The London School of Economics and Political Science

Non-Sovereign States in the Era of Decolonisation:

Politics, Nationalism and Assimilation in French and British Caribbean Territories, 1945-1980

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A thesis submitted to the Department of International History of the London School of Economics for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy, London, July 2019

Declaration

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Abstract

Non-independent territories today account for more than half the states in the Caribbean but regional and global histories of the twentieth century tend to exclude them from narratives of protest and change. This thesis addresses this gap. Using the Cayman Islands, the British Virgin Islands, Martinique and Guadeloupe as case studies, it argues that a focus on the processes of decolonisation in these non-sovereign states reveals features common to the global experience of twentieth century decolonisation elsewhere. This comparative perspective shows how the postwar context, the Cold War, differing colonial policies, local elites, local party politics and protest movements shaped political outcomes in British and French territories. Thus, a comprehensive account of decolonisation must acknowledge the developments in non-independent territories. No longer formal colonies, yet having not become conventional independent sovereign states, these territories challenge our preconceptions about decolonisation and the so-called postcolonial world.

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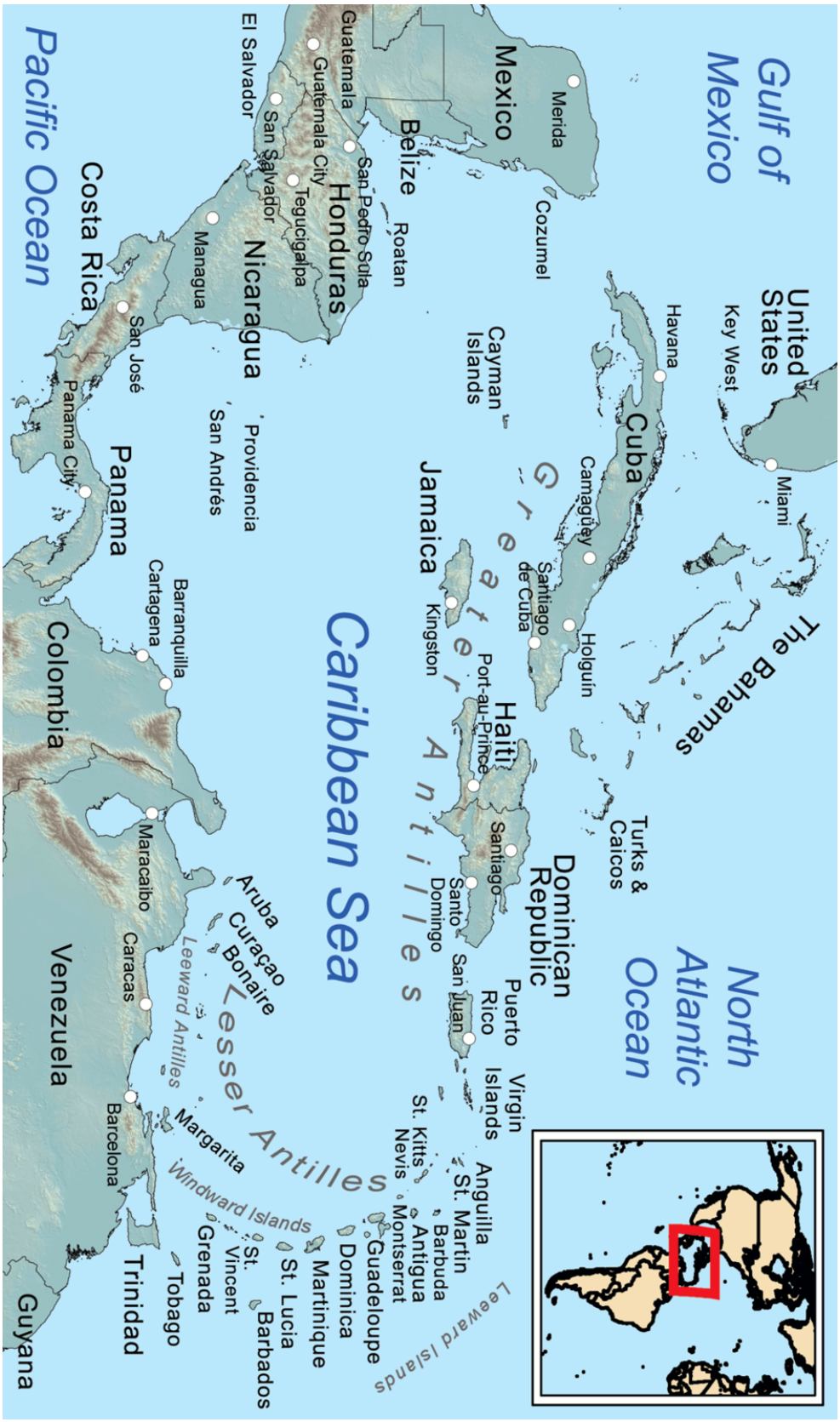

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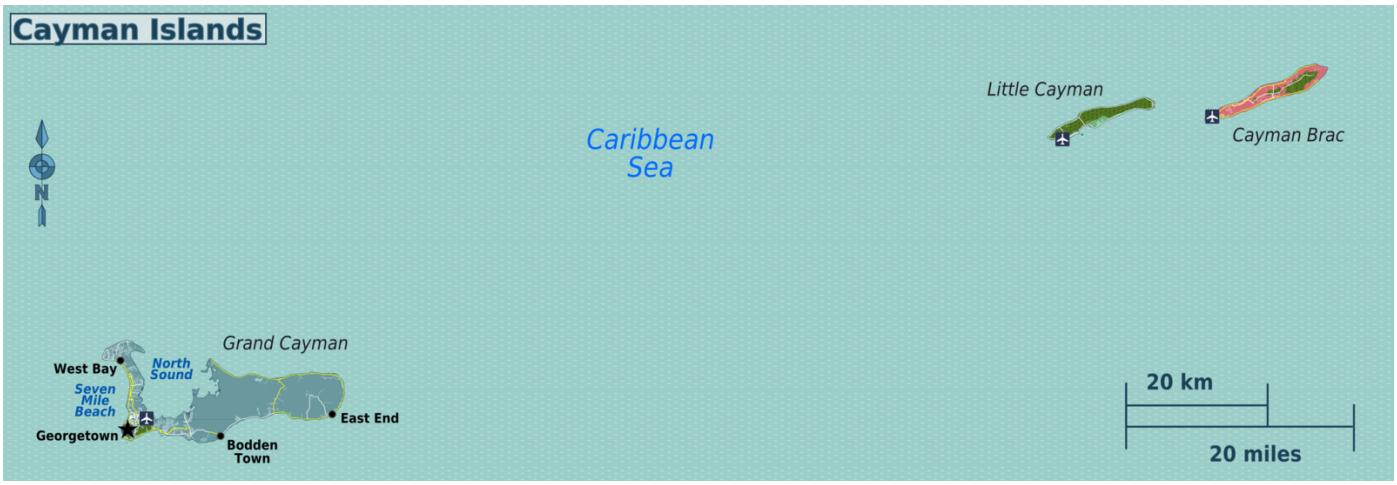
[1] Wikipedia.org, https://sco.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Caribbean_general_map.png.



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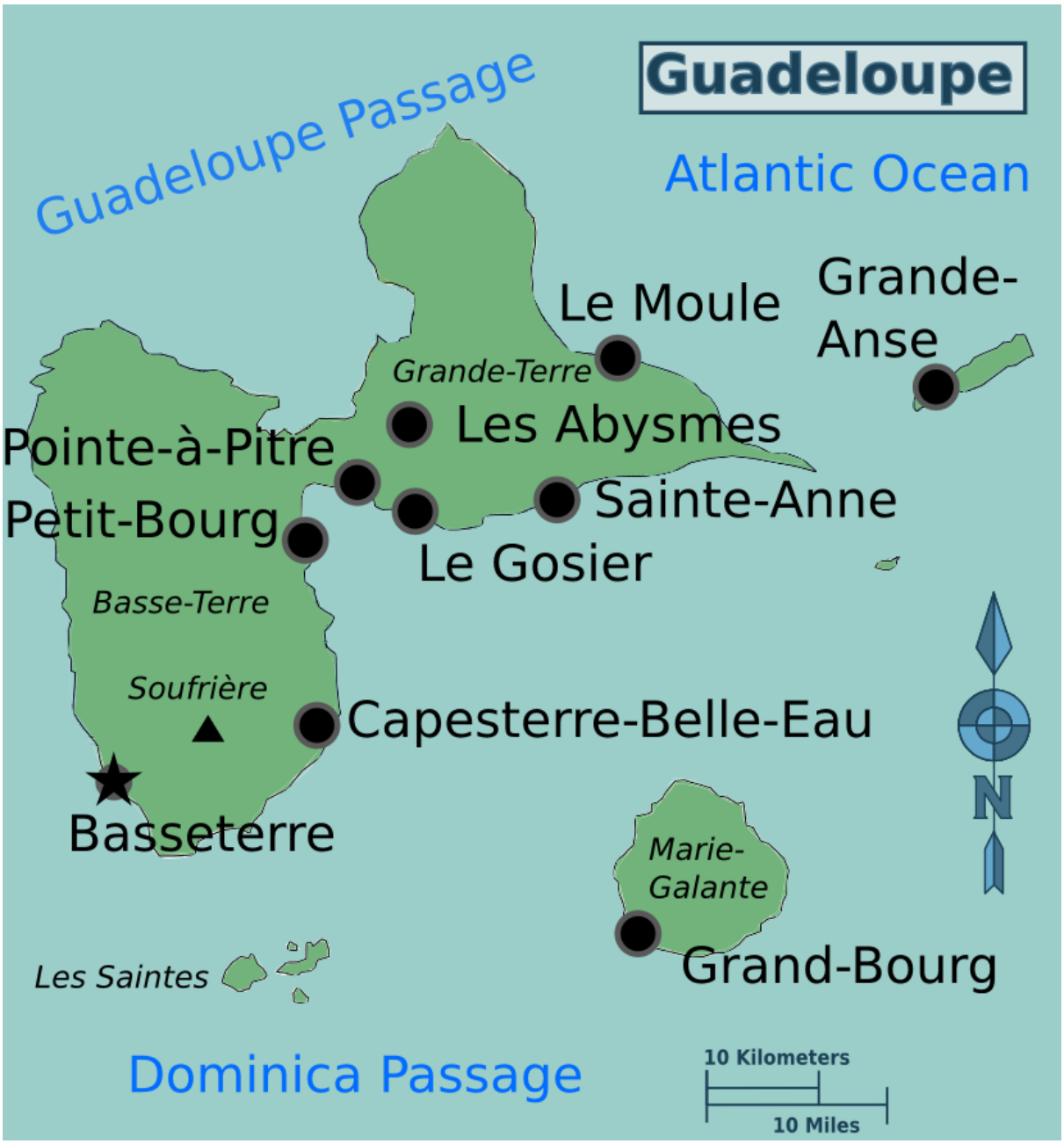
[2] Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Cayman_Islands_regions_map.png.
[3] Wikimedia Commons, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:British_Virgin_Islands_locator.svg.



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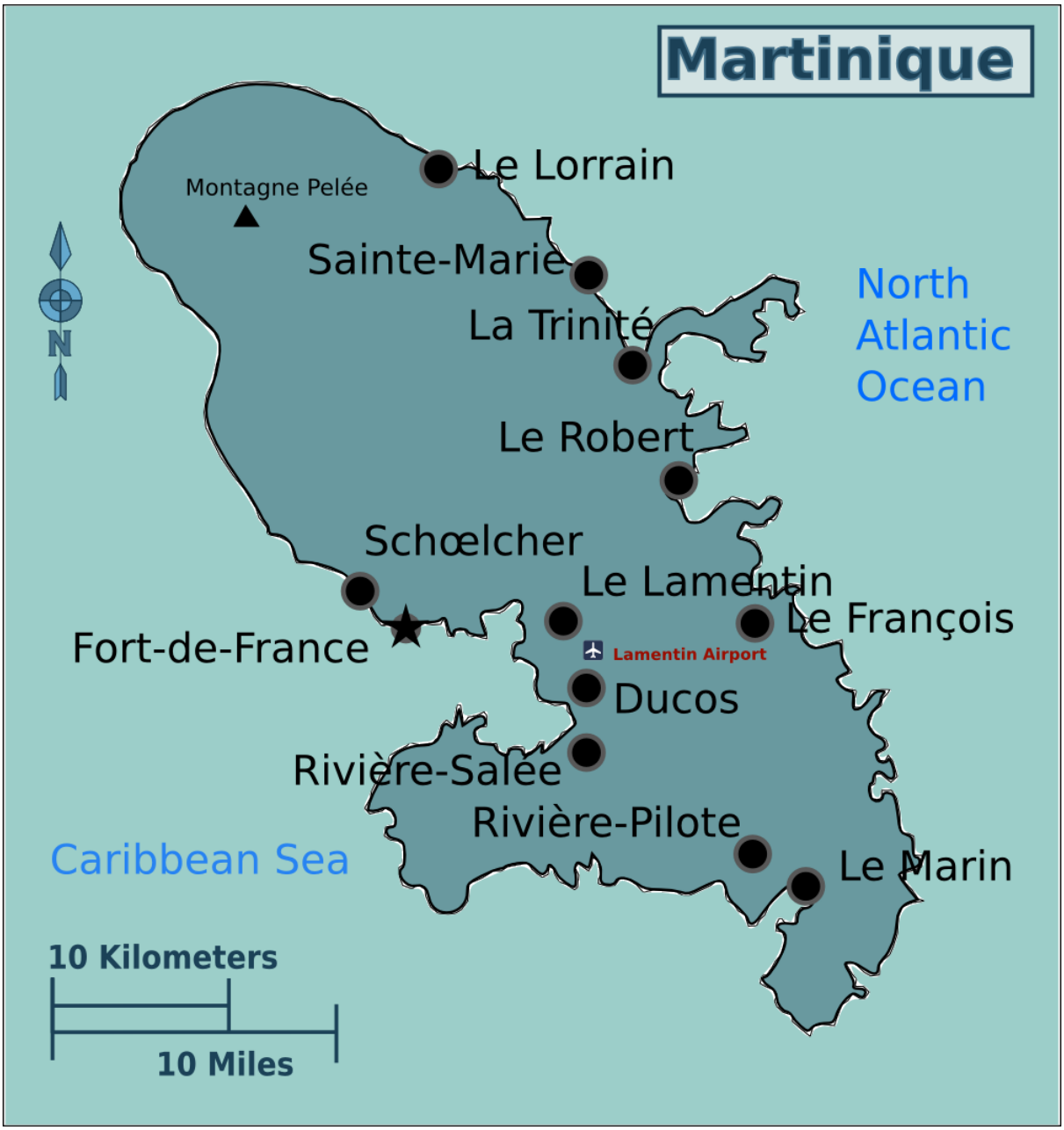
[4] Wikipedia, https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Wikivoyage_Guadeloupe_map_PNG.png.



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[5] Wikipedia, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Wikivoyage_Martinique_map_PNG.png.

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List of Abbreviations

ADG	Archives Départementales de la Guadeloupe
ADM	Archives Départementales de la Martinique
AFFPOL	Ministère des Colonies, Direction des Affaires Politiques, France
AN	Archives Nationales, France
ANOM	Archives Nationales d'Outre-mer, France
BNF	Bibliothèque Nationale de France
BVI	The British Virgin Islands
Cayman	The Cayman Islands
CINA	Cayman Islands National Archives
CO	Colonial Office
DOM	Département d'Outre-mer
FCO	Foreign and Commonwealth Office
JORF	Journal Officiel de la République Française
MP	Member of Parliament
RG	Renseignements Généraux, French Intelligence Service
TNA	The National Archives, UK
US	United States
USVI	Virgin Islands of the United States
VINA	National Archives of the Virgin Islands, Tortola

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A Note on Terminology

This thesis uses the term 'non-sovereign' to refer to the current status of Martinique, Guadeloupe, the British Virgin Islands and the Cayman Islands. Bonilla uses 'non-sovereign' in her analysis of labour movements in Guadeloupe, in an attempt to move beyond 'the epistemic constraints of political modernity'.[6] Like this thesis, her work seeks to counteract the separation and isolation of the non-sovereign territories of the Caribbean from the independent states that is common in scholarship. In line with this, the title of this thesis uses the term non-sovereign. However, 'non-independent' is also used in this thesis for clarity, in instances where it is specifically the decolonisation without independence of these territories that is under consideration.

The term 'overseas territories' is used throughout this thesis to refer collectively to the four case study island groups: Martinique, Guadeloupe, the British Virgin Islands and the Cayman Islands. In the period in question, the British islands were, at various points, a presidency, a dependency, a colony and a dependent territory. The French islands were colonies which then became overseas departments. Overseas France is split into regions and departments, collectivities, and territories, and currently the only overseas territory is the French Southern and Antarctic Lands. Strictly speaking, Martinique and Guadeloupe are overseas departments rather than overseas territories. However, for ease, and to avoid confusion, this thesis uses the term overseas territory to refer to all four island groups.

[6] Yarimar Bonilla, *Non-Sovereign Futures: French Caribbean Politics in the Wake of Disenchantment* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2015), xiv.

Introduction

'A Paradox in Paradise'?

The era of decolonisation in the twentieth century has led to an assumption that today's world of nation states was inevitable. However, in the twenty-first century, more than forty non-independent and partially independent states remain.[7] This phenomenon is particularly apparent in the Caribbean region, where there are more non-independent territories than independent nation states.[8] Surely then, this form of political status should be crucial to our understanding of both Caribbean and global politics. Nonetheless, political scientists simply dismiss these territories as 'paradoxical' and anomalous.[9]

This thesis will argue that these non-sovereign territories are very much part of the history of decolonisation in the twentieth century. It will do so by studying four Caribbean territories: Martinique, Guadeloupe, the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands. After the Second World War, the global political context of the Cold War and growing anticolonial nationalism shaped the development of these territories. They embody that notion of islands as places of both connection and separation, in that they were closely connected to many of the developments taking place in the Caribbean region and globally. Yet, at other times decisions were very particular to local circumstances. Their history tells us that during the processes of decolonisation many different options and possible futures were envisaged. Full independence was not a foregone conclusion.

[7] David A. Rezvani, *Surpassing the Sovereign State: The Wealth, Self-Rule, and Security Advantages of Partially Independent Territories* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 12.
[8] Bonilla, *Non-Sovereign Futures*, 6.
[9] Richard D. E. Burton, *Assimilation or Independence?: Prospects for Martinique* (Montreal: McGill University, 1978); William F. S. Miles, *Elections and Ethnicity in French Martinique: A Paradox in Paradise* (New York: Praeger, 1985); William F. S. Miles, 'Democracy Without Sovereignty: France's Post-Colonial Paradox', *The Brown Journal of World Affairs* 11, no. 2 (2005): 223–34.

The thesis will focus on the period from 1945 to 1980, which covers the main era of twentieth century decolonisation. The end of the Second World War is frequently seen as the start of decolonisation for many regions of the world. Shipway, for example, places the war at the centre of his analysis suggesting that the impact of the Second World War was 'multi-layered and pluri-dimensional', causing a significant shift in the colonial interaction and accelerating change.[10] This was certainly the case for the four Caribbean colonies under scrutiny, as the war encouraged citizens to reconsider their relationship with the colonial metropole. In the aftermath of the Second World War, all four colonies changed their political status, beginning with the French Antilles and departmentalisation in 1946.

The time frame ends in 1980 because significant changes in the 1980s altered the context of decolonisation for both the British territories and the French departments. In the case of the British territories, the last British Caribbean colony to become independent was St Kitts and Nevis in 1983. As a result, British policy, as well as the expectations of Caribbean politicians and people, changed. Furthermore, the Falklands War in 1982 had a considerable impact on debates about the British Overseas Territories.[11] For the French Antilles, the decentralisation laws of 1982 reduced restrictions on expressions of cultural distinctiveness, such as the speaking and teaching of Creole.[12] As a direct result of decentralisation, the question of autonomy was no longer at the centre of local political debates. Aimé Césaire, the mayor of Fort-de-France, signalled this change in his 1981 declaration of a moratorium on the question of Martinique's political status, after the

[10] Martin Shipway, *Decolonization and Its Impact: A Comparative Approach to the End of the Colonial Empires* (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2008), 234–39.
[11] Robert Aldrich and John Connell, *The Last Colonies* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 30; Ronald Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire: The Road to Decolonisation, 1918-1968* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 329.
[12] Jean Bernabé and Raphaël Confiant, 'Le CAPES de créole: Stratégies et enjeux', *Hermès, La Revue* 1, no. 32–33 (2002): 211.

election of socialist President François Mitterrand.[13] Though these developments did not end debates about decolonisation and independence, later events are outside the scope of this study.

Historical Background

A longer historical perspective is crucial to understanding the post-Second World War era in the Caribbean. Both the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands were dependencies of British colonies (Jamaica and the Leeward Islands respectively), and thus the Colonial Office in London did not administer them directly.[14] The British established colonies in Cayman and the BVI in the seventeenth century and, while Taíno and Kalinago populations had settled in the Virgin Islands prior to European colonisation, no archaeological evidence exists to date of an indigenous presence in the Cayman Islands.[15] These two islands groups had a similar early colonial history, characterised by: temporary settlement; piracy and privateering; wrecking; fishing; and small-scale agriculture.[16] Colonial accounts of this time commonly describe these colonies as 'lawless'. For example, a 1797 report described Cayman as 'inhabited by a handful of lawless men… who are in reality nothing more than sea-robbers'.[17] The British eventually founded slave-based plantation economies in both colonies, though they were on a smaller scale to the large plantations of other Caribbean colonies like Jamaica.[18] As a result, issues of race and racism have been left out of the popular and archival narrative of early Caymanian history.[19]

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[13] Aimé Césaire, 'Discours du Moratoire', 15 June 1981, Fort-de-France, reproduced in Gérard Théobald, *La Liberté est ou n'est pas...* (Paris: Éditions Publibook, 2014), 669–72.
[14] Annual Report, 1950, CO 1071/93, 7, TNA.; Governor of Leeward Islands to Secretary of State for the Colonies, 15 December 1949, CO 152/536/8, 1, TNA.
[15] Colleen Ballerino Cohen, *Take Me to My Paradise: Tourism and Nationalism in the British Virgin Islands* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2010), 77; Roger C. Smith, 'The Caymanian Catboat: A West Indian Maritime Legacy', *World Archaeology* 16, no. 3 (1985): 330.
[16] Christopher A. Williams, *Defining the Caymanian Identity: The Effects of Globalization, Economics, and Xenophobia on Caymanian Culture* (London: Lexington Books, 2015), 3–25; Eugenia O'Neal, *From the Field to the Legislature: A History of Women in the Virgin Islands* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2001), 1–20.
[17] Report from Captain Don Juan Tirri to the Governor-General of Cuba, 1797, cited in Ulf Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics: Structure and Style in a Changing Island Society* (Stockholm: University of Stockholm, 1974), 25.
[18] Alan West, *African Caribbeans: A Reference Guide* (London: Greenwood Press, 2003), 45.
[19] Annual Report, 1946, CO 1071/93, 26-28, TNA.

In Cayman, fishermen from Jamaica built temporary dwellings during the turtle season, but permanent settlement did not occur until 1734 when timber felling began.[20] Cotton cultivation later replaced timber, reaching its height at the start of the nineteenth century.[21] After abolition in 1834, some white planters left to settle in more economically viable places like the Bay Islands off the coast of Honduras, but many stayed.[22] Williams has highlighted several flaws in the historiography of the Cayman Islands.[23] While some suggest that Cayman was, from the outset, a place of relative racial harmony and mixing, in reality, this did not occur until the late nineteenth and early twentieth century when economic hardship and isolation encouraged Caymanians to focus on survival rather than racial hierarchies.[24] The traditional historiography, which emphasises the seafaring traditions of Cayman, suggests that slavery was less significant and less harsh than elsewhere in the Caribbean.[25] In reality, slavery was an essential part of both the agricultural and the maritime industries, and the role of slavery in the creation of Caymanian society and culture should not be underestimated. Furthermore, although timber felling and cotton farming were not as rigorous or regimented as sugar cultivation, slavery in the Cayman Islands was nevertheless violent and brutal.[26] For example, in 1820 an enslaved woman named Long Celia was sentenced to public flogging with fifty lashes for 'uttering seditious words'.[27]

[20] George Hirst, *Notes on the History of the Cayman Islands*, Commissioner of the Cayman Islands (1907-1912) (CINA, 1910), 24.
[21] *Our Islands' Past: Volume I: Edward Corbet's Report and Census of 1802 on the Cayman Islands* ed. CINA (George Town, Cayman, 1992) 1-2.
[22] L. R. Fyfe, *Grand Cayman: Report of Official Visit Preceded by Minute of Instructions by His Excellency Sir H. W. Norman, Governor of Jamaica* (Kingston: Government Printing Establishment, 1887).
[23] Williams, *Defining the Caymanian Identity*, 21–25.
[24] Ibid., 67-87.
[25] E.g. Roger C. Smith, *The Maritime Heritage of the Cayman Islands* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000); J. A. Roy Bodden, *The Cayman Islands in Transition: The Politics, History, and Sociology of a Changing Society* (Kingston: Ian Randle, 2007).
[26] Williams, *Defining the Caymanian Identity*, 21–25.
[27] Hirst, *Notes on the History of the Cayman Islands*, 205–7.

In 1832, the Cayman Islands inaugurated an elected council, known as the Assembly of Justices and Vestry.[28] Though Cayman was supposedly under Jamaican control, as the Governor of Jamaica approved the appointment of the Chief Magistrate and Justices of Peace, it was not until 1863 that Cayman was formally named a dependency of Jamaica.[29] The British Virgin Islands, on the other hand, were administered through the government of the Leeward Islands in Antigua from 1672 onwards. A plantation economy based on cotton and sugar began in the seventeenth century in the BVI, but was only prosperous between 1756 and 1783, due to trade links with North American colonies during the American War for Independence. After hurricanes and drought in the nineteenth century, and abolition in 1834, most of the white planter class left the BVI for Britain.[30] Thus in 1902, following decades of economic decline, the British abolished the legislative council and established the BVI as a presidency within the Leeward Islands colony, further reducing political representation in the islands.[31] It is noteworthy that in both the BVI and Cayman, formerly enslaved people were able to acquire land in the second half of the nineteenth century. Unlike many other Caribbean colonies, an agricultural peasantry developed in the BVI, as land became available on abandoned estates.[32]

In the twentieth century, the societies of the BVI and Cayman were ethnically very different and this affected British attitudes towards each colony. An American geographer who visited Cayman in the 1940s observed how 'the majority of the population are of white or mixed blood, many of the older families being pure white, and a considerable number very blond.'[33] As a result, twentieth century British colonial reports show a measure of respect and some sense of kinship towards

[28] Colonial Office Annual Report on the Cayman Islands, 1946, CO 1071/93, 28, TNA.
[29] 'Imperial Act - An Act for the Government of the Cayman Islands', 22 June 1863, Cayman Laws 1863-1929, CINA.
[30] Bill Maurer, *Recharting the Caribbean: Land, Law, and Citizenship in the British Virgin Islands* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1997), 61.
[31] British Virgin Islands Report for the years 1961 and 1962, 52-53, VINA.
[32] *Laws of the Cayman Islands up to No. 12 of 1889* (Kingston, 1889), 1-4, cited in Williams, *Defining the Caymanian Identity*, 59.
[33] James H. S. Billmyer, 'The Cayman Islands', *Geographical Review* 36, no. 1 (1946): 34.

Caymanians.[34] In the BVI, on the other hand, where the majority of the population were of African descent, British attitudes tended far more towards condescension, racism and scorn.[35]

Prior to the war, these two dependencies held little interest for Britain and were underfunded and underdeveloped. For example, from 1927 to 1928, Britain spent £83 149 on Antigua, but only £7 240 on the BVI.[36] Revealingly, J. A. C. Cruikshank, the newly appointed Commissioner of the British Virgin Islands, included in a report that, 'there were three chairs in my office not one of which had a seat,' on his arrival in 1945.[37] Having finally resolved the situation, he was no longer 'diverted by the spectacle of official visitors endeavouring to detach the chairs from their posteriors nor am I irritated by finding myself in the same predicament when rising from my desk'.[38] His account highlights the underdevelopment of the British Virgin Islands from years of neglect both by the Governor in Antigua, and the Colonial Office in London. The Cayman Islands, geographically isolated in the north-western Caribbean, were similarly ignored and neglected until Allen Wolsey Cardinall, Commissioner from 1934 to 1941, drew attention to their potential as a source of skilled naval recruits.[39] Nonetheless, this did not lead to immediate investment and in 1950 journalist John Maloney was still able to refer to them as 'The Islands That Time Forgot'.[40]

As elsewhere across the British Empire, in the decade before the Second World War, widespread political protest broke out in the British West Indies due to economic hardship, unemployment

[34] E.g. Colonial Reports, 1946-1950, CO 1071/93, TNA.
[35] E.g. Commissioner's Report, 4 December 1946, CO 152/536/3, TNA.
[36] Annual Report for the Leeward Islands, 1927-1928, TCO 1071/231, TNA; It should be noted that while the population of the Virgin Islands was six times smaller than Antigua, colonial expenditure was twelve times smaller, representing a considerable difference per capita.
[37] Commissioner of the British Virgin Islands to Governor of the Leeward Islands, 4 December 1946, CO 152/536/3, TNA.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Harold Banks, Carley Ebanks and Harvey Ebanks, in interview conducted by Liz Scolefield, 18 May 1996, 20, CINA.
[40] John Maloney, *Saturday Evening Post,* 41.222, 8 April 1950, 38.

and a lack of political representation.[41] Although no major political protests or trade union action arose in BVI, the emerging merchant class placed pressure on the Commissioner to reinstate the legislative council. In 1938, a lawyer from Tortola, Hope Stevens, returned from studying in New York and set up the Civic League to encourage political change.[42] Along with other Civic League officers, Stevens prepared a petition with hundreds of signatures from BVIslanders calling for a legislative council.[43] This elite group were predominantly lighter-skinned merchants and traders who had profited from working abroad in the first half of the twentieth century. A second civic group was set up among the BVI community in New York: the British Virgin Islands Pro-Legislative Committee of America.[44] Though the BVI elite were influenced by American and other Caribbean political movements, they remained conservative in approach. The Secretary of State for the Colonies rejected their petition, but the action of the Civic League garnered some attention for the neglected islands.[45]

Merchants also constituted the elite sector of society in the Cayman Islands, the principal difference being that, in Cayman, the majority of these merchant families were white.[46] They controlled much of the economic and political life in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century through their gatekeeper status, managing access, communications and goods to and from the outside world.[47] The economic structure of society was vertical: between the peasant-fisherman who made up the majority, and the small, economically dominant merchant elite. This patron-client relationship with shared interests and loyalty meant that, generally, the peasants and

[41] Richard Hart, *Labour Rebellions of the 1930s in the British Caribbean Region Colonies* (London: Caribbean Labour Solidarity and the Socialist History Society, 2002).
[42] Vernon W. Pickering, *A Concise History of the British Virgin Islands: From the Amerindians to 1986* (New York: Falcon Publications International, 1987), 71.
[43] The term 'BVIslander' to refer to citizens of the BVI is a relatively recent phenomenon. See Maurer, *Recharting the Caribbean*, *xiv*.
[44] Bill Maurer, 'Writing Law, Making a "Nation": History, Modernity, and Paradoxes of Self-Rule in the British Virgin Islands', *Law & Society Review* 29, no. 2 (1 January 1995): 265.
[45] Maurer, *Recharting the Caribbean*, 58.
[46] Ibid., 61.
[47] Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, 39–54.

fisherman respected the merchants and their roles as Justices of the Peace, in the Church, and in charitable organisations.[48] Merchants sometimes encouraged resentment through abuse of power, racism, or when they intervened in court matters.[49] For most of the nineteenth century, no government official from Britain resided in Cayman, since the office of Commissioner was not established until 1898.[50] Although Vestrymen were elected from across different groups in Caymanian society, the local merchant elite maintained considerable influence over the Assembly.[51]

Like the British dependencies, the French colonies of Martinique and Guadeloupe trailed behind the metropole in terms of political representation, social rights, and economic development. Unlike the populations of the British colonies, people in Martinique and Guadeloupe had been French citizens since 1848, meaning all adult men could vote for representatives in the French National Assembly in Paris.[52] However, in reality the French President, the Minister of the Colonies and the Governor controlled Martinique and Guadeloupe, in what Nesbitt describes as a 'quasi-feudalistic juridical relic'.[53]

Along with French Guiana and Réunion, Martinique and Guadeloupe were referred to as the 'Old Colonies' because France had colonised them during the monarchical imperial age in the seventeenth century, as opposed to the republican era of the nineteenth century.[54] The slave trade had shaped the societies of the French Antilles until abolition in 1848.[55] The colonial encounter displaced and wiped out the indigenous population, leaving a plantation-based society with a small

[48] Kenneth Pringle, *Waters of the West* (London: G. Allen and Unwin, 1938), 180–90.
[49] Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, 39–54.
[50] Colonial Office Annual Report on the Cayman Islands, 1946, CO 1071/93, 28, TNA.
[51] Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, 49–53.
[52] Robert Aldrich and John Connell, *France's Overseas Frontier: Départements et Territoires d'outre-Mer* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1992), 51–56.
[53] Nick Nesbitt, 'Departmentalization and the Logic of Decolonization', *L'Esprit Créateur* 47, no. 1 (2007): 33.
[54] William Miles, 'Fifty Years of Assimilation: Assessing France's Experience of Caribbean Decolonisation through Administrative Reform', in *Islands at the Crossroads: Politics in the Non-Independent Caribbean*, ed. Angel Israel Rivera Ortiz and Aarón Gamaliel Ramos (Kingston: Ian Randle, 2001), 46.
[55] Bill Marshall, *The French Atlantic: Travels in Culture and History* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009), 187.

minority of rich whites, known as *Békés*, controlling the majority of the industry and economy. A key difference in the histories of Martinique and Guadeloupe occurred during the French Revolution. In Martinique, the *Békés* managed to maintain control, because the British protected the institution of slavery in the island. In Guadeloupe, on the other hand, most of the white planters fled or were killed, and slavery was abolished during the regime of Victor Hugues between 1794 and 1798.[56] Despite the attempts of resistance leaders Louis Delgrès, Solitude and Joseph Ignace, Napoleonic France reoccupied Guadeloupe in 1802 and reinstated slavery for another forty-six years. This split during the revolution made the societies of Martinique and Guadeloupe quite different and altered the way constructions of race operated within society.

Though they are often left out of the historiography, it is important to acknowledge the presence and influence of Indian indentured labourers in the French Antilles.[57] Between 1853 and 1888, over 68 000 labourers arrived in Martinique and Guadeloupe, from both French enclaves in Pondichéry and Karikal, and British India.[58] At the same time, from abolition onwards, a black political elite developed, greatly inspired by the French revolutionary ideals of liberté, égalité, fraternité.[59] Assimilationist doctrines established through education had engendered a society which valued French language and culture. By the twentieth century, some of this black middle class worked and studied in Paris, coming into contact with other elites from across the French Empire.[60] Martinicans Aimé Césaire and Paulette Nardal, for example, spent the 1930s in Paris, collaborating with Léopold Senghor from Senegal and Léon Damas from French Guiana on the concept of *Négritude* and on the journals *L'Étudiant Noir* and *La Revue Du Monde Noir.*[61] Césaire

[56] Auguste Lacour, *Histoire de La Guadeloupe, Tome 2e, 1789-1798* (Basse-Terre, Guadeloupe: Imprimerie du gouvernement, 1857).
[57] David Northrup, 'Les immigrants indiens engagés aux Antilles françaises', *Revue française d'histoire d'outre-mer* 87, no. 326 (2000): 245–71.
[58] Ibid., 267-271.
[59] Leon de Lepervanche, *JORF*, 13 March 1946, 665.
[60] Kesteloot Lilyan, 'La Littérature Négro-Africaine Face à l'histoire de l'Afrique', *Afrique Contemporaine* 241, no. 1 (2012): 43–53.
[61] *La Revue Du Monde Noir* (Paris), founded in 1931; *L'Étudiant Noir* (Paris), founded in 1935.

went on to write *Cahier d'un retour au pays natal* which discussed issues of racism, oppression, assimilation and colonialism.[62] Like many British West Indian colonies in the 1930s, the French Antilles experienced major strike action by plantation and sugar workers. Colonial authorities often responded by violently repressing uprisings and protests.[63] Despite widespread strikes among labourers and developing notions of *Négritude* among intellectuals, French Antilleans remained generally loyal to France.[64] Césaire and his associates certainly perceived themselves to be part of the imagined French community.[65] Across the four colonies, patriotic enthusiasm for the 'mother country' characterised responses to the outbreak of war. But the war would challenge the seeming dominance and invulnerability of Britain and France, changing perceptions of empire and the colonies' place within it.

Non-Independent Territories

Despite being neglected in many larger works on decolonisation, several studies focusing specifically on the non-independent Caribbean do address the question of their decolonisation. Peter Clegg has written extensively about small states in the international system, including the non-independent Caribbean, from an International Relations perspective.[66] Clegg highlights the 'inter-island antipathy and rivalry' that is often at the root of twenty-first century calls for

[62] Aimé Césaire, *Cahier d'un Retour Au Pays Natal* (Paris: Volontés, 1939).
[63] H. Adlai Murdoch, 'The Language(s) of Martinican Identity: Resistance to Vichy in the Novels of Raphaël Confiant', *L'Esprit Créateur* 47, no. 1 (2007): 70.
[64] *Parcours de Dissidents,* (2006), documentary film by Euzhan Palcy.
[65] Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso, 1983).
[66] Peter Clegg, 'The UK Caribbean Overseas Territories, New Labour, and the Strengthening of Metropolitan Control', *Caribbean Studies* 34, no. 1 (1 January 2006): 131–61; Peter Clegg and E. Pantojas-Garcia, *Governance in the Non-Independent Caribbean: Challenges and Opportunities in the 21st Century*, 2009; Peter Clegg, 'The United Kingdom and Its Caribbean Overseas Territories: Present Relations and Future Prospects', *Caribbean Journal of International Relations & Diplomacy* 1, no. 2 (June 2013): 53–64; Peter Clegg and David Killingray, eds., *The Non-Independent Territories of the Caribbean and Pacific: Continuity and Change* (London: The Institute of Commonwealth Studies, 2012); Peter Clegg, 'Independence Movements in the Caribbean: Withering on the Vine?', *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 50, no. 4 (1 November 2012): 422–38; Peter Clegg, 'Taking Stock of the Decolonization Agenda – The UK Overseas Territories (Caribbean, Bermuda, and St Helena): Current Positions and Future Options' (United Nations Caribbean Regional Seminar on Decolonization, Managua, Nicaragua, 2015).

independence, rather than direct antipathy towards Britain.[67] This is not a recent phenomenon, as this thesis will demonstrate. A couple of collections have compared the non-independent territories of the Caribbean, though these contain separate chapters on each territory, limiting the comparative analysis.[68] However, unlike these works, this research compares the territories throughout, in every chapter. A comparative approach, it is argued, is a crucial part of moving past interpreting these islands as mere anomalies. It allows us to identify trends across linguistic and colonial borders. Furthermore, the differences identified help to highlight the local dimensions which influenced the particular outcomes of decolonisation in each territory. Caribbean studies are too often bounded by the divisions set up by the colonial past, with scholars studying groups of islands which all belonged to the same empire. Comparing across these boundaries encourages us to step beyond colonial limits.

The Cayman Islands

Turning to specific island focused studies, after Neville Williams' short official history of the Cayman Islands published in 1970, relatively little was written on Caymanian history until the twenty-first century.[69] A growing interest in protecting and promoting Caymanian traditions, culture and history in the late twentieth century led to the establishment of several useful institutions for historians, including the National Archive and the oral history Memory Bank. Making use of these resources, Michael Craton's *Founded Upon the Seas* offers a detailed and comprehensive history of the islands from the sixteenth century to today.[70] Importantly, Craton acknowledges that Cayman was a 'slave society' and includes a chapter on the experiences of

[67] Clegg, 'Independence Movements in the Caribbean'.
[68] Lammert de Jong and Dirk Kruijt, eds., *Extended Statehood in the Caribbean: Paradoxes of Quasi Colonialism, Local Autonomy, and Extended Statehood in the USA, French, Dutch, and British Caribbean* (Amsterdam: Rozenberg, 2005); Angel Israel Rivera Ortiz and Aarón Gamaliel Ramos, eds., *Islands at the Crossroads: Politics in the Non-Independent Caribbean* (Kingston: Ian Randle, 2001).
[69] Neville Williams, *A History of the Cayman Islands* (Grand Cayman: Government of the Cayman Islands, 1970).
[70] Michael Craton, *Founded Upon the Seas: A History of the Cayman Islands and Their People* (Kingston: Ian Randle, 2003).

enslaved people. This is often overlooked in popular understandings of Caymanian history as rooted in buccaneering and maritime pursuits.[71] Nonetheless, Craton's account, to a certain extent, presents a 'white settler' perspective on Caymanian history. For example, he suggests that 'the first permanent inhabitants were probably poor but respectable turtlers and logcutters, who settled down with their families and a few slaves to a lifestyle that was more congenial, though no richer, than they could have enjoyed in planter-dominated Jamaica'.[72] Furthermore, he rather surprisingly describes the history of slavery in Cayman as 'fascinating – and occasionally uncomfortable', underestimating the impact of slavery and racism on the development of Caymanian society and identity.[73] Going further than Craton, this thesis analyses the dynamics of racial inequality and white minority government which are at the heart of understanding political developments in the territory.

The white merchant oligarchy and their monopoly over Caymanian politics is the subject of Ulf Hannerz' anthropological study.[74] Based on extensive interviews in the 1970s, Hannerz offers a useful insight into the political crises of the 1960s and 1970s. Roy Bodden builds on these themes in his study of Caymanian politics, describing the workings of Caymanian society as a 'patronage system' in which most of the population was dependent on the merchant elite for resources, transport and jobs.[75] In his earlier work on Caymanian history, Bodden suggests that Cayman was a 'society with slaves, rather than a slave society'.[76] He is outspoken on issues of racial inequality in Caymanian politics, but this claim regarding slavery could be interpreted as part of an overly positive, patriotic notion of Caymanian history as being more harmonious and equal than other Caribbean islands. More convincing, is Christopher Williams' assertion of the importance of

[71] Craton, 63–87.
[72] Craton, 2.
[73] Craton, 63.
[74] Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*.
[75] J. A. Roy Bodden, *Patronage, Personalities and Parties: Caymanian Politics from 1950-2000* (Kingston: Ian Randle, 2010), 4–5.
[76] Bodden, *The Cayman Islands in Transition: The Politics, History, and Sociology of a Changing Society*.

slavery in shaping Caymanian society such that 'the entrenchment of a stubborn homegrown racism…would continue to privilege all things white…well beyond emancipation'.[77] Mindful of these issues, this research highlights the role of the merchant oligarchy and racial dynamics in Caymanian society in shaping political debates and the process of decolonisation.

The British Virgin Islands

The creation of the College of the Virgin Islands in the USVI in 1962 facilitated increased scholarly attention on the history of the British Virgin Islands. As a result, in 1975, two histories of the BVI were published, one by Guyanese historian Isaac Dookhan, and the other by BVIslanders Norwell Harrigan and Pearl Varlack.[78] Dookhan presents a government perspective on BVI history, relying solely on British archival records. Using oral history as well as archival sources, Harrigan and Varlack's *Virgin Islands Story* analyses the islands' history from a BVI viewpoint. They were early proponents of the now more common insistence on using the term 'Virgin Islands' rather than 'British Virgin Islands'.[79] Although it is a useful brief overview of BVI history, the book suggests that contact 'between the Virgin Islands blacks and other black West Indians had never amounted to much'.[80] This contradicts evidence which will be presented in this thesis of the extensive migration by BVIslanders in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Furthermore, experiences in administrative and political roles in other British Caribbean colonies greatly shaped the outlooks of the BVI political elite in the 1950s. Frequently absent from historical accounts, the important role of women in BVI history is covered in depth by Eugenia O'Neal, who explores

[77] Williams, *Defining the Caymanian Identity*, 25.
[78] Norwell Harrigan and Pearl Varlack, *The Virgin Islands Story* (Kingston: Caribbean Universities Press, 1975); Isaac Dookhan, *A History of the British Virgin Islands, 1672 to 1970* (Epping: Caribbean Universities Press, 1975).
[79] For ease and to distinguish between the USVI and the BVI, this thesis will use 'British Virgin Islands' rather than simply 'Virgin Islands'.
[80] Harrigan and Varlack, *The Virgin Islands Story*, 176.

how women have defined themselves in relation to Virgin Island society.[81] Likewise, this research will acknowledge the influential women who have shaped developments in the BVI.

Our understanding of identity and culture in the British Virgin Islands has been greatly enhanced by the work of anthropologists.[82] Colleen Ballerino Cohen uses the annual British Virgin Islands' Festival as a means of exploring notions of BVI identity.[83] She investigates the relationship between tourism, globalisation and nationalism, issues rooted in the social change which took place in the 1960s and 1970s.[84] This period of rapid transformation has been analysed by W. Errol Bowen, who demonstrates how three great transformations in the 1960s, in development, immigration, and politics, combined to provoke 'discomfiting' social change for BVIslanders.[85] This thesis situates these changes within the context of decolonisation, assessing their impact on the decolonisation process.

An important intervention came from Bill Maurer, who focuses on the ways land ownership and law writing have become expressions of BVI identity and citizenship. [86] Self-rule is imagined through the ability to write legislation, despite the continuation of deeply entrenched colonial structures.[87] Certainly, ownership of land was central to political debates and moments of crisis and conflict. This is most evident in the 1968 Positive Action Protest which is glossed over or absent from the literature, with the exception of Bowen. Unlike previous accounts, this research highlights the vision of figures like Positive Action leader Noel Lloyd, whose global anticolonial

[81] O'Neal, *From the Field to the Legislature*.
[82] See Maurer, 'Writing Law, Making a "Nation": History, Modernity, and Paradoxes of Self-Rule in the British Virgin Islands'; Maurer, *Recharting the Caribbean*; Colleen Ballerino Cohen, '"This Is de Test": Festival and the Cultural Politics of Nation Building in the British Virgin Islands', *American Ethnologist* 25, no. 2 (1 May 1998): 189–214; Cohen, *Take Me to My Paradise*.
[83] Cohen, '"This Is de Test": Festival and the Cultural Politics of Nation Building in the British Virgin Islands'.
[84] Cohen, *Take Me to My Paradise*.
[85] W. Errol Bowen, 'Development, Immigration and Politics in a Pre-Industrial Society: A Study of Social Change in the British Virgin Islands in the 1960s', *Caribbean Studies* 16, no. 1 (1 April 1976): 85.
[86] Maurer, *Recharting the Caribbean*.
[87] Maurer, 257.

perspective demonstrates the impact of international campaigns and ideas on certain groups in BVI society.

Martinique and Guadeloupe

Turning next to the French Caribbean, the literature on the history of Martinique and Guadeloupe is extensive. A tendency exists in French scholarship to focus either on institutional or economic history, particularly the development of the sugar industry.[88] This has been countered by Antillean historians centring their analysis on moments of crisis and revolution, such as the 1802 reinstating of slavery in Guadeloupe or Vichy rule in the Caribbean during the Second World War.[89] Furthermore, influential Antillean thinkers, from Césaire to Fanon to Glissant, have explored French Caribbean history and identity.[90] Their impact is explored in greater detail in chapter four. More recently, Jacques Dumont's account of twentieth century history in the French Caribbean explores issues of assimilation, identity and political status, yet he fails to place this within the context of global developments.[91]

The question of departmentalisation has been tackled from different angles by historians, political scientists and anthropologists.[92] Too often, it is either analysed in isolation from global events, or

[88] Georges Cazes, 'Problèmes de population et perspectives économiques en Martinique et en Guadeloupe', *Les Cahiers d'Outre-Mer* 23, no. 92 (1970): 379–424; Jean Crusol, *La croissance économique de la Martinique depuis la départementalisation, 1949-1969* (Fort-de-France: Centre d'études régionales Antilles-Guyane, 1971); Alain Philippe Blérald, *Histoire Économique de La Guadeloupe et de La Martinique: Du XVIIe Siècle à Nos Jours*, Hommes et Sociétés (Paris: Karthala, 1986).
[89] Jacques Adélaïde-Merlande, *Delgrès, ou, La Guadeloupe en 1802* (Paris: Karthala Editions, 1986); Henri Bangou, *La Révolution et l'esclavage à la Guadeloupe, 1789-1802* (Paris: Messidor-Éditions sociales, 1989); Éliane Sempaire, *La dissidence an tan Sorin, 1940-1943* (Pointe-à-Pitre: Editions Jasor, 1989); Eric T. Jennings, 'La dissidence aux Antilles (1940-1943)', *Vingtième Siècle. Revue d'histoire* 68, no. 1 (2000): 55–72; René Bélénus, *Mai 1802, la guerre de Guadeloupe* (Gourbeyre, Guadeloupe: Nestor, 2005).
[90] Aimé Césaire, *Discours Sur Le Colonialisme* (Paris: Réclame, 1950); Frantz Fanon, *Peau Noire, Masques Blancs* (Paris: Seuil, 1952); Édouard Glissant, *Le discours antillais* (Paris: Seuil, 1981); Jean Bernabé, Patrick Chamoiseau, and Raphaël Confiant, *Éloge de la créolité* (Paris: Gallimard, 1989).
[91] Jacques Dumont, *L'amère patrie: Histoire des Antilles françaises au XXe siècle* (Paris: Fayard, 2010).
[92] Victor Sablé, *La Transformation Des Isles d'Amerique En Departements Français* (Paris: Éditions Larose, 1955); Daniel Guérin, *Les Antilles Décolonisées* (Paris: Presence Africaine, 1956); Henri Descamps, *Le politique aux Antilles françaises de 1946 à nos jours* (Fort-de-France: L'Imprimerie Antillaise, 1981); Fred Constant and Justin Daniel, *Cinquante ans de départementalisation Outre-mer 1946-1996* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1997); Nesbitt, 'Departmentalization and the Logic of Decolonization'; Jean-Pierre Sainton, *La décolonisation*

is treated as a pernicious capitulation to French assimilationism. Instead, this thesis will situate departmentalisation within a comparative analysis of decolonisation and will present it in its historical context, without the assumption of independence as a natural destination for colonies. Kristen Stromberg Childers makes a useful contribution to the literature on departmentalisation, particularly in regards to the gender and family dynamics in the Antilles.[93] However, Childers presents Martinique and Guadeloupe as 'anomalous' within the Caribbean, suggesting that they are 'a curious exception in the larger history of decolonization'.[94] This is a common but unhelpful framing of recent Antillean history for two reasons. Firstly, it fails to acknowledge the prevalence of various non-sovereign arrangements across the Caribbean region. Secondly, it reinforces the idea that decolonisation was simply a transfer from colony to independent nation state. By contrast, this thesis examines how political developments in the French Antilles since the Second World War can be understood as part of the global experience of decolonisation.

Crucially, the literature on these territories fails to offer any comparative perspective across linguistic boundaries. Matthew Bishop's political economy is the exception, comparing Martinique and Guadeloupe with St Lucia and St Vincent and the Grenadines.[95] This research compares the four case study territories side-by-side throughout to allow for a deeper understanding of their shared patterns and trends, as well as differences and anomalies. It is the fundamental premise of this thesis that only through comparisons across linguistic boundaries can we fully understand twentieth century decolonisation in this geographical area.

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improbable: Cultures politiques et conjonctures en Guadeloupe et en Martinique (Pointe-à-Pitre: Editions Jasor, 2012); Kristen Stromberg Childers, *Seeking Imperialism's Embrace: National Identity, Decolonization, and Assimilation in the French Caribbean* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016).

[93] Childers, *Seeking Imperialism's Embrace*, 151–74.

[94] Childers, 4–9.

[95] Matthew Louis Bishop, *The Political Economy of Caribbean Development* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

The Caribbean Region in the Era of Decolonisation

Broadening out from the local perspective, this thesis situates the developments in the overseas territories within the regional context of Caribbean decolonisation.[96] Politicians and activists in these territories were part of regional networks and exchanges of ideas. Migration was commonplace and many islanders travelled to other parts of the Caribbean for work or study. They also participated in the interwar and postwar Caribbean networks in metropolitan centres like New York, London and Paris.[97] Independence did not end debates about sovereignty and racial inequality in the region. As Kate Quinn has demonstrated, although scholarship on Black Power has traditionally focused on North America, people across the Caribbean engaged in debates about imperialism, racism and notions of Black Power in the 1960s and 1970s.[98] As chapter six explores, activists in all four case study territories engaged with ideas about Black Power and other forms of social protest.

Scholars who work specifically on British decolonisation in the Caribbean have tended to focus on the failure of the West Indies Federation, the independent states that came out of the Federation's break up, and the political and economic issues of the newly independent nations. For example, David Killingray, whilst acknowledging attempts at federation in the nineteenth century, identifies the 1930s, with labour unrest and the Moyne Commission, as the root of the

[96] For more general works on Caribbean history and decolonisation see: Franklin W. Knight, *The Caribbean: The Genesis of a Fragmented Nationalism* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1978); Anthony Payne and Paul Sutton, eds., *Modern Caribbean Politics* (London: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1993); Holger Henke and Fred Reno, eds., *Modern Political Culture in the Caribbean* (Kingston: University of the West Indies Press, 2003); Gordon K. Lewis, *The Growth of the Modern West Indies* (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2004); Gad Heuman and David Vincent Trotman, eds., *Contesting Freedom: Control and Resistance in the Post-Emancipation Caribbean* (Oxford: Macmillan, 2005); Gad Heuman, *The Caribbean: A Brief History*, 3rd ed (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2018).

[97] Vijay Prashad, *The Darker Nations: A People's History of the Third World* (New York: The New Press, 2008); Marc Matera, *Black London: The Imperial Metropolis and Decolonization in the Twentieth Century* (Oakland, California: University of California Press, 2015); Michael Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis: Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third World Nationalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

[98] Kate Quinn, 'Introduction: New Perspectives on Black Power in the Caribbean', in *Black Power in the Caribbean*, ed. Kate Quinn (Tallahassee: University Press of Florida, 2014), 1–24.

West Indies Federation.[99] Howard Johnson highlights the importance that British policy makers placed on the economic viability of the colonies in the decolonisation process.[100] This became a crucial part of independence debates in the non-independent territories, as this research explores in detail. Eric Duke's more recent study on the Federation has moved beyond the focus on the short-term influences of the Federation to look at the longer historical seeds of federation in the early twentieth century.[101] He offers a more global perspective, exploring the relationship between the Federation and the wider black diaspora.[102] Similarly, this thesis considers the interactions between activists in the overseas territories and the black diaspora on both sides of the Atlantic.

In Caribbean Studies, it is common to focus solely on the history of one island or island group. In Richard Hart's political history, he recounts his own involvement as a lawyer, labour journalist and political activist in the early stages of decolonisation in Jamaica.[103] Jerome Teelucksingh assesses the labour movements in Trinidad and Tobago during decolonisation, moving the focus away from British colonial officials and the middle-class politicians.[104] Teelucksingh argues that 'Democracy was neither a gift to the West Indian colonies bestowed by imperial Britain nor was it granted out of good intentions. Instead, it was consistently and brazenly demanded by Labour'.[105] With this in mind, this research considers the impact of the lack of labour movements and unions in the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands, as well as the significant influence and power of unions in the French Caribbean. These factors are important in providing a more complete

[99] David Killingray, 'The West Indian Federation and Decolonization in the British Caribbean', *The Journal of Caribbean History* 34, no. 1 (2000): 71–88.
[100] Howard Johnson, 'The British Caribbean from Demobilisation to Constitutional Decolonisation', in *The Oxford History of the British Empire: Volume IV: The Twentieth Century*, ed. Judith Brown and Wm. Roger Louis (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 597–622.
[101] Eric D. Duke, *Building a Nation: Caribbean Federation in the Black Diaspora* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2016).
[102] Ibid.
[103] Richard Hart, *Towards Decolonisation: Political, Labour and Economic Developments in Jamaica 1938-1945* (Barbados: Canoe Press, 1999).
[104] Jerome Teelucksingh, *Labour and the Decolonization Struggle in Trinidad and Tobago* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).
[105] Teelucksingh, 174.

picture of the processes of decolonisation in these territories. In an earlier account of decolonisation in Trinidad and Tobago, Selwyn Ryan argues that the small size of the state was a significant factor in its decolonisation.[106] This thesis takes into account the relative small size of the territories under consideration, including the fact that the French islands are much larger, in size and population, compared to the British territories.

In a more regional approach, Spencer Mawby examines the failures of British policymaking at the end of empire and the breakdown of the West Indies Federation.[107] Unlike Mawby's account, this research balances an analysis of British and French policymaking with a local perspective, to fully explore the range of influences. Anne Spry Rush explores the development of British West Indian middle-class identity in early twentieth century up to independence.[108] Though absent from her study, this middle-class identity rooted in respectability was apparent in the Cayman Islands and British Virgin Islands. Notions of Britishness were influential in the debates about decolonisation, particularly in the Cayman Islands. Political systems are central to our understanding of decolonisation. Historians of the Anglophone Caribbean have highlighted the legacy of the Westminster model which continues to influence contemporary Caribbean politics.[109] Like the rest of the former-British Caribbean, the BVI and Cayman maintain a Westminster style political system, which has shaped political developments in the islands.

Francophone Caribbean accounts of decolonisation centre on departmentalisation in 1946, as discussed in the previous section.[110] Departmentalisation is rarely considered in comparison to

[106] Selwyn D. Ryan, *Race and Nationalism in Trinidad and Tobago: A Study of Decolonization in a Multiracial Society* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972).
[107] Spencer Mawby, *Ordering Independence: The End of Empire in the Anglophone Caribbean, 1947-69* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012)., 17.
[108] Anne Spry Rush, *Bonds of Empire: West Indians and Britishness from Victoria to Decolonization - Oxford Scholarship* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011).
[109] Brian Meeks and Kate Quinn, *Beyond Westminster in the Caribbean* (Ian Randle Publishers, 2018).
[110] Sablé, *La Transformation Des Isles d'Amerique En Departements Français Victor Sable*; Robert Deville and Nicolas Georges, *Les départements d'outre-mer: l'autre décolonisation* (Paris: Gallimard, 1996); Constant and Daniel, *Cinquante ans de départementalisation Outre-mer 1946-1996*.

Federation in the British Caribbean, something this research directly addresses. Scholarship in the Caribbean is usually divided along linguistic frontiers, limiting comparative analysis. Yet this thesis offers a comparative approach and a Caribbean perspective to decolonisation. In considering the wider history of the Francophone Caribbean, it is worth noting that Guadeloupe's history is more closely tied to that of Haiti than it might first appear.[111] During the chaotic decades after the French Revolution, slavery was abolished in Guadeloupe and many of the plantation owners were killed. Solitude, Louis Delgrès and Joseph Ignace led a resistance movement opposing the reoccupation of Guadeloupe and the reinstatement of slavery in 1802 but were ultimately unsuccessful.[112]

Although not the subject of this research, decolonisation in other non-independent territories such as Puerto Rico, the Caribbean Netherlands and Aruba provides useful examples of the diversity of the decolonisation experience in the region.[113] As Chapter two details, decolonisation in these territories took place in the context of the Cold War and the ever-growing US influence in the region. The Cuban Revolution was hugely significant for regional political dynamics.[114] Several studies assess decolonisation within this regional geopolitical framework.[115] The Caribbean region

[111] For more on the significance of Haiti for decolonisation in Guadeloupe and Martinique, see: Charles Forsdick, 'Haiti and Departmentalization: The Spectral Presence of Toussaint Louverture', *International Journal of Francophone Studies* 11, no. 3 (26 November 2008): 327–44.
[112] Adélaïde-Merlande, *Delgrès, ou, La Guadeloupe en 1802*; Bangou, *La Révolution et l'esclavage à la Guadeloupe, 1789-1802*; Bélénus, *Mai 1802, la guerre de Guadeloupe*.
[113] Laura Briggs, *Reproducing Empire: Race, Sex, Science, and U.S. Imperialism in Puerto Rico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002); Gert Oostindie and Inge Klinkers, *Decolonising the Caribbean: Dutch Policies in a Comparative Perspective* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2003); César J. Ayala and Rafael Bernabe, *Puerto Rico in the American Century: A History since 1898* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2009).
[114] Thomas G. Paterson, *Contesting Castro: The United States and the Triumph of the Cuban Revolution* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1994); Marifeli Pérez-Stable, *The Cuban Revolution Origins, Course, and Legacy*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Kate Quinn, 'Cuban Historiography in the 1960s: Revisionists, Revolutionaries and the Nationalist Past', *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 26, no. 3 (2007): 378–98; Lars Schoultz, *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic: The United States and the Cuban Revolution* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2011); Tanya Harmer, 'Two, Three, Many Revolutions? Cuba and the Prospects for Revolutionary Change in Latin America, 1967–1975', *Journal of Latin American Studies* 45, no. 1 (February 2013): 61–89.
[115] Gerald C. Horne, *Cold War in a Hot Zone: The United States Confronts Labor and Independence Struggles in the British West Indies* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2007); Jason C. Parker, *Brother's Keeper: The United States, Race, and Empire in the British Caribbean, 1937-1962* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008).

challenges not only assumptions about the outcomes of decolonisation, but also the temporal boundaries. Haiti, Cuba and the Dominican Republic achieved independence from France and Spain in the nineteenth centuries.[116] Though this research focuses on events in the twentieth century, it is important to acknowledge that decolonisation was not solely a twentieth century phenomenon. As part of a more global understanding of decolonisation, we should also extend its chronological boundaries to encompass earlier decolonisation.

Non-Sovereign Territories in the Context of Global Decolonisation

Though they have largely been left out of global histories of twentieth century decolonisation, this thesis will situate the Caribbean territories within this global context.[117] The twentieth century decolonisation of empires has been the subject of many works in the fields of imperial history and postcolonial theory. Traditionally, there has been little conversation between these two disciplines, either in Anglophone or Francophone scholarship. However, as Dane Kennedy highlights, both could be enriched by further dialogue and engagement.[118] In line with recent endeavours to integrate imperial and postcolonial studies, this thesis draws on strands identified as useful from both spheres of research. It engages with both fields to illustrate a neglected part of the history of decolonisation. In an effort to move past constructing historical narratives 'from the centre out',

[116] See C. L. R. James, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint l'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution* (London: Secker and Warburg, 1938); Carolyn E. Fick, *The Making of Haiti: The Saint Domingue Revolution from Below* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1990); Laurent Dubois, *Les vengeurs du Nouveau Monde: histoire de la révolution haïtienne* (Rennes: Perséides, 2005); Léon-François Hoffman, Frauke Gewecke, and Ulrich Fleischmann, eds., *Haïti 1804. Lumières et ténèbres. Impact et résonances d'une révolution* (Frankfurt: Iberoamericana, 2008); Kate Quinn and Paul Sutton, eds., *Politics and Power in Haiti* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013); Ada Ferrer, *Freedom's Mirror: Cuba and Haiti in the Age of Revolution* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2014); Anne Eller, *We Dream Together: Dominican Independence, Haiti, and the Fight for Caribbean Freedom* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2016); Charles Forsdick and Christian Høgsbjerg, *Toussaint Louverture: A Black Jacobin in the Age of Revolutions* (London: Pluto Press, 2017).
[117] For the trajectory of global decolonisation see Ralph A. Austen, 'Africa and Globalization: Colonialism, Decolonization and the Postcolonial Malaise', *Journal of Global History* 1, no. 3 (November 2006): 403–8; Todd Shepard, 'Algeria, France, Mexico, UNESCO: A Transnational History of Anti-Racism and Decolonization, 1932–1962', *Journal of Global History* 6, no. 2 (July 2011): 273–97; Eva-Maria Muschik, 'Managing the World: The United Nations, Decolonization, and the Strange Triumph of State Sovereignty in the 1950s and 1960s', *Journal of Global History* 13, no. 1 (March 2018): 121–44; Richard Drayton and David Motadel, 'Discussion: The Futures of Global History', *Journal of Global History* 13, no. 1 (March 2018): 1–21.
[118] Dane Kennedy, 'Imperial History and Post-Colonial Theory', in *The Decolonization Reader*, ed. James D. Le Sueur (New York: Routledge, 2003), 20.

this research employs a variety of sources and seeks to look beyond a Western colonial perspective in its analysis.[119]

Firstly, when writing on the subject of decolonisation, it is crucial to consider the problematic nature of the term itself. When defined as the end of European empires, or as the withdrawal of European powers and giving of independence, 'decolonisation' is Eurocentric and denies agency to local actors involved in negotiating independence.[120] The OED defines decolonisation as 'the withdrawal from its former colonies of a colonial power; the acquisition of political or economic independence by such colonies.'[121] However, a clear chronological separation of formal imperial rule and national independence does not acknowledge the more informal, neocolonial influences and systems of control at work after independence.[122] Moreover, as the existence of European overseas territories today attest, global decolonisation did not transform all colonies into independent nation-states. Thus, this thesis approaches decolonisation 'less as a sequence of events and more as a globally connected process', one which is ongoing.[123]

Furthermore, interpreting decolonisation is not a question of choosing to see it as strictly change or continuity.[124] Whilst the success of nationalist, anticolonial movements 'appears less as a linear progression than as a conjuncture', there are also elements of continuity in the history of

[119] Tobias Green, 'Challenge or Opportunity? Postcolonialism and the Historian', in *History, Memory and Public Life: The Past in the Present*, ed. Anna Maerker, Simon Sleight, and Adam Sutcliffe (London: Routledge, 2018), 48–64.
[120] Martin Thomas, Bob Moore, and L. J. Butler, *Crises of Empire: Decolonization and Europe's Imperial States* (London: Bloomsbury Publishing, 2008), 1–3.
[121] Oxford English Dictionary (OED), http://www.oed.com/view/Entry/48333?redirectedFrom=decolonisation#eid, accessed 23/05/2016.
[122] Michael Collins, 'Nation, State and Agency: Evolving Historiographies of African Decolonization', in *Britain, France and the Decolonization of Africa: Future Imperfect?*, ed. Andrew W. M. Smith and Chris Jeppesen (London: UCL Press, 2017), 17.
[123] Martin Thomas and Andrew S. Thompson, 'Rethinking Decolonization: A New Research Agenda for the Twenty-First Century', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Ends of Empire*, ed. Martin Thomas and Andrew S. Thompson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 4.
[124] Frederick Cooper, *Africa since 1940: The Past of the Present* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002), 4.

decolonisation.[125] Additionally, Cooper places great importance on studying the period from the 1940s to the 1970s.[126] He argues that in order to understand decolonisation and the postcolonial world we need to return to this period to see exactly what people said, wrote and did, rather than interpreting it from a contemporary perspective.[127] Returning to the post-war period, as this research does, allows for the variety of possibilities and routes that different actors wished to take at the time. This thesis analyses the processes of decolonisation without seeing them as an inevitable course of events.

In the case of the overseas territories, the range of political possibilities available after the Second World War makes their political status today appear less of an anomaly. Indeed, research on Francophone Africa demonstrates that greater power within the French Republic, and integration or federalism, rather than independence, was a route favoured by many African political leaders.[128] Decolonisation was not the end of a historical process and many independent states remain under different levels of external control and influence.[129] This thesis uses these insights to integrate overseas territories into the wider narrative of global decolonisation. Gary Wilder explores the theme of federalism through the intellectual thought of Aimé Césaire and Léopold Senghor, suggesting that they envisaged freedom from colonial rule through a decentralised federation of former colonies governed democratically by the French Republic.[130] These studies reveal that, in the midst of decolonisation, the current world of nation-states was not a foregone conclusion. Thus, as this thesis demonstrates, the decolonisation of the French Antilles through integration with France is far more closely linked to wider French decolonisation than it may at first appear.

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[125] Frederick Cooper, 'Conflict and Connection: Rethinking Colonial African History', in *The Decolonization Reader*, ed. James D. Le Sueur (New York: Routledge, 2003), 36.
[126] Frederick Cooper, *Citizenship between Empire and Nation: Remaking France and French Africa, 1945-1960* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2014), 3–25.
[127] Ibid., 3-4.
[128] Ibid., 1-25.
[129] Thomas, Moore, and Butler, *Crises of Empire*, 3–5.
[130] Gary Wilder, *Freedom Time: Negritude, Decolonization, and the Future of the World* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2015).

Focusing on British decolonisation, initial accounts grew out of the preceding body of imperial literature written during the days of empire. They continued to focus on the actions and intentions of British politicians, policy-makers and civil servants. Many historians have addressed what Robinson and Gallagher call 'the official mind'.[131] This includes Frank Heinlein's investigation of British government policy during decolonisation, made possible by the new evidence available in the series *British Documents on the End of Empire*.[132] Hemming assesses decolonisation through the role of Macmillan, concluding that Macmillan and the British often battled between the desire to prepare colonies for independence and to advance fast enough to avoid nationalist unrest.[133] Many accounts of decolonisation centre on the notion of stable British institutions, an orderly retreat from empire with little consequence for the metropole, and the continuing importance of Britain globally through the Commonwealth.[134] Unlike these accounts of 'orderly' decolonisation, this research demonstrates the, at times, chaotic nature of decolonisation, with British officials often responding to events on the ground or British representatives in the colonies acting counter to official policy. The fact that the British Overseas Territories maintained their links to Britain in the 1970s, when other small colonies were encouraged to become independent, suggests that Britain did not maintain control of the decolonisation process. The British Government often reacted to events, rather than dictating them.[135]

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[131] Ronald Robinson and John Gallagher, *Africa and the Victorians: The Official Mind of Imperialism* (London: Macmillan, 1961).
[132] Frank Heinlein, *British Government Policy and Decolonisation, 1945-63: Scrutinising the Official Mind* (London: Routledge, 2013); see also *British Documents on the End of Empire,* Series A to C, www.bdeep.org.
[133] Philip E. Hemming, 'Macmillan and the End of the British Empire in Africa', in *Harold Macmillan and Britain's World Role*, ed. Richard Aldous and Sabine Lee (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 98.
[134] David George Boyce, *Decolonisation and the British Empire, 1775-1997* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1999), 2–3; Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire*, 403; A. G. Hopkins, 'Rethinking Decolonization', *Past & Present* 1, no. 200 (2008): 243.
[135] Helen Hintjens and Dorothea Hodge, 'The UK Caribbean Overseas Territories: Governing Unruliness amidst the Extra-Territorial EU', *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 50, no. 2 (2012): 190–225.

By comparison, decolonisation has traditionally received less attention from French historians.[136] A 2005 law which required history teachers to promote the 'positive role' of French colonialism overseas caused much controversy and reignited the debate on the French Empire and decolonisation. This was notable, not only in the media and the political arena, but also in historical scholarship.[137] There appears to be a greater tendency to write comparative histories of decolonisation, compared with the Anglophone historiography.[138] Several French accounts of decolonisation give a sense of it being the logical conclusion to colonialism and ultimately inescapable.[139] Yet in his analysis of the demographic dimensions of decolonisation, Guy Pervillé emphasizes that colonisation does not necessarily lead to decolonisation.[140] When it comes to the French overseas departments, Pervillé resorts to purely economic reasoning, arguing that income transfer from the metropole has meant that the French Antilles live beyond their means, making independence undesirable. This is a greatly simplified argument which fails to take into account the many dimensions of decolonisation in the French Antilles. This thesis explores the different factors which led to the non-independent status of Martinique and Guadeloupe today, demonstrating the complex range of dynamics at play.

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[136] Véronique Dimier, *Le gouvernement des colonies: regards croisés franco-britanniques* (Brussels: Éditions de l'université de Bruxelles, 2004), 11; Emmanuelle Saada, 'France: The Longue Durée of French Decolonization', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Ends of Empire*, ed. Martin Thomas and Andrew Thompson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018), 85–101.

[137] For example, André Nouschi, *Les Armes retournées: colonisation et décolonisation françaises* (Paris: Belin, 2005); Nicolas Bancel, Pascal Blanchard, and Sandrine Lemaire, eds., *La fracture coloniale: la société française au prisme de l'héritage colonial* (Paris: La Découverte, 2005); Romain Bertrand, *Mémoires d'empire: La controverse autour du 'fait colonial'* (Vulaines-sur-Seine: Éditions du Croquant, 2006); Francis Arzalier and Georges Labica, *Une mauvaise décolonisation: la France, de l'empire aux émeutes des quartiers populaires* (Paris: Temps des Cerises, 2007); Alexandre Gerbi, ed., *Décolonisation de l'Afrique ex-française: Enjeux pour l'Afrique et la France d'aujourd'hui* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2010).

[138] Henri Grimal, *La décolonisation 1919-1963* (Paris, 1965); Jean Louis Miège, *Expansion européenne et décolonisation de 1870 à nos jours* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1973); Guy Pervillé, 'Qu'est-Ce Que La Décolonisation? Pour Une Réhabilitation Des Facteurs Démographiques', *Maghreb Review* 19, no. 1–2 (1994): 84–94; Marc Michel and Charles Robert Ageron, eds., *L'ère des décolonisations: sélection de textes du colloque 'Décolonisations comparées'* (Paris: Karthala, 1995); Charles Robert Ageron, Jean Stengers, and Marc Michel, eds., *Décolonisations européennes: Actes du colloque international 'Décolonisations comparées'* (Aix-en-Provence: Publications de l'Université de Provence, 1995); Bernard Droz, *Histoire de la décolonisation: Au XXe siècle* (Paris: Seuil, 2006).

[139] For example, Charles Robert Ageron, *La décolonisation française* (Paris: A. Colin, 1991); Droz, *Histoire de la décolonisation*.

[140] Pervillé, 'Qu'est-Ce Que La Décolonisation? Pour Une Réhabilitation Des Facteurs Démographiques', 84–94.

Algeria forms a significant part of the narrative on French decolonisation, due to the complicated and violent nature of the Algerian War of Independence and the significant impact it had regionally and globally. Like Martinique and Guadeloupe, Algeria was legally classified an integral part of France. The nature and great impact of its decolonisation has been assessed from a variety of perspectives.[141] The Algerian War held great consequences for political developments in the French Antilles. Many Antilleans fought in the war and were left disillusioned with French colonialism. Beginning less than a decade after the French Antilles had become overseas departments of France, the war challenged ideas about *liberté, égalité, fraternité* and France's supposed benevolence overseas. The independence movements which developed in Martinique and Guadeloupe were heavily influenced by the Algerian War and many groups fostered ties with the newly independent Algerian leadership. This context is central to understanding Antillean independence movements and France's repressive response.

In fact, in the Francophone historiography, decolonisation traditionally received greater attention from scholars studying anticolonial nationalism than imperial policies.[142] Pan-Africanist and socialist writers have contributed to this anticolonial narrative, including writers from the Anglophone and Francophone Caribbean.[143] One of the earlier criticisms of colonialism appeared

[141] See Charles André Julien, *Histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine* (Paris: Presses universitaires de France, 1964); Michel Cornation, *Les regroupements de la décolonisation en Algérie* (Paris: Les éditions ouvrières, 1967); André Gauthier, *L'Algérie: décolonisation, socialisme, industrialisation* (Paris: Bréal, 1976); Alistair Horne, *A Savage War of Peace: Algeria, 1954-1962* (London: Penguin Books, 1987); Jean-Jacques Pérennès, *Structures agraires et décolonisation: les oasis de l'oued R'hir (Algérie)* (Algiers: L'Harmattan, 1979); Martin Thomas, *The French North African Crisis: Colonial Breakdown and Anglo-French Relations, 1945–62* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2000); Matthew Connelly, 'Taking Off the Cold War Lens: Visions of North-South Conflict during the Algerian War for Independence', *The American Historical Review* 105, no. 3 (2000): 739–69; Matthew Connelly, 'Rethinking the Cold War and Decolonization: The Grand Strategy of the Algerian War for Independence', *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 33, no. 2 (2001): 221–45; Phillip Chiviges Naylor, 'A Reconsideration of the Fourth Republic's Legacy and Algerian Decolonization', *French Colonial History* 2, no. 1 (2002): 159–180; Mohammed Harbi and Benjamin Stora, *La guerre d'Algérie: 1954-2004, la fin de l'amnésie* (Paris: Laffont, 2004).

[142] Saada, 'France: The Longue Durée of French Decolonization', 86.

[143] James, *The Black Jacobins*; Césaire, *Discours Sur Le Colonialisme*; Fanon, *Peau Noire, Masques Blancs*; George Padmore, *The Gold Coast Revolution: The Struggle of an African People from Slavery to Freedom* (London: Dobson, 1953); George Padmore, *Pan-Africanism or Communism?: The Coming Struggle for Africa*

in the famous *Discours sur le colonialisme* by the Martinican politician and poet Césaire.[144] Fanon, a pupil of Césaire, critiqued colonialism and decolonisation from a psychiatric and psychological perspective in *Les damnés de la terre.*[145] Leslie James has demonstrated the extensive interaction between Caribbean scholars, particularly Padmore, and global Pan-African, Communist and anticolonial movements in the twentieth century.[146] Local elites in the BVI and Cayman engaged in these global movements despite not always articulating their political aims in a nationalist, anticolonial framework. Attempts to decentre decolonisation are less well established in the overseas territories. However, examples can be found in Sainton and Gama's 'nationalist' history of the 1967 massacre in Guadeloupe and in Bodden's works on the history the Cayman Islands.[147]

The end of the empire has been explored from the perspective of various elite groups. This includes Philip Murphy's assessment of the role of the monarchy in British imperial ideology.[148] The monarchy held symbolic importance for the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands, and their relationship with Britain. At key moments in their decolonisation, the Queen was evoked by politicians and local people to add weight to their negotiating positions. Other historians have focused on the economic aspects of decolonisation, including the relationship between economic elites and the end of empire.[149] This thesis acknowledges the economic elites, like the *Békés* in Martinique and the merchant oligarchy in Cayman, who influenced decolonisation but balances

(London: Dobson, 1956); Léopold Sédar Senghor, *Nation et voie africaine du socialisme* (Paris: Presence Africaine, 1961); Kwame Nkrumah, *Consciencism: Philosophy and Ideology for Decolonization and Development with Particular Reference to the African Revolution* (London: Panaf, 1970); Ahmed Sékou Touré, *Afrika and Imperialism* (Newark: Jihad Pub. Co., 1973); C. L. R. James, *Nkrumah and the Ghana Revolution* (Westport, CT: Lawrence Hill & Co., 1977); Elikia M'Bokolo, *L'Afrique au xxe siècle: le continent convoité* (Paris: Éditions du Seuil, 1985); Glissant, *Le discours antillais*.

[144] Césaire, *Discours Sur Le Colonialisme*.

[145] Frantz Fanon, *Les damnés de la terre* (Paris: Éditions Maspero, 1961).

[146] Leslie James, *George Padmore and Decolonization from Below: Pan-Africanism, the Cold War, and the End of Empire* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015).

[147] Jean-Pierre Sainton and Raymond Gama, *Mé 67: mémoire d'un événement*, 2nd ed. (Port Louis, Guadeloupe: Editions Lespwisavann, 2011); Bodden, *The Cayman Islands in Transition: The Politics, History, and Sociology of a Changing Society*; Bodden, *Patronage, Personalities and Parties*.

[148] Philip Murphy, *Monarchy and the End of Empire: The House of Windsor, the British Government, and the Postwar Commonwealth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014), 1–28.

[149] P. J. Cain and A. G Hopkins, *British Imperialism 1688-2000*, 2nd edition (Harlow: Longman, 2002); Catherine Hodeir, *Stratégies d'empire: le grand patronat colonial face à la décolonisation* (Paris: Belin, 2003).

this with other significant, non-economic factors to offer a more complete picture of political developments.

Moving away from economic interpretations, a growing body of literature analyses the cultural history of decolonisation and the impact it had on metropolitan British society.[150] While this research does not look at the impact of decolonisation on domestic British politics, it incorporates a cultural, as well as political, analysis. Other scholars have emphasised the international dimensions of decolonisation.[151] Chapter two of this thesis explores the international political environment and pressures such as the Cold War which influenced the process of decolonisation in the overseas territories. Contributions to the scholarship on decolonisation since the 1980s have attempted to break away from the split between accounts of official decision-making in the metropole and local developments in specific colonies.[152] This research balances the international climate, British and French colonial approaches, regional factors and local political dynamics to offer a full picture of decolonisation in the overseas territories.

Narratives of chaotic decolonisation highlight its violent nature.[153] For example, Lewis, Anderson and Elkins all indicate the violence of British decolonisation in Kenya.[154] In the overseas territories,

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[150] Stuart Ward, ed., *British Culture and the End of Empire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001); Bill Schwarz, *The White Man's World*, Memories of Empire (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011); Lena Tan, *Metropolitan Identities and Twentieth-Century Decolonization* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015); Anna Bocking-Welch, *British Civic Society at the End of Empire: Decolonisation, Globalisation, and International Responsibility* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018); Sarah Stockwell, *The British End of the British Empire* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2018).

[151] Ageron, *La décolonisation française*; Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire*.

[152] John Darwin, *Britain and Decolonisation: The Retreat from Empire in the Post-War World* (London: Macmillan, 1988); Frederick Cooper, *Decolonization and African Society: The Labor Question in French and British Africa* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Nicholas J. White, *Decolonisation: The British Experience Since 1945* (London: Longman, 1999); John Darwin, 'Diplomacy and Decolonization', *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 28, no. 3 (1 September 2000): 5–24; John Darwin, 'The Geopolitics of Decolonisation', in *Endless Empire: Spain's Retreat, Europe's Eclipse, America's Decline*, ed. Alfred McCoy, Josep Maria Fradera, and Stephen Jacobson (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2012).

[153] See Benjamin Grob-Fitzgibbon, *Imperial Endgame: Britain's Dirty Wars and the End of Empire* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011).

[154] Joanna Lewis, 'Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Mau Mau: The British Popular Press and the Demoralisation of Empire', in *Mau Mau and Nationhood: Arms, Authority and Narration*, ed. E. S. Atieno Odhiambo and John Londsdale (Oxford: James Currey, 2003), 227–50; David Anderson, *Histories of the Hanged: Britain's Dirty*

decolonisation was not a well-directed, peaceful affair. Colonial policy trailed behind and reacted to local events.[155] Violence was particularly apparent in the French Antilles as clashes between sugar workers and their employers were frequently subdued through extreme force by colonial troops.[156] Though they do not always appear in official records, using a wide range of sources can unearth instances of violence or chaos, presenting a more complicated view of decolonisation. Researching instances of police violence has been difficult due to restrictions on archival material. As a result, this thesis has used oral history to get a sense of people's experiences and to try to fill in the gaps in the official history.

The French and British empires feature prominently in most comparative texts on twentieth century decolonisation.[157] Comparisons of colonial approaches and legacies often hold up France and Britain as opposing examples.[158] Although this thesis compares French and British colonial approaches, it will not set up the two approaches as opposing forms of governance. Instead, it will highlight similarities and differences in approaches in the territories, including comparing policies in the BVI compared to Cayman and Martinique compared to Guadeloupe. Through years of scholarly debate on these two imperial models, a stereotypical comparison has developed in which the British imperial model is portrayed in a much more favourable light. Typically, the

War in Kenya and the End of Empire (London: Orion, 2005); Caroline Elkins, *Britain's Gulag: The Brutal End of Empire in Kenya* (London: Pimlico, 2005).

[155] Clegg, 'The United Kingdom and Its Caribbean Overseas Territories'.

[156] Kristen Stromberg Childers, 'Citizenship and Assimilation in Postwar Martinique: The Abolition of Slavery and the Politics of Commemoration', *Proceedings of the Western Society for French History* 34 (2006): 282–99; Christian Schnakenbourg, 'Le Moule, 14 février 1952: Autopsie d'un massacre', *Bulletin de la Société d'Histoire de la Guadeloupe*, no. 170 (2015): 55–81.

[157] Georges Fischer and W. H Morris-Jones, eds., *Decolonisation and After: The British and French Experience* (London: Frank Cass, 1980); Ageron, Stengers, and Michel, *Décolonisations européennes*; Michel and Ageron, *L'ère des décolonisations*; Olivier Dard and Daniel Lefeuvre, eds., *L'Europe face à son passé colonial* (Paris: Riveneuve, 2008); Marguerite Guyon de Chemilly, *Asie du Sud-Est: la décolonisation britannique et française : étude comparative* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2010); Andrew W. M. Smith and Chris Jeppesen, *Britain, France and the Decolonization of Africa: Future Imperfect?* (London: UCL Press, 2017).

[158] Michael Crowder, 'Indirect Rule: French and British Style', *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 34, no. 3 (1964): 197–205; Alexander Lee and Kenneth A. Schultz, 'Comparing British and French Colonial Legacies: A Discontinuity Analysis of Cameroon', *Quarterly Journal of Political Science* 7, no. 4 (2012): 365–410; Saliha Belmessous, *Assimilation and Empire: Uniformity in French and British Colonies, 1541-1954* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2013).

assimilationist, centralised French style of colonialism is contrasted with the pragmatic, indirect rule of the British.[159] Véronique Dimier maintains that the two imperial models were in reality far more similar than is usually acknowledged, a view echoed by John Iliffe.[160] As Martin Thomas has argued, a comparative study of decolonisation should not aim to determine which decolonisation was 'better' but simply to analyse differing policies and approaches, and their outcomes.[161] A comparative, transnational approach to British and French decolonisation allows engagement in two bodies of historical research which do not always interact. There are great possibilities within comparative studies that go across linguistic borders and new discoveries to be made in this 'contact zone'.[162]

Decolonisation without Independence

Moving beyond the current literature, this thesis will make a key contribution to the historiography of global decolonisation by demonstrating the connection between the process of decolonisation in these overseas territories to developments elsewhere. Decolonisation was a globalising force which encouraged the growth of global geopolitics and significant movements of migration.[163] In the non-independent territories, regional and global connections were forged through migration, transnational networks of ideas and social protest, and the movement of goods and capital.

Like many other colonies, the Second World War had a significant impact on political debates in the territories. Major changes to political status were made in the aftermath of the war. Furthermore, the global Cold War environment intersected with the process of decolonisation,

[159] Dimier, *Le gouvernement des colonies*, 9–11.
[160] Dimier, 273–80; John Iliffe, *Africans: The History of a Continent*, 2nd ed. (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007), 202.
[161] Martin Thomas, *Fight or Flight: Britain, France, and Their Roads from Empire* (Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press, 2014), 7.
[162] Charles Forsdick, 'Beyond Francophone Postcolonial Studies: Exploring the Ends of Comparison', *Modern Languages Open*, 8 May 2015, 8.
[163] Thomas and Thompson, 'Rethinking Decolonization: A New Research Agenda for the Twenty-First Century', 4–5.

shaping political outcomes. Though these territories have been left out of the narrative of global decolonisation, the role of the mobile middle classes can help to reveal the ways in which these territories are intimately connected to decolonisation in other post-colonial states. Travelling to metropolitan centres in London, New York and Paris, often as students, islanders from these territories participated in the interwar and postwar networks of anticolonial activism. They were greatly influenced by international debates about anticolonialism and decolonisation. However, their debates about their islands' political status took place within the particular context of island society. They applied these anticolonial ideas to their situation and envisaged a future which remained, for the moment, tied to the colonial power.

The colonial state had an impact on the process of decolonisation in these territories. As they did in other colonies, Britain and France influenced decolonisation through repression, assimilation and a variety of policies. Decolonisation in these territories highlights the chaotic nature of colonial governance. As well as the colonial state, local elite groups wielded a considerable amount of power in local political debates. Economic, political and intellectual elites used their positions in society to shape public debates to their advantage. Whereas in some colonies political parties were used to generate political support for independence, in the territories under consideration, the establishment of a European model of political parties obstructed attempts to achieve change.

Nonetheless, independence movements and activists did exist, and protests fuelled by issues of self-determination did take place in the postwar decades. Positioning local politicians, activists and intellectuals as both interconnected to wider anticolonial debates and yet acting in a somewhat separate island society, helps us to understand how these islands negotiated a decolonisation without independence. Including the non-sovereign states in our narrative of twentieth century decolonisation encourages us to approach decolonisation from the perspective of not seeing

independence as an inevitable outcome.[164] Ultimately, a better understanding of the processes of decolonisation in the non-independent territories allows for a more complex and more accurate picture of how decolonisation developed around the world. It is a broader definition which acknowledges the differing spheres of influence and control that colonial powers continue to maintain in the so-called postcolonial world.

Methodology

Part of the originality of this thesis lies in its methodology. It employs comparative analysis to draw conclusions about decolonisation across linguistic, national and colonial divides. Furthermore, this research embraces a wide range of sources, including extensive oral history where official sources are scarce. Despite the great diversity of the Caribbean region and the scope for comparative research, too often scholars stick to old colonial borders. Yet a comparative analysis of different island groups is hugely rewarding in highlighting parallels and points of connection between events and peoples across the region. It also identifies anomalies and moments that appear to run against the regional trends. Comparing decolonisation in the overseas territories identifies more clearly the factors that had the greatest impact on the way decolonisation developed. Within this analysis is a multidisciplinary approach which combines, not only historical research methods, but also draws on the fields of anthropology, sociology, geography and political science.

This thesis uses three kinds of sources to offer a diverse and detailed picture of decolonisation developments and the political debates which surrounded negotiations: archival sources; newspaper reports; and oral history. The arguments of this thesis are based on extensive archival

[164] Frederick Cooper, *Colonialism in Question: Theory, Knowledge, History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005).

research in English and French. This was undertaken in archives in London, Paris, Aix-en-Provence, Martinique, Guadeloupe, the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands.

At the National Archives at Kew (TNA), 143 files were consulted relating to the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands. The majority of these were Colonial Office (CO) or Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO) files containing correspondence between the governments in the territories and London. They also contained accounts of local assembly meetings, intelligence reports and internal Foreign Office correspondence in London, relating to issues in the territories. Where relevant, files from the Prime Minister's Office (PREM), the Ministry of Overseas Development, later the Overseas Development Administration (OD), and the Treasury (T) were consulted. Furthermore, Cabinet Office (CAB) files detailing the memoranda of the Joint Intelligence Committee between the years 1946 to 1980 were checked. This was used to establish how relevant or important issues in the Caribbean region were perceived to be by the Intelligence Committee.

To add greater depth to the local dimensions and perspectives on decolonisation, the Cayman Islands National Archive (CINA) was consulted. The archives contain Annual Reports for the territory and the Legislative Assembly minutes, most of which are also available in Kew, London. In addition to this, the archives contain a useful collection of Vestry Papers which include speeches made in the local assembly, petitions sent to the Cayman government and local government correspondence with other local bodies as well as governments in the Caribbean. The Legislative Assembly storeroom is also a source of speeches made in local assembly meetings and local events, as well as local committee meetings, circulars and correspondence.

The National Archives and Records Management Unit (VINA) in the Virgin Islands, Tortola has a more limited collection. As well as duplicates of Legislative Assembly minutes and government

correspondence held at Kew, VINA has a small but useful collection of memoirs and writings by local politicians, civil servants and influential figures. The special edition collection of writings on the anniversary of the restoration of the Legislative Assembly was particularly valuable for local perspectives on political developments in the twentieth century.[165]

The French Archives for the Overseas Territories (ANOM) in Aix-en-Provence provided sources for the process of departmentalisation in the 1940s. The Political Affairs collection (AFFPOL) from the Ministry of the Colonies contains extensive documents on the 'Assimilation of the Old Colonies', including correspondence between Paris and the colonies, reports, newspaper articles and speeches. The private collection of Émile Devouton (APOM), who led an inspection of the administration in the French Antilles during the Second World War, provided useful background information and context on the social and economic issues facing the Antilles at this time.

For post-1946 documents, after Martinique and Guadeloupe had become overseas departments, the French National Archives (AN) at Pierrefitte contains a collection of files from the Management of the Overseas Departments and the Ministry of Overseas France. The documents, ranging from 1946 to 1979, include correspondence between Paris and Martinique and Guadeloupe, intelligence service reports, election details and prefectural reports. The French National Assembly archives online are an invaluable resource for parliamentary debates from the fourth and fifth republics.

At the departmental archives in Martinique (ADM), the contemporary series W contains sources from the local administration, including prefectural correspondence. Communications between the prefect and the police were particularly helpful in revealing the extent of censorship and

[165] *Empowerment Through Representation* (2000), VINA.

repression. The private papers collection provided an insight into the lives of certain Martinican public figures. The most relevant for this study were the files by communist activist Louis Adrassé, including correspondence with imprisoned activists in the 1960s, solidarity campaigns with other Caribbean figures, and the workings and communications of the Martinican Communist Party. Unfortunately, part of the departmental archives in Guadeloupe (ADG) were unavailable at the time of request due to flood damage. Nonetheless, series W did contain some valuable sources from the intelligence services (*Renseignements Généraux*).

Newspaper accounts are used in this thesis to enrich the archival sources. Joanna Lewis argues that we need to acknowledge the importance of the media's role in public opinion during decolonisation.[166] This can be difficult, given that the press' dealings with government often took place 'off the record'.[167] Local Caribbean newspapers offer a useful insight into issues that were most prominent in public and political debates at the time. They reveal the kinds of rhetoric and language used to discuss local identity and issues of political status. Furthermore, the official newspapers of political parties offer an important account of party policies and propaganda. Nonetheless, caution must be exercised when using newspaper accounts. They contain both deliberate and unconscious biases, and events may be misreported. As long as this potential for error and bias is taken into account, newspapers are an excellent source of events and opinions that may not appear in official archives. When compared over several decades, they can highlight trends and changes in public opinion and debate.

Neither the Cayman Islands nor the British Virgin Islands had local newspapers until the 1950s. This lack of local press had a significant impact on the communication and development of

[166] Lewis, 'Daddy Wouldn't Buy Me a Mau Mau'.
[167] Joanna Lewis and Philip Murphy, '"The Old Pal's Protection Society": The Colonial Office and the Media on the Eve of Decolonisation', in *Media and The British Empire*, ed. Chandrika Kaul (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006), 55.

nationalism and decolonisation in the islands. *The Virgin Islands Daily News,* based in St Thomas, USVI often reported events from the BVI, especially in the days before the BVI had its own newspaper. *The Daily News* is available on the Google newspaper archive online. The archives in the British Virgin Islands has a collection of *Tortola Times* and *The Island Sun.* The Cayman Islands National Archives contains copies of *Cayman Times, The Caymanian Weekly, Tradewinds, The Northwester*, and *The Newstar.* Certain editions of these newspapers can also be found at the British Library, London. Both the departmental archives in Guadeloupe and Martinique have extensive newspaper collections. Newspapers and journals proliferated in the postwar years, with every political party and group having their own journal. In total, sixty-one different newspapers were consulted to build up a picture of political debates across the political spectrum in the French Antilles. The journal of the Guadeloupean independence movement GONG was banned in the 1960s. Ken Kelly, the former editor, kindly allowed me to look through his private collection of GONG journals.

Finally, written memoirs and interviews are used to provide personal accounts of political developments and to give greater context where archival sources are incomplete. Oral history can offer an important perspective on political events and public sentiment, helping to highlight silences in the official record. Nonetheless, personal accounts have been compared with archival sources to help to filter biases and inaccuracies from both the interviewer and the interviewee. The archives in the Virgin Islands, as well as the HLSCC library Virgin Islands studies collection, hold memoirs of BVI politicians and political figures.[168] I was also able to obtain a copy of the unpublished memoirs of political activist Noel Lloyd from Dr Angel Smith at HLSCC. The University College of the Cayman Islands has a collection of political memoirs. Memoirs of French Antillean political figures are available in libraries in Martinique and Guadeloupe, as well as in the

[168] HLSCC is the Hamilton Lavity Stoutt Community College in Tortola, BVI.

French National Library in Paris. The memoirs of Pierre Bolotte, the prefect of Guadeloupe during the turbulent events of 1967, are held in the Sciences-Po archives in Paris.

The Cayman Islands National Archive has an indispensable oral history collection, including interviews with all major politicians and government officials from the postwar period. The archives in the Virgin Islands holds interview footage of activists involved in the 1968 Positive Action Movement. In Martinique and Guadeloupe, I conducted interviews with independence activists and people affected by the 1967 massacre in Pointe-à-Pitre. The extensive range of oral history sources has allowed this thesis to bring to light previously unheard life stories and life histories. This is particularly apparent in chapter six, which documents the experiences of activists and protestors formerly overlooked by historians. The combination of archival, newspaper and oral history sources creates a richer, more detailed picture that goes beyond official government records. I spent fifteen months in the Caribbean region to fully immerse myself in the archives and to connect with local political debates and social movements. This allowed for multiple perspectives on current and historical issues, helping to fill in gaps in the official historical record.

Outline

The thesis is split into six chapters and is organised thematically, with the British and French territories being compared side by side throughout. Firstly, chapter one looks at the key factors behind postwar changes in political status, the motivations of local politicians involved in these negotiations, and the impact of these changes on future steps to decolonise. In 1946, Martinique and Guadeloupe gained overseas department status, to integrate them fully into the French Republic. Meanwhile, the West Indies Federation negotiations gave the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands the opportunity to reconsider their position within the British Empire. Both chose to become crown colonies with a more direct link to Britain. This chapter will argue that these changes to political status were crucial to later attempts to negotiate greater autonomy. It

was particularly significant for the French Antilles as it would halt debates about independence for the following ten to fifteen years. In the British territories, it stabilised British rule and shifted the focus towards economic development.

Chapter two explores the impact of the global Cold War on decolonisation in these Caribbean territories. Three factors relating to the Cold War are explored: Americanisation in the Caribbean region; the significance of the Cuban Revolution; and anticolonial and Third World solidarity movements. As a newer colonial power in the Caribbean, the US played an important role as a cultural and ideological counterpoint to the metropolitan governments of Britain and France. In the French Antilles, the popularity of the Communist Party caused great concern for the French State which took extensive measures to monitor and suppress it. The Cuban Revolution was a key moment for the region, inspiring activists across the Caribbean, including in the four territories in question. Fear of the spread of communism affected local politics and was used to discredit pro-autonomy politicians and activists. Chapter two will demonstrate that the Cold War in the Caribbean was, at times, a backdrop to political developments and, at other times, a crucial part of the political situation.

The third chapter addresses British and French involvement in the decolonisation of the case study territories. It assesses the differing approaches of colonial representatives towards the political status of the territories. This includes measures taken to repress anticolonial protests and activists, the Gallicisation of Guadeloupe and Martinique after departmentalisation, and the impact of years of chronic underfunding. This chapter places these territories within the wider context of decolonisation of the British and French empires. It will argue that colonial pressures prevented a fair and open debate on the question of independence in these territories.

Chapter four assesses the nature and position of local elites in the four territories. In the Cayman Islands, economic and political power was concentrated in the hands of a small, mostly white elite group. In the French Antilles, though the descendants of white plantation owning families controlled the economic sphere, local politics were dominated by a black political elite who had emerged after abolition. Local intellectuals, like Aimé Césaire in Martinique, were key negotiators of decolonisation. Some have described the British Virgin Islands as a 'classless' society. Certainly, the redistribution of land and the departure of the white plantation owners in the decades after abolition had led to a relatively equal population of smallholders. However, it is important to note that the first political group to champion Virgin Islander rights was established in the 1930s by a group of merchants and a lawyer, who had all become more economically successful and politically active through opportunities in the US and during the Prohibition era. Local elites, seeking to improve the islands, acting in self-interest or collaborating with colonial representatives, were key actors in the negotiation of the islands' political status and thus are crucial to our understanding of decolonisation.

The fifth chapter analyses and compares the development of political parties in the territories. Many of the local political parties in the French Antilles, like the Communist and Socialist parties, were associated with their metropolitan counterparts. As a result, their position towards French colonialism and local autonomy was compromised. This made for a striking blend of political discourse that was vehemently anticolonial yet also pro-French and anti-independence. Attempts to establish political parties in the Cayman Islands caused heated debate and much opposition from the Caymanian oligarchy, and ultimately failed. This was intimately tied up with the failure of the most significant pro-autonomy politician. In the British Virgin Islands, personal battles between political parties and politicians often pushed issues of autonomy to the background. Chapter five will contend that the development of political parties in each of the territories was closely tied to the ways nationalism and decolonisation evolved.

Finally, the last chapter offers a comparison of protest movements in the territories: some appeared to be less politically motivated and more concerned with land rights and economic grievances; other movements, such as the march in 1949 in the BVI, openly called for greater political rights and autonomy. Furthermore, none of the campaigns by local pro-autonomy activists managed to achieve widespread public support or electoral success. This final chapter will explore local independence groups, their political discourse, and their interactions with the local population, existing political structures, and regional anticolonial movements. It is inaccurate to suggest that the non-sovereign status of these territories was a result of a lack of popular protest or a total absence of nationalism. Rather, through the relationship between popular protest movements, local politics, clandestine independence activists and the colonial response to protest, no widespread call for independence emerged.

Chapter One

Political Futures after the Second World War

The Second World War is frequently cited as a catalyst for political change in colonies around the globe, and a determining factor in the nature and timing of decolonisation. While later chapters will deal more broadly with the period from 1945 to 1980, this chapter will focus on the initial postwar political changes in Martinique, Guadeloupe, BVI and Cayman. It will show that the overseas Caribbean territories participated in the regional and global debate about decolonisation in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War, but negotiated new political statuses linking them *more closely* to the metropolitan powers.

World War II is, for many scholars, a crucial moment in twentieth century decolonisation, causing changes in colonial dynamics which accelerated decolonisation. The 'cataclysmic events' of the war are seen as ushering in 'the beginning of the end of empire'.[169] Darwin, for example, places emphasis on the importance of the Second World War in the timing of decolonisation, especially in South Asia.[170] He argues that the war 'produced a dangerous conjuncture of international, domestic and colonial pressures' which combined to undermine British colonialism.[171] In the French Caribbean, Childers argues that the Second World War was a turning point, as Vichy rule forced Antilleans to reconsider their future relationship with France.[172] For the British overseas territories, experiences during the war prompted islanders to reevaluate their position in the region and within the British Empire.

[169] Bishop, *The Political Economy of Caribbean Development*, 26.
[170] John Darwin, *End of the British Empire: The Historical Debate* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), 117–20.
[171] Ibid.
[172] Kristen Stromberg Childers, 'The Second World War as a Watershed in the French Caribbean', *Atlantic Studies* 9, no. 4 (2012): 409–10.

However, historians of the British Caribbean and the West Indies Federation commonly root postwar Federation developments in the labour unrest of the 1930s and the subsequent Moyne Commission.[173] According to this interpretation, the Second World War is less significant than the interwar period for Caribbean decolonisation. It is important to note that, while activists began agitating for greater representation in the BVI in the 1930s, both Cayman and the BVI did not experience the labour unrest which swept across much of the British Caribbean. Studies on anticolonial nationalism in capitals like London, Paris and New York in the interwar years also suggest that this era was crucial to decolonisation after World War II.[174] Furthermore, attempts to reinvigorate empire by imperial policymakers in the aftermath of the Second World War complicate the notion of decolonisation accelerating after the war. [175]

Certainly, while it would be wrong to overlook the changes that were already taking place in the 1930s, experiences during the Second World War were influential in shaping postwar decolonisation. It is evidently more complicated than World War II simply acting as an accelerating force in a continuous decolonisation process or as a disruptive turning point. For both the French Antilles and the British Virgin Islands, debates about citizenship and autonomy began earlier in the twentieth century. However, experiences during the Second World War were crucial. Caribbean experiences of the war had a considerable impact on local constructions of identity and the way it manifested in political debates. As this chapter will demonstrate, the reconstruction that took place in France in the aftermath of the Occupation was essential for facilitating departmentalisation. The regional negotiations on the West Indies Federation which began in 1947

[173] Johnson, 'The British Caribbean from Demobilisation to Constitutional Decolonisation'; Killingray, 'The West Indian Federation and Decolonization in the British Caribbean'.
[174] Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis*, 1–20; Matera, *Black London*.
[175] William Roger Louis, *Imperialism at Bay, 1941-1945: The United States and the Decolonization of the British Empire* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1977); William Roger Louis, *The British Empire in the Middle East, 1945-1951: Arab Nationalism, the United States, and Postwar Imperialism* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1984); Martin Lynn, ed., *The British Empire in the 1950s: Retreat or Revival?* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2005); Hopkins, 'Rethinking Decolonization'.

prompted the BVI and Cayman to engage in debates about self-determination and governance that were not possible at a local level. Thus, the Second World War was critical for departmentalisation and the crown colony status that were adopted in the postwar years.

This chapter will argue that these initial postwar changes were fundamental to the later development of decolonisation in these territories. Firstly, it will explore Caribbean experiences during World War II, particularly how this altered local expressions of identity. It will then assess the adoption of both departmentalisation in the French Antilles and crown colony status in the British territories. Crucially, the chapter will analyse the relationship between politics and identity during political developments, examining how a sense of identity influenced or was used to justify the decisions taken. Finally, it will consider the impact of departmentalisation and crown colony status on later decolonisation negotiations.

In an era of decolonisation, when many colonies were moving towards independence, the fact that these four territories strengthened their ties to the metropolitan power may seem anachronistic. However, it is important to acknowledge the diverse range of debates and political futures envisaged in the 1940s and 1950s. Cooper demonstrates that during the earlier stages of decolonisation, some African politicians favoured federalism within the French Union rather than independence and state sovereignty.[176] Similarly, Wilder suggests that intellectuals and political leaders like Césaire and Senghor explored the idea of a federation of former colonies governed by France as a possible form of decolonisation.[177] Furthermore, throughout the West Indies Federation negotiations and in the aftermath of the Federation's dissolution, many small states in the Eastern Caribbean remained wary of full independence and wished to maintain ties to Britain.[178] These studies reveal that, in the midst of decolonisation, the current world of nation-

[176] Cooper, *Citizenship between Empire and Nation*.
[177] Wilder, *Freedom Time*.
[178] Killingray, 'The West Indian Federation and Decolonization in the British Caribbean', 85–86.

states was not a foregone conclusion. The postwar political developments in the case study territories are far more closely linked to wider decolonisation in this respect than it may at first appear. These postwar changes are important because any future political debates came from a position of greater closeness to France or Britain. They shifted the political landscape in the territories and, to a certain degree, halted the question of independence. Therefore, the postwar political developments were instrumental in subsequent attempts to negotiate greater autonomy.

1. Caribbean Experiences of World War II

Experiences during the Second World War are essential to understanding the postwar political decisions of these territories, particularly in how the war changed their relationship with the colonial powers and the US. Many Caribbean colonies experienced economic adversity and isolation during World War II.[179] However, the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands were somewhat protected from shortages of food and resources. A US Coast Guard was stationed at the American naval base on Grand Cayman from 1942 onwards.[180] This brought increased amounts of US dollars into circulation on the islands. Additionally, many Caymanian men found employment in the Allied Naval Forces or skilled work in the Canal Zone due to their reputation as some of the best mariners in the world.[181] This allowed them to send money home, increasing spending power on the islands. In terms of relations with the US, Craton argues that US forces in George Town were closer to the local population than almost any other American forces in the Caribbean.[182] The Commissioner and the George Town elite warmly welcomed the American naval troops. They were invited to weekly dances and 'moving pictures' in the town hall of George

[179] See Claus Füllberg-Stolberg, 'The Caribbean in the Second World War', in *General History of the Caribbean: The Caribbean in the Twentieth Century*, ed. P. C. Emmer, Bridget Brereton, and B. W. Higman (London: Macmillan, 2004), 82–140; Ashley Jackson, *The British Empire and the Second World War* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2006).
[180] Colonial Office Annual Report on the Cayman Islands, 1946, CO 1071/93, 7, TNA.
[181] Ibid., 3.
[182] Craton, *Founded Upon the Seas*, 294.

Town.[183] This led to much interaction between locals and Americans, and a new exposure to American culture. Although some instances of conflict arose, generally relations were amicable and this even led to a couple of marriages, such as that of Lilian Bodden, from one of the founding families in Cayman, and an American, Chief Warrant Officer Jack Howard, in 1942.[184]

The war did not drastically alter Caymanian perceptions of Britain. Notions of serving 'your King and… your country' motivated many Caymanians to volunteer at the outbreak of war.[185] Part of the imagined bond with Britain was forged by a similar sense of being a maritime people.[186] The British encouraged enlistment by giving it religious significance: they issued calls to arms at the main church in George Town and presented the war as a holy struggle.[187] In his church speech to new recruits in 1941, the Captain of HMS Corsair praised the men for offering 'their services to their King for the safety, honour and welfare of the Empire'.[188] These church speeches evidently influenced volunteers like Conray Forbes who explained that he chose to serve because of what 'Commissioner Cardinall said in his speech at the Presbyterian Church… I wanted to play my part too'.[189] Two thirds of the adult male population of the islands participated in the Allied Forces, either in the British Merchant Navy or in the Trinidad Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve (TRNVR).[190] Disillusionment with their treatment during the war led some Caymanians to feel either that the imperial 'mother country' had exploited them, or that 'Britain needed us more than we needed

[183] US Coast Guard Logbook, 11 September 1943, Collection 16, The George Roy Collection, MSC/1, CINA.
[184] Collection 16, The George Roy Collection, MSC/1, CINA cited in Craton, *Founded Upon the Seas*, 297.
[185] A.C. Panton, Acting Commissioner, 'Proclamation 111', Government Notice, No. 94/40, Commissioner's Office, 20 June 1940, XH/117/2, CINA.
[186] T. Ewart Ebanks, in interview conducted by Heather McLoughlin, 19 February 2003, 20, CINA.
[187] Conray Forbes, 'An Experience of War', *Newstar* (Cayman), 52 (1995), 15, CINA.
[188] Address by the Captain of HMS Corsair in George Town Presbyterian Church, 29 July 1941, MSD 343, CINA reproduced in Craton, 291.
[189] Conray Forbes, 'An Experience of War', 15.
[190] David Owen Spence, ''They Had the Sea in Their Blood': Caymanian Naval Volunteers in the Second World War', in *Transnational Soldiers: Foreign Military Enlistment in the Modern Era*, ed. Nir Arielli and Bruce Collins (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013), 106.

them'.[191] Yet overall Britain managed to maintain loyalty and patriotism among Caymanian troops by fostering a sense of cultural pride in their superior maritime skills.[192]

Like the Cayman Islands, the negative effects of economic underdevelopment in the British Virgin Islands were eased during the war by the establishment of a US naval base in the neighbouring island of St Thomas.[193] A large labour force, predominantly made up of BVIslanders, carried out the construction of the base.[194] Additionally, the military base increased the demand for livestock. These factors transformed the BVI economy and islanders all but abandoned agricultural production in favour of livestock rearing and construction work.[195] Once they had completed the construction of the base, BVIslanders continued to travel to St Thomas for work and to trade goods. Many BVIslanders signed up for twenty-nine day work contracts, since this was the longest that the US allowed them to work in the USVI without a visa.[196] This led to US Virgin Islanders using the pejorative term '29 dayers' to refer to the BVI workers.[197] Traditionally, BVIslanders traded agricultural produce with St Thomas, but their relationship changed when the USVI became a provider of employment. This changing relationship brought BVIslanders into closer contact with the US, economically and culturally.

The French Antilles, on the other hand, suffered isolation, economic difficulties and political repression during the war. In 1940, after the French armistice with Nazi Germany, the colonial government in Martinique and Guadeloupe became officially pro-Vichy. This lasted until 1943 when revolts and unrest in Guadeloupe escalated into an armed resistance in Martinique to

[191] Norman McLaughlin, *The Forgotten Men of the Navy: The Dedicated Men of the Cayman Islands Who Served in the British Navy during World War 2* (Miami: McLaughlin, 2002), 16.
[192] Carley Ebanks, in interview conducted by Liz Schoefield, 31 May 1996, 18, CINA.
[193] Joseph Reynold O'Neal, *Life Notes: Reflections of a British Virgin Islander* (Bloomington, Indiana: Xlibris, 2004), 75–76.
[194] Ivan Dawson, *A Brief Outline of a Humble Life* (Tortola: Dawson, 1993), 17.
[195] Noel Lloyd, 'Positive Action in the British Virgin Islands 1968', Government of the Virgin Islands, 2000, 9-10.
[196] Sybil Lettsome, *The Untold Story: A Biography of Terrance B. Lettsome* (Tortola: HDVP Books, 2000), 9.
[197] Cohen, *Take Me to My Paradise*, 27.

overthrow the pro-Vichy leader Admiral Robert.[198] During the authoritarian regime of Admiral Robert, Antilleans endured food shortages and increased levels of poverty, as well as severe political repression.[199] This included the abolishing of universal suffrage for men, and restricting married women and mothers from working.[200]

Some French Antilleans feared the situation was akin to a return to slavery and over 5000 escaped to nearby Dominica and St Lucia to avoid persecution or to join Free French and British forces.[201] Known as the *Dissidence,* Antillean intellectuals have likened these acts of rebellion to *marronage* during the era of slavery.[202] Charles De Gaulle acknowledged the contribution of Antilleans in a 1943 radio speech, in which he proclaimed: 'The National Liberation Committee is pleased to welcome the patriotic people of Martinique and Guadeloupe into a French empire unified for the Resistance and for the Liberation of the metropole. I know how long you have yearned to join us'.[203] Since the radio was their primary contact with de Gaulle, or 'Général Micro', French Antilleans were pleased to hear their efforts acknowledged.[204] 'Général Micro' was a nickname used by Germany and the Vichy regime to mock de Gaulle, yet Antilleans appear to have used it as a term of respect and endearment.[205] Despite de Gaulle's rhetoric, after the war France did not fully acknowledge the importance of the *Dissidence* in the Antilles when compared to the *Resistance* in the Hexagon.[206] Yet it has gained significance retrospectively among writers and intellectuals as a time of self-sufficiency and self-liberation.[207]

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[198] Jean Cazenave de la Roche, 'Tension in the French West Indies', *Foreign Affairs*, 1943, 564.
[199] Letter from a resident in Fort-de France to a friend in France, March 1941, 1 AFFPOL 767/2, ANOM.
[200] Inspector Devouton to Secretary of State for Colonies, 11 April 1941, 1 AFFPOL 767/2, ANOM.
[201] 'Délibérations du Conseil général', Session extraordinaire, 1 July 1940, Basse-Terre, 5-10, ADG.
[202] Glissant, *Le discours antillais*, 310.
[203] *Journal official de la Guadeloupe*, 24 July 1943, 379, ADG.
[204] From interviews in *Parcours de Dissidents,* documentary film by Euzhan Palcy, 2006.
[205] Ibid.
[206] The concept of France as *L'Hexagone* due to its geographical shape was first suggested during the Franco-Prussian War in 1870, but the term only became popular as a metonym for France in the 1950s.
[207] E.g. Raphaël Confiant, *Le nègre et l'amiral* (Paris: Editions Grasset, 1988).

The *Dissidence* also gained significance through the emergence of several influential political leaders. Paul Valentino, a key Guadeloupean figure in the resistance movement would become one of the most vocal critics of departmentalisation.[208] Frantz Fanon was one of many who fled to Dominica and later fought among Free French forces in North Africa. This time was crucial to his developing ideas on racism and colonialism, and it influenced his later writings on Martinican identity.[209] Furthermore, the authoritarian regime made the matter of political rights and racial equality even more pressing for Antilleans. Experiences during the war shaped Antillean notions of France, as Admiral Robert, supported by the majority of the *Békés*, came to represent the old France of slavery and authoritarianism, whereas de Gaulle and the Free French symbolised the republican France of *liberté, égalité, fraternité*.[210] For example, during a football match in Guadeloupe in 1943, supporters began shouting 'Vive le Goal! Vive la France!' in a barely disguised cheer for de Gaulle.[211] It was this idealised notion of France that French Antilleans would choose to join in 1946. Although demands for annexation by the US arose during the war, race issues in America encouraged Antilleans to look towards France as an opportunity to overcome the power of the white plantocracy.[212]

Women played a pivotal role in the *Dissidence* in the Antilles. Jennings suggests that it is impossible to determine exactly the dynamics of gender roles in the resistance to Admiral Robert's regime.[213] Women were among those who escaped to Dominica and St Lucia, and they participated in daily opposition and clandestine activities within French Antillean society. Female teachers were prominent in the resistance movement, after the new government had sacked them en masse.[214] Although acts of resistance by women are less discussed or well documented, one noted example

[208] *Fraternité*, Vol 1, No 5, 9 December 1944, 1.
[209] Frantz Fanon, *Pour la révolution africaine: écrits politiques* (Paris: Maspero, 1964), 20–25.
[210] Childers, 'Citizenship and Assimilation in Postwar Martinique', 283–84.
[211] Jean Massip, 'La Résistance aux Antilles', *La Revue de Paris,* May 1945, 2.
[212] Aimé Césaire, *JORF*, 15 March 1950, 2075-78.
[213] Jennings, 'La dissidence aux Antilles (1940-1943)', 63.
[214] 2M 1 616, ADM; SC 19, Dossier 2, ADG, cited in Jennings, 63.

is that of Esmérelda Cotellon who was arrested for publicly broadcasting *L'Internationale* anthem on her phonograph.[215] After the war, women gained the vote.[216] While Martinicans did not elect any female MPs in the 1940s, Guadeloupe elected Eugénie Éboué-Tell and Gerty Archimède.[217] Women's actions during the pro-Vichy regime influenced political changes and debates after the war.

In all four colonies, experiences during the Second World War forced local citizens to reconsider their position, status and identity relative to other Caribbean countries, to the colonial power, and to the increasing influence of the US. These experiences directly influenced local opinion in the postwar political debates. In the Cayman Islands, the cementing of the idea of Caymanians as different to other West Indians because of their maritime skills and lighter skin would influence later negotiations within the West Indies Federation. For the BVI, the war brought them even closer to the US Virgin Islands, a fact that would encourage them to refuse to join the Federation. Experiences of the Vichy regime in the French Antilles, strengthened the belief among the Antillean political elite that the French Republic offered a potential solution to poverty and inequality.

2. Departmentalisation in the French Antilles

The immediate political impact of the Second World War in the French Antilles manifested in the move to departmentalise and integrate into the French Republic in 1946. Much has been written on the motivations of local representatives who supported departmentalisation: to improve the social and economic situation in the Antilles; to gain greater equality for the black majority; to take

[215] Sempaire, *La dissidence an tan Sorin, 1940-1943*, 84–85.
[216] Ordonnance du 21 avril 1944 relative à l'organisation des pouvoirs publics en France après la Libération, Article 17, *JORF*, 22 avril 1944, 325-27.
[217] Assemblé Nationale, Base de données des députés français depuis 1789, http://www2.assemblee-nationale.fr/sycomore/fiche/%28num_dept%29/186, and, http://www2.assemblee-nationale.fr/sycomore/fiche/(num_dept)/2809, accessed 07/05/2016.

a step closer to France after years of assimilation.[218] Childers argues that we should interpret departmentalisation as a pragmatic move, rather than as a capitulation to French imperialism and assimilation, or an irrational seeking of further dependence.[219] While it is true that it was viewed as an opportunity to solve the economic and social issues in Martinique and Guadeloupe, seeing the move as purely pragmatic ignores the impact of decades of assimilationist policies. For the black political elite of the Antilles, this decision was also a means to circumvent the power of the white oligarchy.

Advocates of departmentalisation articulated and presented the law through the framework of French identity. Having benefitted from the French education system, this black middle class expressed an affinity to France and French society. However, it is important to remember that access to French literature and culture was not widespread across all sectors of Antillean society in the 1940s. While it may not have been the principal driving motivation for politicians like Césaire, the apparent Frenchness of the *vieilles colonies* determined their success with the French National Assembly.[220] This move must be appreciated within the context of the postwar era when many French colonies were seeking greater democracy through a closer relationship with France.[221] Ultimately, the perceived French identity of the Antilles, and the other *vieilles colonies* allowed them to push through departmentalisation. Other colonies in Africa and Indochina were unsuccessful in their attempts and later turned to independence as a means to better political representation.

[218] See Sablé, *La Transformation Des Isles d'Amerique En Departements Français Victor Sable*; Guérin, *Les Antilles Décolonisées*; Constant and Daniel, *Cinquante ans de départementalisation Outre-mer 1946-1996*; Childers, *Seeking Imperialism's Embrace*.
[219] Childers, *Seeking Imperialism's Embrace*, 59.
[220] Along with French Guiana and Réunion, Martinique and Guadeloupe were referred to as the *vieilles colonies* or 'Old Colonies' because France had colonised them during the monarchical imperial age in the 17th century, as opposed to the republican era of the 19th century.
[221] Cooper, *Citizenship between Empire and Nation*, 279–80.

Between October 1945 and June 1946, France had a short-lived postwar government in which a majority of the parliamentary representatives were communist or socialist.[222] Members of parliament from the French Antilles, and the other two 'Old Colonies', used this brief window of opportunity to push through the Departmentalisation Law. The issue of the Frenchness of these colonies was fundamental to the debate over full integration into the French Republic. Analysing the language used during the National Assembly debates reveals the centrality of French identity to this issue, and illuminates the way it was used to achieve departmentalisation. Significantly, three key themes emphasising French identity appeared in the discourses of politicians during the debates: shared history; shared sacrifice; and shared culture.

Firstly, notions of a shared history with France were an important element of the debates. Aimé Césaire, a representative for Martinique, highlighted that Guadeloupe and Martinique had been French for three centuries. He compared them to other French colonies, suggesting that they 'have never ceased to be part of the civilization of the *mère-patrie*'.[223] Shared 'historical memories' are a central part of forming a 'nation' and national identity.[224] As well as stressing the historical interconnectedness between metropolitan France and the French Antilles, Césaire exhibited his own Frenchness through his use of a characteristically French nationalist phrase *mère-patrie*.[225] The importance of French print culture and the spread of French intellectual and political thought is evident in Césaire's participation in the 'imagined community' of France.[226] Metropolitan politicians like Jean-Jacques Juglas reinforced the patriotic message of shared historical experience. He reminded the National Assembly that these Old Colonies had in fact been French longer than the French regions of Flanders and Alsace Lorraine.[227]

[222] Nesbitt, 'Departmentalization and the Logic of Decolonization', 32.
[223] Aimé Césaire, *JORF*, 13 March 1946, 660.
[224] Anthony D. Smith, *National Identity* (London: University of Nevada Press, 1991), 11–15.
[225] Aimé Césaire, *JORF*, 13 March 1946, 660.
[226] Anderson, *Imagined Communities*.
[227] Jean-Jacques Juglas, *JORF*, 15 March 1946, 755-56.

A second theme apparent in the speeches was the idea of shared sacrifice. Citizens from these colonies had participated in many French wars, playing an important role in the First and Second World Wars. During World War One, 51 618 soldiers from Martinique, Guadeloupe, French Guiana and Réunion went off to fight for France, of which 32 918 died.[228] Léopold Bissol, from Martinique, reminded the French Assembly that 'our hearts have beaten in unison with yours, in glory as in defeat, in joy as in sorrow'.[229] He likened Martinique's experience of war to that of the Nazi Occupation of France with his emotive statement that 'we have experienced the same fate, the same anguish: tenacious resistance, heroic liberation'.[230] Generating reciprocal emotions is central to constructions of collective identity, and Bissol used highly emotive and patriotic language to reinforce the supposed Frenchness of the Antilles.[231] His patriotic speech argued 'in 1870-1871, in 1914-1918, in 1939-1945, the sons and daughters of the Old Colonies have always had a spontaneous, resolute affection towards an invaded and wounded France'.[232]

Furthermore, fighting and dying in defence of the nation, as Smith highlights, can be used to promote national solidarity.[233] This idea of shared sacrifice was particularly potent in France in the postwar period, where the Gaullist myth promoted a narrative that the majority of French people had supported the Resistance, leaving only a few collaborators.[234] Bissol's speech tapped into this narrative and the particular form of postwar patriotism. Members of the communist and socialist movements in the colonies, like Bissol, were keen to demonstrate their support for or involvement with the *Dissidence* in the Antilles. Bissol maintained that 'the list is long of those who have fallen

[228] Ibid., p. 61.
[229] Léopold Bissol*, JORF*, 13 March 1946, 664.
[230] Ibid.
[231] See Jeff Goodwin, James M. Jasper, and Francesca Polletta, eds., *Passionate Politics: Emotions and Social Movements* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001).
[232] Léopold Bissol*, JORF*, 13 March 1946, 664.
[233] Anthony D. Smith, 'War and Ethnicity: The Role of Warfare in the Formation, Self-Images and Cohesion of Ethnic Communities', *Ethnic & Racial Studies* 4, no. 4 (October 1981): 380–89.
[234] James Quinn, 'Shared Sacrifice and the Return of the French Deportees in 1945', *Proceedings of the Western Society for French History* 35 (2007): 278.

so that France may survive'.[235] Through his language, Bissol engaged in a form of 'sacrificial republicanism', and politicised the memory of those who died.[236] He echoed words spoken during the French Revolution, participating in a tradition of constructing a heroic memory of the nation's past. Other MPs reinforced the idea of shared sacrifice through reference to an *impôt du sang*, or blood tax, paid by citizens from the Old Colonies during the wars.[237] Since the French Revolution, fighting for your country was an integral part of being French. MPs used the sacrifice of their soldiers to promote masculine notions of French identity.

Thirdly, notions of common language, culture and civilization contributed to the image of Frenchness in Martinique and Guadeloupe. Eric Hobsbawm argues that the French Revolution established the nature and boundaries of French patriotism and an imagined French national culture.[238] Thus MPs had to work within the framework of this imagined culture in order to claim French identity. Césaire contended that the colonies were French through their outlook, their land, their ideas, and their '*esprit de nationalité*', which forged an enduring link with France.[239] The significance of these proclamations lies, not just in their claims, but in the specific language used. Generations of French politicians and philosophers have espoused nationalist phrases like, *esprit de nationalité* and *Vive la République! Vive la France!*[240] Césaire demonstrated that he was French, not just through his arguments, but by the very words he chose to put across his argument. Similarly, Monnerville from French Guiana claimed his country had been 'molded, formed in the *creuset* of French culture for three centuries'.[241] He could not have chosen a more typically French metaphor than the *creuset*, to portray French Guianese culture.[242]

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[235] Léopold Bissol*, JORF*, 13 March 1946, 665.
[236] Achille Mbembe, 'Provincializing France?', *Public Culture* 23, no. 1 (2011): 109–12.
[237] Gaston Monnerville*, JORF*, 15 March 1946, 754.
[238] Eric Hobsbawn, 'Introduction: Inventing Traditions', in *The Invention of Tradition*, ed. Eric Hobsbawn and Terence Ranger (Cambridge, 1983), 1–14.
[239] Aimé Césaire, *JORF*, 13 March 1946, 662.
[240] Patrick Weil, *Qu'est-ce qu'un Français: histoire de la nationalité française depuis la Révolution* (Paris: Editions Grasset, 2002).
[241] Gaston Monnerville, *JORF*, 15 March 1946, 754.
[242] Ibid.

With French identity at the heart of their arguments for departmentalisation, the representatives from the Old Colonies were successful in persuading the French National Assembly to agree to full integration into the French Republic. Though the Minister for Overseas France and his supporters expressed concerns about the possible costs involved, the proposal gained unanimous support when it came time to vote.[243] On 19th March 1946, France passed the Departmentalisation Law, granting departmental status to Martinique, Guadeloupe, French Guiana and Réunion. Article 2 of the Departmentalisation Law stated that all French laws not currently in use in the new *départements d'outre-mer* (DOMs) would be applied by 1st January 1947.[244] Furthermore, as laid out in Article 3, any new French laws would apply to the overseas departments, unless the law specified otherwise.[245] When analysing the discourse of national identity, Calhoun advises looking, not at specific terms, but at the rhetoric and language used.[246] The rhetoric of the departmentalisation debates manifests, through the language and imagery used, the very Frenchness which the protagonists were claiming. This persuasive discourse demonstrates that MPs from the French Antilles used the language of their colonisers to achieve greater power within the colonial state. In a time of rebuilding the French nation, Antillean politicians actively contributed to this narrative and reconstruction.

Significantly, anticolonial sentiment was noticeably absent from the political discourse of these Antillean political leaders during negotiations over departmentalisation. This was not because they were not exposed to nationalist, pan-Africanist or anticolonial ideas: Césaire was one of the founders of the *Négritude* movement.[247] He would go on to write *Discours sur le colonialisme* in 1950,

[243] Minister for Overseas France, *JORF*, 15 March 1946, 757-58.
[244] Loi n° 46-451, Article 2, 19 March 1946, Legifrance, http://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000868445, accessed 13 August 2015.
[245] Ibid., Article 3.
[246] Craig J. Calhoun, *Nationalism* (Buckingham: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 3–4.
[247] Césaire established the cultural review *Tropiques* in 1941, which promoted African and Afro-Caribbean literature and culture. He also co-founded *Présence Africaine* in 1947.

condemning the exploitative nature of colonialism.[248] Yet Césaire argued that he was elected with a mandate to seek departmentalisation and saw it as a means of decolonisation.[249] In 1946, the elite group of Antilleans who voiced this construction of French identity saw embracing their perceived Frenchness as a way to overcome colonialism. This would have significant repercussions for constructions of identity within the wider society in the French Antilles.

Nevertheless, there was opposition to departmentalisation in the Caribbean, and not just among the *Békés*. While departmentalisation was generally very popular and seen as a means to improve the social and economic situation in the Antilles, many significant political figures opposed it. Guyanese Léon-Gontran Damas, another founder of the *Négritude* movement, asserted that departmentalisation would do nothing to address racial prejudice.[250] Paul Valentino and Joseph Pitat, prominent Guadeloupean socialists, were concerned about the future of the Antilles under departmentalisation if it brought greater assimilation and Gallicisation.[251] Unfortunately, these fears would prove well founded as Martinique and Guadeloupe struggled to cope with the effects of departmentalisation in the decades that followed.

Therefore, departmentalisation should not be seen as anachronistic when understood within a postwar context that included many French colonies debating the possible benefits of federation and maintaining ties to France. The political leaders who sought departmentalisation did so in an attempt to solve the major social and economic issues of the postwar Antilles. Influenced by wartime experiences under the Vichy regime, the black middle class in Martinique and Guadeloupe associated the *Békés* with most of the ills of colonialism, while they saw the French Republic as embodying the ideals of *liberté, egalité, fraternité.* Years of assimilationist policies undoubtedly had a

[248] Césaire, *Discours Sur Le Colonialisme*.
[249] Aimé Césaire, *JORF*, 13 March 1946, 659-62.
[250] Léon-Gontran Damas, *Retour de Guyane: suivi de misère noire et autres écrits journalistiques* (Paris: José Corti, 1938).
[251] Paul Valentino, *JORF,* 15 March 1946, 751-752.

certain influence on this perspective among the educated middle classes. Nonetheless, departmentalisation was a deliberate choice to integrate politically, socially and economically into France in order to ease poverty and inequality. Thus, the perceived French identity of Guadeloupe and Martinique was not a central motivating factor but a means by which the departmentalisation law could be passed. This helps to illuminate why and how the French Antilles aligned themselves more closely with France.

3. The West Indies Federation and Crown Colony Status

Turning now to the West Indies Federation, conferences and consultations on the possibility of a Federation began in the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. The lifespan of the Federation coincided with important debates over the political status of the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands. Indeed, debates over the issue of Federation prompted Islanders to consider their own political status, and their relationship with Britain and the rest of the British West Indies. At the start of the 1950s, neither Cayman nor BVI had a direct association with the Colonial Office in Britain. The Cayman Islands was a dependency of Jamaica and thus entered the West Indies Federation without direct representation.[252] BVI, on the other hand, opted to exchange its status as a presidency within the Federal Colony of the Leeward Islands, in order to become a crown colony in its own right in 1956.[253] Anxious to protect its new status, the BVI chose not to join the West Indies Federation, prioritising its close ties with the US Virgin Islands over its weak connections to the rest of the Eastern Caribbean.[254] As the West Indies Federation began to break up, with Jamaica moving towards independence, the Cayman Islands also took the step to become a crown colony.[255] It is intriguing that, at a time when many British colonies were moving towards independence, these islands instead chose to solidify their relationship with

[252] Colonial Office Annual Report on the Cayman Islands, 1959-1960, 4, CINA.
[253] British Virgin Islands Report, 1961-1962, 54, VINA.
[254] Hugo Vanterpool, 'Representation At Last', in *Empowerment Through Representation* (2000), 261, VINA.
[255] 'Letter from Gov of Jamaica (Blackburne) to Secretary of State for Colonies', 19 March 1962, Minutes of Legislative Assembly Meeting, 11-12 May 1962, Legislative Assembly Storeroom, Box 31, CINA.

Britain. This would dictate the position from which they would negotiate any further changes to their political status in the following decades, and would be a major factor in their decolonisation without independence.

The British Virgin Islands

From the outset, the West Indies Federation provided both an arena for BVI political actors to garner support for local issues, and a benchmark against which to negotiate BVI's political status. Early discussions about the possibility of Federation in the Caribbean in the 1940s became a vehicle for BVIslanders to generate support for greater political representation. Howard Penn, a Road Town businessman, obtained unanimous approval for his resolution to reinstate the BVI Legislative Council at the Closer Union Conference in St Kitts in 1947.[256] The Legislative Council had been dissolved in 1901, leaving BVIslanders with very little say in the governance of their islands.[257] Though the Colonial Office and the Commissioner of the BVI did not immediately implement these changes, the conference resolution gave greater legitimacy to calls for a legislative Council, and paved the way for the 1949 protest march which finally pushed Britain into accepting the Virgin Islanders' demands.[258] The Legislative Council was then reinstated in 1950.[259] It would be more accurate to say that it was 'instated' rather than 'reinstated' because, as Maurer has pointed out, this was the first time that the council included elected BVIslanders.[260] Therefore, with few outlets for political debate to flourish within the Virgin Islands in the 1940s, the initial West Indies Federation negotiations offered an important medium for BVI political actors.

[256] 'Minutes of a Conference on Closer Union of the Windward and Leeward Islands', Supplement to the Leeward Islands Gazette, 3 January 1947, CO 1042/117, TNA.
[257] Vernon W. Pickering, 'Twentieth Century British Virgin Islands A Chronology', *The Island Sun,* 1998, 2, TNA.
[258] Telegram from Secretary of State for Colonies to Leeward Islands (Baldwin), 24 December 1949, CO 152/536/8, TNA.
[259] Telegram Governor of Leeward Islands to CO, 15 December 1949, CO 152/536/8, TNA.
[260] Maurer, *Recharting the Caribbean*, 241–43.

As plans were being finalised, in the mid-1950s, for the establishment of the West Indies Federation, BVI looked towards Britain, rather than the rest of the Caribbean, for a chance at greater political representation. As a presidency governed through the Colony of the Leeward Islands, few decision-making powers were held in the BVI itself. In 1956, the Leeward Islands defederated in preparation for joining the West Indies Federation. The Government of the BVI chose to become a crown colony with a direct link to the Secretary of State for the Colonies. Legislative powers previously controlled by the Leeward Islands were now the responsibility of the Administrator of the BVI, in consultation with the Executive Council.[261] In the following two years, local politicians were keen to retain these newfound powers and made it clear that the BVI wished to be a crown colony, rather than join the West Indies Federation. Joining the Federation would mean accepting 'such crumbs and sympathy as the larger units might care to give us', according to John Charles Brudnell-Bruce, member of the Legislative Council.[262] Fear of giving up decision-making powers to an external organisation in the Caribbean was a crucial factor in the choice to remain out of the West Indies Federation.[263]

This decision to abstain was also heavily influenced by economic factors and identity issues, particularly relating to the US Virgin Islands. Political endeavours by BVIslanders in the postwar period exhibited a desire to negotiate their position relative to the US Virgin Islands, to which they felt far more connected than the rest of the British West Indies. This was as a result of their close proximity, their history of interconnectedness, and the large number of BVI citizens working in St Thomas, USVI. During the 1947 Closer Union Conference, as well as gaining support for a reinstated Legislative Council, Penn successfully campaigned for the BVI to receive special consideration in Federation arrangements.[264] The fact that the islands 'geographically and

[261] British Virgin Islands Report, 1961-1962, 54, VINA.
[262] John Brudenell-Bruce, 'Why The British Virgins Said "No"', *Tortola Times*, 28 February 1959, 4.
[263] British Virgin Islands Report, 1961-1962, 3-11, VINA.
[264] Howard Penn, *Memoirs of H. R. Penn: A Personal Account of the History and Politics of the British Virgin Islands in the Twentieth Century* (Road Town, BVI: Caribbean Printing Co., 1990), 32.

economically form one unit with the Virgin Islands of the United States of America' justified this claim.[265] Furthermore, following pressure from local politicians, the US dollar became legal tender in the BVI in 1950, cementing their economic links to the USVI.[266] Some British Virgin Islanders saw their connection with the American islands as a valuable economic resource that they were unwilling to open up to the rest of the Eastern Caribbean.[267] They 'cast an eye on the potential wealth of St Thomas, and said to… less fortunate fellow-colonies "We will not share"'.[268] At any given moment, more than 10% of British Virgin Islanders were working in St Thomas, where wages were reportedly the highest in the Eastern Caribbean.[269] Close ties with the USVI continued into the 1960s, as 'the main source of employment for the British Virgin Islanders continued to be St. Thomas'.[270]

These strong links with the USVI, which pulled the BVI away from Federation with other islands, involved a sense of shared Virgin Islander identity. The importance of this relationship with the USVI resulted in the founding of the Inter-Virgin Islands Conference in 1951.[271] This further strengthened ties between the two island groups and reinforced calls for political union.[272] Debates over the unification of the two island groups remained prevalent in local newspapers well into the 1960s. For example, an article from a St Thomas newspaper, reprinted in the Tortola Times, argued that representatives from the BVI hoped 'some day they would be adopted by the United States of America'.[273]

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[265] 'Minutes of a Conference on Closer Union of the Windward and Leeward Islands', Supplement to the Leeward Islands Gazette, 3 January 1947, CO 1042/117, TNA.
[266] See 'Proposal to change currency from West Indian to United States Dollar', 1949, CO 152/536/11, TNA.
[267] 'BVI and the Federation', *The Island Sun*, 25 August 1962, 4.
[268] Ibid.
[269] British Virgin Islands Report, 1961-1962, 4-5, VINA.
[270] Ibid.
[271] Colonial Office Reports on Inter-Virgin Islands Conference, 1951, CO 1031/602, TNA.
[272] Dookhan, *A History of the British Virgin Islands, 1672 to 1970*, 223.
[273] 'BVI to become part of USA?', *Tortola Times*, 18 November 1961, 1, originally printed in *Home Journal*, St Thomas, 15 Nov 1961.

For every account of pro-American sentiment, however, there was another expressing its affinity with Britain. Many argued that the BVI would never accept annexation by the US due to a fondness for the British system and a refusal to give 'up their British identity'.[274] Brudnell-Bruce, a British tobacco planter who had moved to the BVI in 1935, campaigned for the islands to remain outside of the Federation to 'build its own future and identity, not to be lumped into some large group to be lost'.[275] Brudnell-Bruce is, to date, the only white elected member of the Legislative Council since its reinstatement in 1950, a striking difference to the Cayman Islands where the white merchant class dominated the Council for most of the twentieth century.[276] Neville Duncan argues that it was 'a wish for a separate identity' that motivated BVI politicians.[277] Certainly, as the West Indies Federation broke up and many islands moved towards independence, the attitude in the BVI was very different: 'The one exception is the Virgin Islands which stands alone with Britain… Reasons for staying out [of the Federation] were logical and based on self-interest, since there was hardly any connection between the BVI and their faraway neighbours'.[278] Therefore, notions of both connection and isolation directed political developments in the BVI, steering the islands towards a future of increased separation from the rest of the Commonwealth Caribbean.

The Cayman Islands

Prior to joining the West Indies Federation, Caymanians had similar fears to the BVI: they wished to maintain the economic benefit of their links to the US; they were concerned about losing legislative powers to another governing body in the Caribbean; and they aspired to retain their own separate identity in relation to the other islands. Unlike the economically struggling BVI, the Cayman Islands had been relatively prosperous in the 1950s, a situation they were keen to

[274]A. L. Steve, 'Is Annexation of the British Virgin Islands a Real Question?', *The Island Sun*, 23 June 1962, 2-4.
[275] *Empowerment Through Representation* (2000), 39, VINA.
[276] *Twenty-Five Years of Ministerial Government* ed. Rita Frett-Georges, Government of the British Virgin Islands (November 1992), 160.
[277] Neville Duncan, 'The Evolution Of Legislative Systems And Alternative Models For The Millennium In The British Virgin Islands', *Empowerment Through Representation* (2000), 405, VINA.
[278]'The Virgin Islands Stands Alone', *The Island Sun,* 30 June 1962, 7.

protect.[279] Undoubtedly, there was a racial dynamic to Caymanians' approach to the West Indies Federation, which was not apparent in political discourse in the BVI. The white merchant elite in Cayman were anxious to retain their control of Caymanian politics and the economy.[280] Despite clear reservations, the Cayman Islands joined the Federation in 1958, with an ambiguous position as a dependency of Jamaica. Shortly after, in 1962, as Jamaica chose independence, the Cayman Islands instead elected to become a crown colony and amended their constitution along the lines of that of the BVI.[281]

The attitude of the Caymanian representatives towards Federation reflected both local political issues and wider regional developments. Initially, the Cayman Islands appeared happy to join the Federation and maintain their association with Jamaica, on the understanding of being allowed greater autonomy. On the Governor of Jamaica's visit to Cayman in 1956, he announced to the Assembly that 'You have local autonomy within your grasp'.[282] Furthermore, he encouraged them to seek a relationship with other British territories 'who believe in the same things that you do', promoting Federation as a step towards self-government.[283] In response, the 'Big Four Delegation', of Willie Farrington, Ducan Merren, Ormond Panton and Ernest Panton travelled to Jamaica in January 1957 to discuss constitutional change.[284] The 'Big Four' were all members of the 'white and near-white' merchant elite, with a conservative, pro-British outlook.[285] Ormond Panton was the exception: though certainly part of the merchant elite, he was a populist, pro-independence, anti-British 'firebrand' who earned the nickname 'Little Busta' for his reputation for championing the interests of the average Caymanian.[286]

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[279] Colonial Office Annual Report on the Cayman Islands, 1957-1958, 3-9, CINA.
[280] This is discussed in further detail in chapter four.
[281] Minutes of Legislative Assembly Meeting, 6 July 1962, Legislative Assembly Storeroom, Box 31, 4, CINA.
[282] 'Constitutional development in the Cayman Islands', 1956, CO 1031/1411, TNA.
[283] Ibid.
[284] 'Big 4 On Historic Mission', *Cayman Times,* 14 January 1957, 1.
[285] Christopher Williams, 'Points of Departure: Shifting Traditionalist Caymanian Understandings of Jamaica and Jamaicans', *Journal of Critical Southern Studies* 2, no. 1 (2014): 41–42.
[286] This is a reference to the Jamaican politician Alexander Bustamante. See David Martins, *A Special Son: The Biography of Ormond Panton* (George Town, Cayman Islands: Pansons Ltd, 1994), 120–21.

As with the British Virgin Islands, the pace of political change in Cayman was accelerated by external Federation negotiations.[287] The local newspaper announced that the 'heroic mission' to Jamaica had been a great success and claimed they had 'not the slightest doubt of the capacity of the Caymans and her people to bear the burden of independence'.[288] This article may however, have overstated Caymanians' appetite for independence. Most Caymanian representatives remained cautious about the Federation and any change to the status quo. In earlier conferences, Caymanians had pushed for direct representation as a condition for their joining, but they now requested a special status within the Federation.[289] However, these issues remained unresolved and ultimately the Cayman Islands joined the Federation without direct representation. [290]

A vital motivating factor for Caymanians in their approach to the Federation was the wish to retain their special relationship to the US. During the war a British commentator in the Cayman Islands noted that 'of recent years many of the islanders have married United States subjects, and in this way United States influence is steadily growing'.[291] This trend continued after the war when improvements in air travel made it easier to fly to and from the US.[292] Furthermore, Cayman became increasingly dependent on the US for employment opportunities. While the war had weakened British naval strength, the American shipping industry thrived. In the 1940s and 1950s Caymanians found work with US companies like Daniel K. Ludwig's shipping line National Bulk Carriers.[293] Ludwig hired many Caymanians due to their reputation as skilled seamen and because they were cheaper than American workers.[294]

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[287] Bodden, *Patronage, Personalities and Parties*, 55.
[288] 'All Together', *Cayman Times*, 21 January 1957, 4.
[289] Martins, *A Special Son*, 102–6.
[290] See 'The West Indies Federation Order in Council', 1957, The Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago, Digital Legislative Library, http://laws.gov.tt/pdf/App2.pdf, accessed 23/05/19; The Cayman Islands (Constitution) Order in Council, 1959, CINA.
[291] A. J. A. Douglas, 'The Cayman Islands', *The Geographical Journal* 95, no. 2 (1940): 127.
[292] Colonial Office Annual Report on the Cayman Islands, 1946-1950, CO 1071/93, TNA.
[293] Charles Foster in interview, 1 May 2000, 24-31, CINA; Dennis Foster in interview, 3 January 1996, 11-15, CINA; Sedley Ritch in interview, 4 March 1996, 20, CINA.
[294] Craton, *Founded Upon the Seas*, 298–300.

Moreover, the US government agreed to a visa waiver concession to anyone with a Caymanian passport and no criminal record, strengthening American-Caymanian ties.[295] This visa waiver was unique to all foreign colonies and is still applicable today.[296] Caymanians were anxious not to allow anything that would threaten this special status. Hugh Malcolm Coe, a member of the Legislative Assembly, wrote vehemently against joining the Federation on the grounds that Cayman's relationship with the US could change.[297] But these fears were assuaged when the Governor of Jamaica 'assured that [Cayman's] "peculiar problems" would receive personal attention and would not be lost in the mass of regional problems', including 'the special arrangements… for the export of… seamen to the US'.[298] These major concerns over the Federation did push Caymanian political actors to demand a new constitution, which was granted in 1959. For the first time, members of the Assembly were elected by universal adult suffrage.[299] This was a considerable success for women's rights campaigners who had been agitating for the vote since the end of Second World War.[300] This new constitution did not, however, resolve Cayman's ambiguous position within the Federation.

The changing relationship between Cayman and Jamaica was another important element in Caymanian political discourse. Williams has written extensively on how the Jamaica-Cayman Islands relationship changed and developed from the 1940s to the 1960s, as Caymanians who had once relied on Jamaica for many essential services and personnel became more hostile.[301] These sentiments were exacerbated by the popularity of socialism in Jamaica, and leaders like Norman Manley and Alexander Bustamante. The Caymanian elite were concerned about the risk of losing

[295] Martins, *A Special Son*, 72–73.
[296] Ibid.
[297] Hugh Malcom Coe, 'We Must Stand Against Federation', *Cayman Times,* 28 January 1957, 2.
[298] 'In Unity', *Cayman Times*, 20 May 1957, 2.
[299] 'Address by Governor of Jamaica to Legislative Assembly of the Cayman Islands', Minutes of Legislative Assembly, 2 October 1959, Legislative Assembly Storeroom, Box 10, 7-10, CINA.
[300] Letter to the Commissioner of the Cayman Islands, 19 August 1948, 'Political Rights of Women' File, Transfer 68, Box 2, CINA.
[301] Williams, 'Points of Departure: Shifting Traditionalist Caymanian Understandings of Jamaica and Jamaicans', 41.

their dominance in local politics if socialist ideas became more popular.[302] Indeed, when Trinidad was announced as the capital of the West Indies Federation in 1957, Caymanians breathed 'a sigh of relief that we will not have the federal centre so close to us that it will intrude upon the administration of our affairs'.[303] Once the Federation began to separate, the conservative Caymanian elite did not like the idea of being a dependency of an independent, socialist Jamaica. Significantly, the Administrator Jack Rose only gave Cayman two options: internal self-government under an independent Jamaica or colony status with Britain.[304] Sybil McLaughlin, the Clerk of the Legislative Assembly, describes how members of the Legislative Assembly were presented with the two options, and how this crucial decision was decided by the visiting Governor of Jamaica 'at the longest and loudest clap of hands'.[305] Roy McTaggart's anti-Jamaica speech received louder applause than Ormond Panton's pro-Jamaica speech, sealing Cayman's fate.[306] As McLaughlin acknowledges, this was highly irregular and 'undemocratic, really'.[307] The growing dislike and suspicion among the Caymanian elite towards Jamaica was therefore crucial in the decision to become a crown colony.

The approach of the Caymanian merchant class towards Jamaica and the Federation was greatly influenced by racial prejudice. The predominantly white oligarchy feared losing their stranglehold on Caymanian politics and the economy if black West Indians from other islands were allowed to move freely to the Cayman Islands.[308] The political apathy and disenfranchisement of the majority of Caymanians allowed the white oligarchy to push their immigration fears to the forefront of political debates.[309] Their concerns were echoed by Commissioner Andrew Gerrard who told the

[302] Peter Hill, 'Socialism Hangs Over The West Indies', *Cayman Times,* 11 February 1957, 1, CINA.
[303] 'First Task', *Cayman Times*, 18 February 1957, 4.
[304] Martins, *A Special Son*, 131–32.
[305] Sybil I. McLaughlin in interview conducted by Heather McLaughlin, 11 February 1993, 5, CINA.
[306] Sybil I. McLaughlin, *Development of Parliamentary Government in the Cayman Islands* (George Town, Cayman Islands: Cayman Free Press, 1982), 28.
[307] Sybil I. McLaughlin in interview, 5.
[308] Minutes of Meeting of Legislative Assembly, 19 March 1960, Legislative Assembly Storeroom, Box 10, 1-9, CINA.
[309] Bodden, *Patronage, Personalities and Parties*, 55.

Assembly in 1955 'now is the time to... strengthen the legislation in regard to immigration and aliens'.[310] Other Caribbean leaders, such as Trinidad's Chief Minister Eric Williams, made it clear that free movement of people was a priority for the Federation, exacerbating unease in the Cayman Islands.[311] The local newspaper warned of an 'influx of 100 West Indians into these islands' if Cayman joined the Federation.[312] As it was, Cayman's special status within the Federation meant that they retained 'the right to control entry' to the islands and full freedom of movement was never implemented across the Federation.[313] The anti-immigration rhetoric focusing on black migrants continued as Cayman renegotiated its relationship with Jamaica. Eldon Kirkconnell, a member of the Legislative Assembly, argued that joining an independent Jamaica would have meant 'no protection... we... would have had a free flow of people and couldn't cope with it, we would have been ruined'.[314] The underlying suggestion that Jamaican immigrants meant black immigrants was evident throughout this political discourse.

Identity issues were significant in Cayman's approach to the West Indies Federation and decision to become a crown colony. In a similar way to the BVI, the Cayman Islands were rather cut off from the rest of the British colonies in the Caribbean. Mawby highlights Jamaican isolationism after the Second World War.[315] Thus it is important to note that Cayman was an isolated outpost of an already isolated administrative centre. This is apparent in speeches made at the Cayman Legislative Assembly during debates about the Federation. Caymanian politicians expressed their fears that the Federation could be a threat to their 'existence as a distinct entity'.[316] In 1961, as it became clear that Cayman would have to choose between Britain and Jamaica, this discourse of

[310] A M Gerrard, Address to the Legislative Assembly, 23 July 1955, Vestry Papers, 34/55, CINA.
[311] 'No Federation without Freedom of Movement', *Trinidad Guardian,* 24 Aug 1958, Fonds Clovis Beauregard, 43J, ADM.
[312] 'Free Entry', *Cayman Times*, 25 February 1957, 2.
[313] Minutes of Legislative Assembly, 2 October 1959, Legislative Assembly Storeroom, Box 10, 2-3, CINA.
[314] Eldon Kirkconnell in interview conducted by Tricia S. Bodden, 10 October 2007, 13, CINA.
[315] Mawby, *Ordering Independence*, 12.
[316] 'Economic Development of the Cayman Islands in Relation to the West Indian Federation', Minutes of Meeting of Legislative Assembly, 19 March 1960, Legislative Assembly Storeroom, Box 10, 9, CINA.

Caymanian identity became more apparent. Heather McLaughlin, an interviewer for the Cayman Islands Memory Bank, suggests that many of the politicians she has spoken to 'felt that if Cayman had gone with Jamaica, that Cayman would have lost its identity'.[317] Commissioner Andrew Gerrard reinforced this notion, telling the Assembly that the 'Islands should aim at preserving their own identity and their own individuality'.[318]

Notions of identity expressed during the agreements to cut ties with Jamaica promoted, not only the idea of a distinct Caymanian identity, but also an affinity to Britain. This was articulated particularly strongly by the Caymanian elite, who saw Cayman as a 'loyal part of what was once the British Empire… not because of any pressure from Great Britain but because the people here have always been deeply loyal to the British Crown and would not have it any other way'.[319] While it remains difficult to establish the strength of this affinity to Britain among the majority of the Caymanian population, the powerful sentiments of the white political elite ensured that Cayman's future was directed towards Britain rather than the rest of the Caribbean.[320]

4. The Legacies of Departmentalisation and Crown Colony Status: A Shift in Focus, 1947-1969

Looking ahead to the years after these significant changes, the new political status shaped the future decolonisation of these territories. In the decades which followed, these major political decisions had three key effects: they further isolated the territories from the rest of the region; they shifted political debate away from the question of autonomy; and they encouraged islanders to see France and Britain as the solution to current issues. This third factor was evident in pro-French and pro-British rhetoric in local newspapers and public debates. Thus, the relationship between

[317] Heather McLaughlin during interview with Sybil I. McLaughlin, 11 February 1993, 10, CINA.
[318] A M Gerrard, Address to the Legislative Assembly, 23 July 1955, Vestry Papers, 34/55, CINA.
[319] McLaughlin, *Development of Parliamentary Government in the Cayman Islands*, 7.
[320] Williams, 'Points of Departure: Shifting Traditionalist Caymanian Understandings of Jamaica and Jamaicans', 42.

identity and politics was central to the processes of decolonisation. These changes were most significant for the French Antilles because departmentalisation stalled discussions about independence for the following ten to fifteen years. Crown colony status in the BVI and Cayman secured British control and shifted the focus towards economic development.

Firstly, their interactions with the West Indies Federation and the timing at which they became crown colonies set the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands on a slightly different course to most of the British Caribbean colonies. As the West Indies Federation broke up, many of the other small states in the Eastern Caribbean were hesitant about full independence and opted instead for associated statehood with internal self-government. The 1967 West Indies Act formalised this new arrangement for Antigua, Grenada, Saint Kitts, Nevis and Anguilla, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent.[321] However, the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands had only recently become crown colonies and were not included in the discussions about a smaller federation in the Eastern Caribbean or associated statehood. The British Virgin Islands did establish a ministerial system of government in 1967, changing their status from colony to territory, but it was not part of the group of associated states.[322]

A sense of separation from other Caribbean islands influenced BVI and Cayman's negotiations with the West Indies Federation. After becoming crown colonies, this idea of separation was amplified. For example, BVI newspapers argued it held a 'unique position' in the Eastern Caribbean and suggested the BVI 'stands alone with Britain'.[323] Maurer argues that the crown colony status 'helped consolidate BVIslanders as a group distinct from other Caribbean peoples'.[324]

[321] 'West Indies Act 1967', Chapter 4, legislation.gov.uk, http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/1967/4/pdfs/ukpga_19670004_en.pdf, accessed 24/05/19.
[322] 'A New Chapter begins', *The Island Sun*, 15 April 1967, 7.
[323] 'The Virgin Islands Stands Alone', *The Island Sun,* 30 June 1962, 7; 'BVI and the Federation', *The Island Sun,* 25 August 1962, 4.
[324] Maurer, *Recharting the Caribbean*, 72.

As has been suggested, the Cayman Islands were already geographically isolated from the rest of the Caribbean. Becoming a crown colony in the 1960s when independence fervour was spreading through the Caribbean exacerbated this isolation from regional political and ideological trends. As the French Antilles became increasingly reliant on France for educational and employment opportunities, cultural ties with France became ever stronger at the expense of links with the rest of the Caribbean. Furthermore, the Antilles became dependent on France for basic foodstuffs and external trade was focused almost entirely on metropolitan France.[325] Departmentalisation made Martinique and Guadeloupe far more economically dependent on France than they had been before the Second World War. As a result, all four territories increasingly looked to Europe rather than the Caribbean for their future.

Secondly, as well as moving the islands further away from the rest of the British Caribbean, crown colony status shifted the political debate in the BVI and Cayman towards a focus on economic development. Having gained the perceived greater benefits from closer ties to Britain, many politicians and commentators argued that the islands should ensure economic progress before further self-government. For example, in a speech in the 1966 constitutional conference, BVI politician Ivan Dawson promoted the importance of financial independence, ignoring the question of political independence.[326] This view was reflected in a Caymanian newspaper editorial in which the editor argued 'We believe the future will be better served by the politicians devoting selfless effort to the improvement of these Islands as a Colony of Her Majesty than by trying to selfishly bring to themselves more pomp and circumstance and power'.[327] Thus crown colony status reinforced the idea that economic improvement should come before constitutional development.

[325] Bernard Petitjean Roget, 'Commerce et dégradation des termes de l'échange: l'exemple martiniquais', in *Historial Antillais,* Volume VI, A2116, 130, ADG.
[326] 'Speech At Constitutional Conference By Hon. I Dawson'. *The Island Sun,* 29 October 1966, 2.
[327] 'Of The Future', *Tradewinds,* 17 December 1964, 2.

In the French Antilles, departmentalisation served to shift the debate away from the question of autonomy in the 1940s and 1950s. Antillean politicians focused on how best to implement departmentalisation and on opposing delays to its application. Though the National Assembly had unanimously supported the Assimilation Act and passed it swiftly, implementation was conducted with far less haste.[328] The Assimilation Act stipulated that all French laws not in effect in the DOMs should be applied by 1st January 1947, but policy-makers quickly realised the difficulties apparent in applying all French law to these former colonies.[329] Furthermore, political changes in metropolitan France in the wake of elections in June 1946 meant that achieving greater social and economic equality in the DOMs was low on the new government's list of priorities.[330] Legal equality was initially delayed until July 1947, and this was then further postponed until January 1948.[331] These deferrals caused increasing unrest and discontent among citizens in the DOMs. Once granted equal status through departmentalisation, both the political elite and the general public were outraged that as French citizens they were not immediately treated equally. For example, in 1948, Césaire told the National Assembly 'the assimilation which you are offering us is but a caricature of that which we demanded'.[332] In Martinique, unions demanded pay rises, greater social security and employment rights.[333] Guadeloupe also saw increased pressure from union groups and threats of strike action, prompting the Governors to contact the Secretary of State to stress the urgency of the situation.[334]

[328] Jean Houbert, 'Réunion: II: The Politics of Départementalisation', *The Journal of Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 18, no. 3 (1 November 1980): 330.
[329] Director of Political Affaires to the Council of Ministers, 'Assimilation des vieilles colonies', 15 February 1947, 1 AFFPOL 373/2, ANOM.
[330] Houbert, 'Réunion: II: The Politics of Départementalisation', 331.
[331] Ministry of the Colonies to the Governors of the DOMs, 28 December 1946, 1 AFFPOL 373/2, ANOM; Report by the Director of Political Affairs, 'Assimilation des vieilles colonies', 22 December 1946, 1 AFFPOL 373/2, ANOM.
[332] Aimé Césaire, *JORF*, 4 May 1948, 2486.
[333] Governor of Martinique to Secretary of State, 5 December 1946, 1 AFFPOL 373/2, ANOM.
[334] Ibid.

The fixation on departmentalisation and its implementation was evident in the local press. When the government confirmed the second postponement of full legal integration until 1 January 1948, local newspapers expressed their dissatisfaction and disillusionment. *L'Action* newspaper in Guadeloupe reported the speech of a local politician, who triumphantly claimed: 'Nous sommes ici en France!'[335] To highlight the glaring disparities between the metropole and Guadeloupe, the paper responded: 'Mais quand serons-nous ici… en France, vraiment?'[336] The communist newspaper, *Justice*, ran several articles in its Martinique edition bemoaning the delay in assimilation.[337] Echoing the discourse of the communist speakers in parliament during the March debates on departmentalisation, the paper focused on the sacrifices made by Martinican soldiers fighting for France in previous wars.[338] Having actively contributed to liberating French soil, it argued, the people of Martinique had just as much right to the new welfare system as metropolitan citizens.[339] Once again, the French identity of Martinicans, through shared sacrifice, was central to calls for full assimilation.

Departmentalisation also shaped political debates among Antillean students in mainland France. Though many expressed anticolonial views and participated in anticolonial campaigns for self-determination in other colonies, the debate about Martinique and Guadeloupe centred on how departmentalisation could be used to ameliorate local issues.[340] For example, a 1951 article by Louis Achille discussed the duty students had to their communities in the Caribbean to focus on improving their islands.[341] By the 1960s, students became more radical and the issue of autonomy

[335] *L'Action* (Guadeloupe), 14 December 1946, 1 AFFPOL 373/2, ANOM.
[336] Ibid.
[337] *Justice* (Martinique), 21 January 1947, 1 AFFPOL 373/2, ANOM.
[338] *Justice*, 13 February 1947, 1 AFFPOL 373/2, ANOM.
[339] *Justice,* 21 January 1947, 1 AFFPOL 373/2, ANOM.
[340] Andrew M. Daily, 'Race, Citizenship, and Antillean Student Activism in Postwar France, 1946-1968', *French Historical Studies* 37, no. 2 (20 March 2014): 331–57.
[341] Louis Achille, 'Lettre de Lyon', *Alizés,* December 1951, 3.

more pressing, as chapters two and six will discuss. However, the immediate impact of departmentalisation was to shift debates away from autonomy.

Thirdly, both departmentalisation and crown colony status were decisive steps involving closer association with the colonial power. Naturally, this had implications for local political debates and the political discourse relating to France and Britain. In the Cayman Islands, politicians continued to promote and espouse pro-British sentiment. For example, a 1965 local newspaper claimed, 'in no other part of the Commonwealth do hearts beat with greater devotion and loyalty for [the Queen] who is above all party politics and who stands for the freedom we love and cherish'.[342] This attachment to the Queen and to Britain extended to suggestions that British civil servants were better and fairer at governing than any local representatives. Member of the Legislative Assembly Annie Bodden argued that 'there is not one local person... competent, during the past ten years, to run the affairs of these Islands... Caymanians should be proud to have someone to direct and lead them in the right way without oppression'.[343] Similar sentiment was expressed in the BVI, with the editor of the only local newspaper maintaining that the 'presence of the Union Jack over us should be a most comforting sight for it is a sign that we are free'.[344] It should be noted that the managing director of this newspaper was an American who had spent a long time in the UK and had a rather paternalistic approach to BVIslanders.[345] In certain respects, the closer ties to Britain encouraged islanders to see Britain as part of the solution to current issues and this was reflected in newspapers and political debates.

Similarly, in Martinique and Guadeloupe, there were many who espoused pro-French rhetoric as the islands became more culturally assimilated into the French Republic. For example, the

[342] 'Colourful Parade Held For Queen's Birthday', *Tradewinds*, 17 June 1965, 7.
[343] Minutes of Legislative Assembly Meeting, 4 January 1963, Legislative Assembly Storeroom, Box 31, CINA.
[344] *Tortola Times,*18 February 1961, 3.
[345] Tom Bower, *Broken Dreams: Vanity, Greed And The Souring of British Football* (London: Pocket Books, 2003), 109–10.

republican Martinican newspaper *France Toujours* described France as 'the most noble, the most humane and the most generous of Motherlands'.[346] It championed the idea of an abolitionist France who 'took care of its Martinican children'.[347] More startling is the pro-French discourse of anticolonial newspapers like *Justice.* In one 1958 article on abolitionist Victor Schoelcher, the Martinican historian Armand Nicolas defended the importance of the French Republic, arguing that Schoelcher was an anticolonialist *because* he was republican.[348] This split position was a continuing issue for political activists who were affiliated with French metropolitan political parties. These examples highlight how the relationship between identity and politics in the overseas territories was transformed by departmentalisation and crown colony status. The legacies of these political changes continued to shape the processes of decolonisation for many decades after.

Conclusion

The Second World War was, of course, a defining moment in Caribbean history. It prompted the four territories in question to reconsider their position in the region, relative to the other islands, to Europe and to the US. Like most colonies around the world, these islands sought to improve their situation through a change in political status in the postwar years. Unusually, perhaps, they chose a closer association with France and Britain, rather than greater autonomy. However, as this chapter has highlighted, this development was not anachronistic but part of a broader experience of decolonisation that encompasses the many options debated at the time, including greater political representation through a stronger relationship with the colonial power**.**

Local politicians were motivated by a desire to alleviate the poverty, inequality and underdevelopment in their islands. This is less apparent in the Cayman Islands where the merchant elite was anxious to maintain its dominance in the Assembly. In both the British Virgin Islands

[346] *France Toujours,* 15 February 1964, 1.
[347] Ibid.
[348] *Justice* (Martinique), 17 July 1958, 1-2.

and the Cayman Islands, fears over immigration made the West Indies Federation seem a less appealing option. This was of particular concern for the predominantly white politicians in the Cayman Islands, whose racial prejudice made them uneasy about a possible influx of black West Indians from other islands. Notions of race were influential in Martinique and Guadeloupe too, where the black and mixed-race middle class hoped that departmentalisation would help them to thwart the power of the white planter *Békés*. While Cayman and the BVI were keen to conserve their links with the US, politicians in Martinique and Guadeloupe feared annexation by a racially segregated United States.

A striking similarity in approaches to political developments across the four territories is noticeable in the way discontent with colonialism was directed towards and associated with authority figures or organisations in the Caribbean, whilst Britain and France were mostly portrayed as benevolent and impartial. Having both been administered by other colonies in the region, the British Virgin Islands and the Cayman Islands were eager to establish a direct link with the Colonial Office. Dissatisfaction with the colonial government was almost always blamed on local administrators or officials on the ground, rather than on Britain. This trend continued after the two territories became crown colonies. Meanwhile, in Martinique and Guadeloupe anticolonial sentiment was levelled at the *Békés,* not the French Republic, as one editorial declared: 'Martinicans can count on the people of France, our surest ally, which is not to be confused with the colonialist bandits who govern here in the name of France'.[349] Fundamentally, this sense of affinity with the metropole among the political class of the territories underpinned both departmentalisation and the adoption of crown colony status. Though not the most significant motivating factor for local politicians, the fact that those with the power to effect change locally expressed a kinship with France or Britain

[349] *Justice* (Martinique), 13 September 1951.

shifted the nature of political debate. The perceived affinity of the local population also influenced colonial officials and representatives when they accepted the proposed changes to political status.

A marked conservatism among local politicians was evident, particularly in the British territories. In the French Antilles, even socialist representatives seemed wary of cutting ties with France. This was intensified by departmentalisation and the move to become crown colonies. Any future negotiations towards greater autonomy would involve stepping back from these new political statuses and the perceived privileges that they provided. As later chapters will show, in the decades following these changes to political status, considerable political energy was spent discussing economic and social improvements in light of the new political situation. While debates about self-determination continued, these early changes had altered the political landscape. Steps towards greater autonomy would be increasingly difficult to promote, particularly in the French Antilles.

Crucially, departmentalisation and crown colony status meant that any future political negotiations were made from a position of greater closeness to the metropolitan power, and further separation from the rest of the Caribbean. As the involvement of the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands in the West Indies Federation has demonstrated, local political debates were often sparked by wider regional and global changes. This will be explored in more detail in the following chapter, which will question the impact of the Cold War on the Caribbean territories.

Chapter Two

Decolonisation and the Global Cold War: The US, the Cuban Revolution and Anticolonial Mobilisation

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The first chapter of this thesis assessed the major changes to political status that occurred in the aftermath of the Second World War. This chapter will broaden the perspective out to embrace a global context by applying the lens of the Cold War to decolonisation in the overseas territories. It will explore to what extent local politics was influenced by global dynamics related to the Cold War, such as so-called 'Third Worldism'.[350] This intersection with the Cold War again illustrates how the territories were a part of the global history of the twentieth century.

As with many regions of the world that decolonised after the Second World War, the Caribbean was affected by the international Cold War environment. Yet, apart from the literature assessing the impact of the Cuban Revolution, the Caribbean region receives little attention in traditional Cold War studies. Indeed, collections on the Cold War such as *The Oxford Handbook of the Cold War* tend to include a section on Latin America, covering Cuba, but rarely the Caribbean as a region.[351] This appears to be because, for the most part, the Anglophone and Francophone Caribbean did not experience significant intervention from the Cold War superpowers before 1980. Though outside the scope of this study, the US invasion of Grenada in 1983 is frequently cited as the defining moment of the Cold War in the Anglophone Caribbean.[352] Mawby, in his analysis of British policymaking in the West Indies, suggests that the Cold War was not central to decision making, with the exception of a brief 'McCarthyite panic' in 1952-1953.[353] This was typified by the

[350] This chapter follows Prashad's definition of Third Worldism as a project comprising of the 'hopes and institutions' of the peoples of Africa, Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean in the struggle against colonialism and the Cold War superpowers. See Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, xv.
[351] Richard H. Immerman and Petra Goedde, eds., *The Oxford Handbook of the Cold War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2013).
[352] Shalini Puri, ed., *The Legacies of Caribbean Radical Politics* (Abingdon: Routledge, 2013), xi-xv.
[353] Mawby, *Ordering Independence*, 26–28.

British response to Ferdinand Smith, a Jamaican communist, and his connections to certain global Trade Union organisations.[354] This time frame also includes the 1953 overthrowing of Cheddi Jagan's democratically elected government in Guyana, which revealed the lengths to which Britain would go to prevent the possibility of a communist state in the Commonwealth Caribbean.[355] Within a traditional top-down understanding of the Cold War, centring around the actions of the two superpowers, the Cold War context appears less important for decolonisation in the Anglophone and Francophone Caribbean.

However, a more nuanced perspective presents the Cold War as a global process which intersected with other twentieth century phenomena, particularly decolonisation and Third Worldism. This is reflected in more recent approaches to the global Cold War, which show how the Cold War shaped local conflicts over decolonisation and, in some cases, drastically transformed them.[356] Indeed, Arne Westad argues that local elites in colonies and former colonies often constructed their political agendas in response to the development models presented by the United States and the Soviet Union.[357] Building on Westad's historiographical intervention, Leslie James and Elizbeth Leake have argued for a common history of decolonisation and the Cold War, as part of a 'broader moment of intertwined, if sometimes paradoxical, local and global change'.[358] Certainly, the dynamics of the Cold War influenced many Caribbean leaders in the fallout from the collapse of the West Indies Federation.[359] For the overseas territories, the Cold War was not the most significant factor shaping political debates, but it did influence metropolitan decision-makers and local elites.

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[354] Spencer Mawby, 'Mr. Smith Goes to Vienna: Britain's Cold War in the Caribbean 1951–1954', *Cold War History* 13, no. 4 (2013): 541.
[355] Johnson, 'The British Caribbean from Demobilisation to Constitutional Decolonisation', 617.
[356] Odd Arne Westad, *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005).
[357] Ibid., 3.
[358] Leslie James and Elisabeth Leake, eds., *Decolonization and the Cold War: Negotiating Independence* (London: Bloomsbury, 2015), 1–9.
[359] Rafael Cox-Alomar, 'Revisiting the Transatlantic Triangle: The Decolonisation of the British Caribbean in Light of the Anglo-American Special Relationship', *Diplomacy & Statecraft* 15, no. 2 (2004): 364–66.

This chapter will argue that decolonisation in the overseas territories needs to be understood in the context of the global Cold War. The significance of the Cold War for local political developments was episodic, only occasionally coming to the forefront of debates. However, the battle between capitalism and communism remained an ideational spectrum within which local elites positioned themselves, and the international environment of the Cold War influenced the approach of the metropolitan states.[360] In assessing the global political context, this chapter will firstly analyse the impact of the US in the Caribbean region. This was not a new phenomenon rooted in the Cold War, but instead American interests in the Caribbean had been growing since the nineteenth century. However, by the 1950s, US foreign policy in the region was increasingly shaped by Cold War concerns.

Secondly, this chapter will consider the impact of the Cuban Revolution, which heightened Cold War tensions in the region. The Cold War backdrop influenced decolonisation, most significantly through the impact it had on independence groups and activists. Given that most pro-independence groups were left-wing and often communist, European colonial governments were warier and less likely to negotiate with them. As a result, this restricted the debate about independence. Advocates of change who seriously challenged the status quo in any way found themselves smeared as communist by both local and metropolitan figures. The Cuban Revolution was a key moment in the Cold War in the Caribbean, drastically altering US foreign policy in the region. The Revolution had a huge impact across the Caribbean and was particularly influential in French Antillean local activism in the 1950s and 1960s.[361] Furthermore, the non-independent

[360] Gilbert M. Joseph, 'What We Now Know and Should Know: Bringing Latin America More Meaningfully into Cold War Studies', in *In from the Cold: Latin America's New Encounter with the Cold War*, ed. Daniela Spenser and Gilbert M. Joseph (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 4.
[361] Bonilla, *Non-Sovereign Futures*, 4.

status of these territories assisted efforts on the part of France, Britain and the US to maintain strategic control in the region and prevent the emergence of more communist states.

Finally, this chapter will consider a factor linked to the Cold War: anticolonial movements, the Non-Aligned Movement and Third Worldism. These interconnected projects reflect the ways that colonised and formerly colonised peoples engaged with the processes of decolonisation and the Cold War in order to imagine alternative futures. Engagement with these ideas is more apparent in the French Antilles, but certain activists and intellectuals in the British territories also participated in transnational exchanges of anticolonial thinking. Though projects like the Non-Aligned Movement directly addressed the Cold War divide, anticolonialism was rooted in interwar and earlier intellectual movements and networks. It built on earlier developments, rather than simply being a Cold War, post Second World War affair. Thus, although often intertwined with Cold War dynamics, these various anticolonial and anti-imperial mobilisations should not be seen as a solely Cold War phenomenon. Overall, these different factors reveal how decolonisation in the overseas territories was influenced by the global political and ideological context.

Given the importance of the Cuban Revolution and the prevalence of anti-communist rhetoric in government reports, local media and political debates, it can be tempting to overemphasise the importance of the Cold War in Caribbean decolonisation. As the Anglophone and Francophone Caribbean did not experience a major 'flashpoint' in the Cold War before 1980, the significance of the Cold War will be acknowledged but not overstated.[362] Nonetheless, this chapter will demonstrate that the overseas territories were part of the twentieth century global history of decolonisation and the Cold War.

[362] Jason C. Parker, *Brother's Keeper: The United States, Race, and Empire in the British Caribbean, 1937-1962*, 4–6.

1. The Role of the US in the Caribbean Region

As a relatively new colonial power in the Caribbean, the US played an important role as a cultural and ideological counterpoint to the metropolitan governments of Britain and France. The previous chapter detailed how the US was of increasing importance for the Caribbean territories in the twentieth century, particularly during the Second World War. US intervention in the Caribbean was a historical dynamic rooted in the nineteenth century, rather than a new Cold War phenomenon.[363] The nature of US interest in the Caribbean changed in 1898 with the Spanish-American War.[364] US victory led to the temporary occupation of Cuba and the acquisition of Puerto Rico. American intervention in the region continued with the occupation of Haiti in 1915, the occupation of the Dominican Republic in 1916 and the annexation of the Virgin Islands from Denmark in 1917. The purchase of the newly named Virgin Islands of the United States was particularly significant for nearby BVI. However, after the Second World War, US foreign policy in the Caribbean was primarily influenced by Cold War concerns. The 1954 CIA-backed coup in Guatemala marked the first significant US intervention in the Caribbean and Latin American region.[365] The possibility of annexation by the US was debated in local Caribbean politics, sometimes through a Cold War lens, and at other times, especially in the BVI, it was more a question of local inter-island relationships.

The French Antilles

Though much of the historiography of the French Antilles focuses on their relationship with France, Childers argues for viewing the Atlantic space as a field of different influences in which

[363] Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 143.
[364] Rosemarie E. Stewart, *United States in the Caribbean* (Oxford: Heinemann, 1982), 3–5; Ivan Musicant, *Empire by Default: The Spanish-American War and the Dawn of the American Century* (New York: Holt, 1998); Lester D. Langley, *The Banana Wars: United States Intervention in the Caribbean, 1898-1934* (Wilmington: SR, 2002), 1–12; Kenneth E. Hendrickson, *The Spanish-American War* (London: Greenwood Publishing Group, 2003); Anthony P. Maingot and Wilfredo Lozano, *The United States and the Caribbean: Transforming Hegemony and Sovereignty* (New York: Routledge, 2013).
[365] Stephen M. Streeter, *Managing the Counterrevolution: The United States and Guatemala, 1954-1961* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2000); Timothy J. Smith and Abigail E. Adams, eds., *After the Coup: An Ethnographic Reframing of Guatemala 1954* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2011).

the US is a key component.[366] In the aftermath of World War II, fear of American encroachment persuaded some that departmentalisation was the only way to prevent US annexation.[367] After departmentalisation, the influence of the US persisted through the number of Antilleans who moved there for study or work, and the prospect of annexation continued to feature in political debates about the future of Martinique and Guadeloupe. For example, in a 1968 debate about the question of autonomy, trade unionists and members of pro-autonomy groups argued that 'American imperialism is a present danger'.[368] Some commentators expressed the fear that stepping away from France completely would leave Guadeloupe open to American interference.[369] It certainly influenced the debate among the Left in the Antilles about autonomy and independence. It exacerbated divisions among different political groups, hindered the chance of a united left-wing coalition on the question of political status, and increased fears about the vulnerability of the Antilles if they became independent.

Given the popularity of communism in the French Antilles, the fear of US intervention if the islands became independent was not unfounded. Indeed, CIA memoranda in 1948 demonstrate US concerns about communist activity in Guadeloupe.[370] Having gained forty-five percent of the votes in the 1946 elections, the Communist Party of Guadeloupe was apparently 'fully capable of creating disorders among the native populace'.[371] The US feared that communist agitators would use the upcoming West Indian Conference to agitate and discredit the conference.[372] Concerns by the US about communism, disorder and the possibility of radical action in Martinique and Guadeloupe continued throughout the period in question, especially after the Cuban Revolution.

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[366] Childers, 'The Second World War as a Watershed in the French Caribbean', 426.
[367] See chapter one.
[368] 'La nation guadeloupéenne: Pour ou contre?', *Alizés*, January 1968, 14.
[369] Ibid.
[370] 'Ability of the Communist Party of Guadeloupe to Disrupt the West Indian Conference', Intelligence Memorandum no. 90, 30 November 1948, General CIA Records, 1-2, CIA FOIA ERR, https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/document/cia-rdp78-01617a000200310001-1.
[371] Ibid.
[372] Ibid.

CIA reports referred to the islands as 'France's discontented stepchildren' and criticised French 'inertia' over local demands for internal autonomy.[373] US intervention in Grenada in 1983 affirmed, to a certain extent, claims by the Guadeloupean and Martinican Left that the US might step in if France no longer controlled the islands.

The British Territories

In comparison, the British territories had a closer relationship to the US, geographically, culturally and politically. In the Cayman Islands, the geographical proximity of the US and the fact that Caymanians had a special visa waiver meant that Cayman-US relations deepened in the 1950s and 1960s. The significant economic change which made Cayman more prosperous in the 1950s was to a considerable degree due to American financing. Caymanian families were increasingly dependent on remittances from relatives working on American ships. This cultivated the relationship to the US and American culture, as many Caymanians purchased consumer goods from the US with their newfound disposable income.[374] Cayman became less isolated in this period and, by the end of 1954, six passenger services a week had been established, reaching destinations such as Kingston and Miami.[375] By the late 1960s, the Caymanian economy had transformed from the dependence on remittances from workers on US ships to the burgeoning tourism and financial sectors.[376] Again, these two sectors were heavily reliant on American tourists and businesses, strengthening US ties.

Furthermore, this special connection to the US, particularly the visa waiver, was an important concern for Caymanian politicians in the 1950s and early 1960s. As the previous chapter revealed,

[373] 'Latin American Trends', 16 April 1975, General CIA Records, no. 0505/75, 5-7, CIA FOIA ERR, https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/document/cia-rdp79t00865a000800010001-3.
[374] Major Ivor O. Smith, 'President's Address to the Legislative Assembly', 22 February 1950, Legislative Assembly Storeroom, Box 26, CINA.
[375] Colonial Office Report on the Cayman Islands, 1953-1954, CO 1071/93, 4, TNA.
[376] Colonial Office Report on the Cayman Islands, 1966-1970, 4, CINA.

in debates about the West Indies Federation and the future of Cayman's political status, maintaining the special visa waiver was a primary concern for Caymanians. This issue fed into the decision to split away from Jamaica as it became independent. Caymanian politician Norman Bodden suggested that the visa waiver was central to the decision to become a crown colony in 1962.[377] Harry McCoy, a senior civil servant, concurred with Bodden, arguing 'we would have lost this concession of being able to go to the United States'.[378] Thus, the connection with the US influenced key political decisions about how to decolonise in the Cayman Islands.

Likewise, the BVI maintained close links to the US throughout the postwar period and into the 1980s. Despite being distinct political entities for most of the past three hundred years, the BVI and USVI, formerly the Danish West Indies, remained interconnected and were often described as one larger socioeconomic entity.[379] BVIslanders relied on employment opportunities in St Thomas, during and after the Second World War, and this dependency continued into the 1960s. The tourism boom in the USVI in the 1960s came as a direct result of the Cuban Revolution, as American tourists looked elsewhere for beach holidays. In 1960, sixteen percent of BVIslanders worked in the USVI, and many found jobs in the expanding tourism sector.[380] Furthermore, many BVIslanders had family in the US Virgin Islands.[381] As a result, amalgamation with the USVI was prevalent in political debates throughout the 1960s and 1970s. For example, a 1972 *Island Sun* editorial questioned 'Will It Ever Jell?' wondering whether unification would occur in the following few years.[382] The USVI Senator Earl B. Ottley argued in favour of unification on the basis of 'ethnic, geographic and economic factors'.[383] The subject was brought up later in 1972 in an

[377] Norman Bodden, in interview (2), conducted by Heather McLaughlin, 10 May 1999, 2, CINA.
[378] Harwell (Harry) McCoy, Snr., in interview (4), conducted by Heather McLoughlin, 22 July 1992, 22, CINA.
[379] Norwell Harrigan, *The Inter-Virgin Islands Conference* (Gainesville: University Presses of Florida, 1980), 2.
[380] Ibid., 55.
[381] Noel Lloyd, *The Positive Action Movement 1968* (Tortola: Government of the Virgin Islands, 2000), 1–15.
[382] 'Will It Ever Jell?', *The Island Sun,* 15 January 1972, 7.
[383] Ibid.

editorial on 'The question of one Virgin Islands'.[384] At times, this focus on the question of amalgamation in political debates side-lined the issue of independence.

To encourage cooperation between the two groups and to deal with the many matters of mutual concern, the Inter-Virgin Islands Conference was established in 1951 and continued through the 1960s.[385] After it was discontinued, there were attempts to revive it in 1970, eventually leading to the establishment of the BVI-USVI Friendship Day in 1971.[386] During the fourth annual Friendship Day celebrations, the Governor of the USVI 'expressed the hope for greater co-operation' suggesting it could 'ultimately lead to unity of both groups of islands under one flag'.[387] The subject of amalgamation was also raised many times over the decades by British officials as a solution to the political status issue. For example, Administrator Thomson described the BVI as 'hanging on the coat-tails of St Thomas' and thought the British Government 'should open negotiations with the United States Government for the disposal of the islands to the United States'.[388] However, by the end of his administration Thomson believed he had strengthened ties to Britain and this should be maintained instead of pushing annexation by the US.[389] Through encouraging a focus on amalgamation, American influence in the BVI skewed the perspective of British officials, as well as local politicians, about the question of independence.

The influence of the US shaped debates about decolonisation across the four overseas territories. In the French Antilles, politicians feared the threat of annexation by the US in the 1940s. They were concerned that joining a racially segregated US would threaten the rights of black Antilleans. This added to the impetus to departmentalise in 1946 in order to avoid this eventuality. In the

[384] 'The question of one Virgin Islands', *The Island Sun*, 28 October 1972, 9.
[385] British Virgin Islands Report, 1961-1962, 3-4, VINA.
[386] British Virgin Islands Report, 1970, 4, VINA.
[387] British Virgin Islands Report, 1975, 9, VINA.
[388] Ian Thomson in letter to Douglas Home FCO, 9 January 1971, FCO 44/614, 1, TNA.
[389] Ibid.

Cayman Islands, on the other hand, discussions about the political future, especially in relation to the West Indies Federation, were shaped by the desire of the Cayman elite to protect the US special visa waiver. In the French Antilles and the Cayman Islands, the influence of the US was perceived locally through a Cold War lens. This was particularly potent in Martinique and Guadeloupe where the popularity of communism encouraged anti-American sentiment. In Cayman, on the other hand, anti-communist attitudes strengthened the US connection.

In the BVI, it was not a desire for access to the US economy but the question of political amalgamation which generated most debate and speculation. Unlike the French Antilles, the possibility of annexation was mostly seen in a positive light in the BVI. It deflected political attention away from the subject of independence, as BVIslanders considered merging with the US Virgin Islands. This was the most significant factor in the process of decolonisation in the Virgin Islands, absorbing considerable political energy. In this instance, the role of the US in local political debates was not generally interpreted through a Cold War lens, but was more an issue of BVI-USVI unity. Therefore, the American influence in the Caribbean territories, though not always principally a Cold War phenomenon, was pertinent throughout the period in question and helped to shape debates about decolonisation.

2. The Cuban Revolution

The clearest manifestation of the Cold War in the Caribbean was – of course – the Cuban Revolution. The Revolution had a sweeping and drastic impact on the Caribbean region, bringing with it the call for rebellion against US-backed governments, anti-Americanism, and Cuba's movement toward communism and alliance with the Soviet Union.[390] It prompted both awe and fear in politicians and officials across the Caribbean. The threat of a similar armed uprising

[390] Paterson, *Contesting Castro*, 3. See also Pérez-Stable, *The Cuban Revolution Origins, Course, and Legacy*; Schoultz, *That Infernal Little Cuban Republic*.

occurring in a French or British colony greatly alarmed colonial officials, particularly in the French Antilles where the local communist parties were popular. For independence activists, it stood as a beacon of hope that change could be achieved against the odds. The four overseas territories did not experience major intervention from the US or Soviet Union and thus could be seen as isolated from this Cold War experience of many post-colonial states. However, in reality the Cold War crept into policy decisions and debates about the future of the territories, making them very much part of this global phenomenon.

The Cayman Islands

The impact of the Cuban Revolution was not the most decisive factor in explaining the decolonisation of the Cayman Islands and their current non-independent status. The monopoly of the merchant elite over politics and the economy, and their expressed affinity for British rule and Britishness held greater sway over local politics.[391] Nonetheless, the proximity of Cuba and the Cold War context undoubtedly had a degree of influence. The British monitored the threat of communist activity in the Cayman Islands because of its strategic location so close to the US and Cuba.[392] The US remained concerned about Cuban planes with refugees landing in Cayman containing 'Communist agents heading for Latin America'.[393] It has also been suggested that the CIA held bank accounts in the Cayman Islands in order to transfer funds anonymously for the purchase of arms during the Cold War.[394] The Cayman Islands evidently held a certain geographical importance for the Cold War in the Caribbean.

[391] Discussed further in chapter four.
[392] For example, see the monthly reports in: 'Cayman Islands Monthly Political Reports', 1963-1965, CO 1031/4768, TNA; 'Cayman Islands Local Intelligence Reports', 1975, FCO 44/1187, TNA.
[393] 'The President's Intelligence Checklist', 13 August 1963, General CIA Records, 3, CIA FOIA ERR, https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/document/0005996503.
[394] Jack Anderson and Joseph Spear, 'How CIA Moved Some Arms-Deal Money', *Washington Post,* 9 December 1986, General CIA records, CIA FOIA ERR, https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/document/cia-rdp90-00965r000100110045-3.

The Cayman Islands gained greater international significance when several anti-Castro Cuban planes landed in Grand Cayman during the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba by the US.[395] This created a potentially difficult diplomatic situation between Britain and the US because Britain initially seized the planes.[396] The suggestion was made that Castro might think Britain was assisting with the invasion and allowing Cayman to be used as a launching point.[397] The CIA report is redacted but implies that the US had the 'unofficial blessing of the British Government' to use Cayman for emergency landings.[398] The British Commissioner at the time, Jack Rose, described discovering four American aircraft with Cuban markings at the airport in Grand Cayman with 'a few bullet holes, but nothing serious'.[399] Rose was concerned to find the planes loaded with 'rockets, bombs and machine guns' and 'the rocket and machine gun controls were still on 'Fire''.[400] The CIA arrived in the night to assist with the situation and little news of the incident got out.[401] The aircraft were returned to the US without major difficulty.[402] The covering up of the incident makes it hard to judge its impact at a local level. At an international level, it appears that Britain remained wary of openly allowing the US to use British territories in its actions against Cuba, though they may have unofficially permitted it. Britain allowed Cold War considerations to influence their approach to the Cayman Islands and Caymanian decolonisation.

The proximity of Cuba to the Cayman Islands, just 185 miles away, was of great significance when it came to Caymanian approaches to communism. Historically, Cayman had strong links to Cuba,

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[395] Letter from the Treasury Solicitor to Foreign Office regarding aircraft landing in Cayman, 14 March 1961, FO 371/156198, 1-2, TNA; see also file on 'Reports on the activities of foreign aircraft and vessels in the Cayman Islands', 1959-1961, FCO 141/5453, TNA.
[396] Jack Rose in interview with *The Cayman Compass,* 31 December 2009.
[397] 'Official History of the Bay of Pigs Operation', Volume 1, Part 2, Air Operations, March 1960-April 1961, General CIA Records, 336-337, CIA FOIA ERR, https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/document/5076ddc4993247d4d82b58da.
[398] 'Official History of the Bay of Pigs Operation', Volume 1, Part 1, Air Operations, March 1960-April 1961, General CIA Records, 148, CIA FOIA ERR, https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/document/5076ddc4993247d4d82b58d9.
[399] Jack Rose in interview with *The Cayman Compass,* 31 December 2009.
[400] Ibid.
[401] Ibid.
[402] 'Official History of the Bay of Pigs Operation', Volume 1, Part 2, 336-337.

with many Caymanians settling in Cuba when faced with economic hardship in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Cayman maintained particularly close links to the Isle of Pines (now the Isle of Youth), where many Caymanians had settled, and there were frequent boats between the two in the early twentieth century.[403] Following the Cuban Revolution, fear of communist ideas spreading to Cayman was prevalent among the merchant elite and British officials. Although communism did not appear a natural inclination for the traditional, religious and conservative Caymanian society, any hint of communism was attacked and quashed. Branding someone a communist was used to discredit political opponents and anyone seen to be disturbing the status quo. It was a useful tool for the merchant elite to maintain their power. Roy Bodden, for example, a teacher in the 1970s and more recently the President of the University College of the Cayman Islands (2009-2018), was subject to considerable opposition and slander when he publicly questioned the power of the merchants and the political status of Cayman in 1978.[404] At the time, he was openly critical of the merchant elite and wrote several articles in the local newspaper examining the problems caused by Cayman's continued colonial status. As a result, he was labelled a communist and found it difficult to gain employment, forcing him to move overseas for further study and work.[405] This was a common experience for those who spoke out against the status quo.

Fear of communism was also used to restrict press activity in the islands. The editors of the newspapers *The Northwester* and *The Caymanian Compass* found themselves the object of criticism, censorship and restrictions because their editorial policies conflicted with that of some of the Executive and Legislative Assembly members.[406] Firstly, four members of the Executive Council wrote to *The Caymanian Compass* to complain about stories in the paper covering news from

[403] Dr. Elsa Cummings, interview, 13 December 2002, 4, CINA; Harwell (Harry) McCoy, Snr, interview, 30 April 1991, 7-8, CINA; Gloris Rolando*, Cherished Island Memories: A History of Cubans and Cayman Islanders* (2007), documentary film.
[404] Roy Bodden, 'Colonialism's curbs; party politics' failure, and future problems', *The Northwester,* September 1978, 36-42.
[405] Roy Bodden, Caymanian historian, in interview with the author, Grand Cayman, 14 July 2016.
[406] Editorial, *The Northwester*, October 1978, 5.

'Communist or socialist countries'.[407] The members were apparently angry because the paper had included reports on Cuba and Guyana which they described as 'propaganda'.[408] The inclusion of Roy Bodden's 1978 article in *The Northwester* attracted the ire of Executive Council member Haig Bodden who labelled the editor 'socialist'.[409] Fellow Executive Council member Truman Bodden also attacked the paper, suggesting that 'evil forces' were at play in Caymanian society 'threatening to wreck Cayman's peaceful way of life'.[410] He later accused *The Northwester* of being communist because they appeared to disagree with his education policy.[411] An editorial in the paper in July 1979 alleged that the persecution of *The Northwester* had continued and a member of the Executive Council, whom they did not name, had blocked the editors from taking a Cayman Airways flight.[412] The use of 'communist' as a slur against anyone who disagreed with the political establishment was not unique to Cayman during the Cold War. However, Cayman's close proximity to Cuba made accusations particularly potent.

In this context, it is perhaps surprising that Cayman accepted Cuban refugees for two decades following the revolution. Indeed, it was one of the few islands in the region to accept Cuban refugees in the 1970s.[413] In the aftermath of the Cuban Revolution, some Caymanians found themselves stuck in Cuba and struggled to return to the Cayman Islands.[414] The Legislative Assembly allowed Cubans to continue to arrive in Cayman. This caused a degree of conflict for the British Government who chose not to get involved in the issue. Hostility towards communism led many Caymanians to object to the arrival of Cuban refugees. They protested at the Grand Cayman airport and tried to block flights from Cuba from landing. Yet Cubans continued to arrive

[407] 'Curbing freedom does not defend it', *The Northwester,* March 1977, 5.
[408] Ibid.
[409] Editorial, *The Northwester*, October 1978, 5.
[410] Ibid.
[411] Editorial, *The Northwester*, May 1979, 5.
[412] Editorial, *The Northwester*, July 1979, 5.
[413] Sandra van der Bol, 'From their island of despair, Cubans come to our isle of hope', *The Northwester,* Christmas 1973, 48-9.
[414] 'Release Caymanians', Tradewinds, 3 August 1967, 3.

in Cayman by boat. *The Northwester* portrayed this as a victory for anti-communist Cayman, suggesting 'From their island of despair, Cubans come to our isle of hope'.[415] For many Caymanians, communist Cuba was both an object of fear and a point of comparison used to promote and venerate the Cayman Islands.

Furthermore, the spectre of 'chaotic' Cuba became significant in debates about self-government in Cayman in the 1960s.[416] One Caymanian living in Canada warned readers of *Tradewinds* that Cayman was 'next-door neighbours to a country which is notorious for recklessness and irresponsibility - CUBA'.[417] She went on to argue that 'Cuba remains chaotic after generations of "self-rule" and political experience'.[418] In his quest for self-government in the 1960s, Ormond Panton had to be very careful about not seeming too radical for fear of being labelled a communist.[419] Given that the most significant push for self-government came in 1962, not long after the Cuban Revolution, this post-Revolution context may have encouraged Caymanians and British officials to be more cautious.

The British Virgin Islands

Likewise, in the British Virgin Islands, the Cuban Revolution encouraged anti-communist rhetoric and this was certainly the clearest impact of the Cold War for decolonisation in the BVI. Anti-communism was used by local politicians to slander opponents, as well as by British intelligence and officials to criticise agitators and pro-independence activists. One contributor to *The Island Sun* suggested that the writer of a piece encouraging independence should be sent 'to Fidel Castro's

[415] Sandra van der Bol, 'From their island of despair', 48-9.
[416] Doreen Miller, Letter to editor, *Tradewinds*, 21 January 1965, 2-3.
[417] Ibid.
[418] Ibid.
[419] 'Election Campaigning Begins', *Tradewinds,* 28 October 1965, 1.

land for insulting the intelligence of British Virgin Islanders'.[420] Like in Cayman, Cuba was evoked in debates about decolonisation and used as a warning of the perils of independence.

The Cuban Revolution was met with interest in the BVI but, like Cayman, BVIslanders tended to be conservative and communism was not popular. The local newspaper *Tortola Times* broke the news of the Revolution by contrasting events in Cuba with the 'peaceful and calm conditions that prevail in the British Virgin Islands'.[421] The editorial argued 'We do not have a 'Castro' like Cuba for the plain and simple reason no one like that is needed here'.[422] Despite the perceived low level risk of 'communist subversion' in the BVI, the British Government remained wary about relations with Cuba.[423] For example, the Commonwealth Office refused to allow Cuban tobacco experts to visit the islands in 1967.[424] The Administrator's request for the visit was deemed 'unacceptable' and the visas for the Cuban experts were denied.[425] This shows that even in islands where communism was not particularly popular, Britain was cautious about allowing contact with Cuba, partly as a result of US pressure.

During this period, the British government monitored any 'radical' persons or groups through the lens of a communist threat, even more so after the Cuban Revolution. For example, one of the leaders of the 1968 Positive Action protest movement, Walter Lindy deCastro, was under constant surveillance after his involvement in the protests became known. He was a vocal advocate of independence and spoke out against the government and British rule. As a result, the British were concerned about his ability to generate unrest. Intelligence reports claimed that deCastro was not

[420] 'More Views on Amalgamation', *The Island Sun,* 1 February 1964, 2.
[421] Editorial, *Tortola Times,* 7 March 1959, 3.
[422] Ibid.
[423] Telegram from Administrator of BVI to Secretary of State for Commonwealth Office, 15 April 1967, FCO 44/121, TNA.
[424] Telegram from Secretary of State for Commonwealth Office to Administrator of BVI, 14 April 1967, FCO 44/121, TNA.
[425] Ibid.

thought to be communist, 'though he frequently uses typical communist expressions'.[426] He apparently did not 'appear to have any direct links with any subversive or Communist group in the US'.[427] However, Britain was concerned that he received 'racialist literature from [the US], and also from Africa'.[428]

The fallout from the Cuban Revolution greatly influenced British approaches to independence activists and anyone calling for change. They automatically viewed activists in terms of whether they would pose a communist or revolutionary threat, often blurring the lines between these two and not making it clear what they defined as 'subversive'. The Cold War encouraged Britain to be even more suspicious and cautious towards advocates of change. The British approach of engineering a decolonisation that favoured Britain-friendly, anti-communist governments was given greater impetus by the Cold War context.

The French Antilles

The Cuban Revolution was hugely significant for the French Antilles. Communism was popular in the islands well before the Revolution, especially after the Second World War. The Revolution had a considerable impact on the quest for independence because all the main pro-independence parties and groups which sprang up in the 1960s were openly Marxist. This not only gave France a greater excuse to monitor and imprison activists, but it also reduced the likelihood of France allowing an open debate or negotiations with these groups. The French intelligence services monitored all local political meetings, debates and assemblies. Any communist politicians or members were subject to increased scrutiny.[429] Furthermore, anti-communist campaigns among right-wing groups and the right-wing press were prevalent throughout the postwar period. For

[426] Report on dissatisfaction with Government, March 1968, FCO 44/336, TNA.
[427] Ibid.
[428] Ibid.
[429] 'Réunion du Conseil Général de la Guadeloupe', 1948-1961, Renseignements Generaux, 1347 W 62, ADG.

example, *La Vérité,* a Guadeloupean journal established in 1952, dubbed itself the 'Guadeloupean mouthpiece for the fight against communism'.[430] Like the British territories, anti-communist campaigns were used to smear political opponents.

Before the Cuban Revolution, the Cold War influenced decolonisation in the French Antilles through the clashes and conflicts within the local and international communist parties. Aimé Césaire famously split from the communist party in 1956 after the Soviet Union crushed the Hungarian Revolution.[431] In his letter of resignation to Maurice Thorez, the leader of the French party, Césaire criticised the party's 'unwillingness to condemn Stalin'.[432] He highlighted the abuse Yugoslavia received from the Soviet Union 'for the crime of having asserted its will to independence' as another reason for his resignation.[433] Césaire further denounced the French Communist Party for 'their inveterate assimilationism' and 'their fairly simplistic faith… in the omnilateral superiority of the West'.[434] Césaire specifically blamed the narrowness of the Communist Party and its inability to deal with the particular nature and problems of Martinique as a reason for leaving. Unrestricted by the communist determination to remain bound to France, this could have been a moment for Césaire to direct Martinique towards greater autonomy or independence. It did allow for a widening of the debate, as Césaire's Martinican Progressive Party, established in 1958, aimed to deal with the 'Martinican situation' and argued in favour of greater autonomy. However, Césaire never went as far as calling for full independence.

Both the Cuban Revolution and the Sino-Soviet split caused further divisions among communist politicians and activists in the French Antilles. The communist parties in Martinique and Guadeloupe approached these issues with an inflexibility that led to increased tensions among

[430] *La Vérité*, no. 6, 15 March 1952, 1.
[431] See 'Demission de Cesaire du Parti Communiste', 1956, Fonds Louis Addrassé, 36J19, ADM.
[432] Aimé Césaire, 'Lettre à Maurice Thorez', *Présence Africaine,* 24 October 1956, BR 62, 6, ADG.
[433] Ibid.
[434] Ibid., 11.

their membership.[435] Those who drew inspiration from Mao or Castro felt increasingly alienated, as the Martinican and Guadeloupean communist parties continued to toe the Soviet line.[436] GONG (the National Organisation Group of Guadeloupe) was one of the many pro-autonomy and pro-independence groups to follow Maoist teachings and, as a result, to clash with the Guadeloupean communist party. Some members of GONG travelled to China to meet Mao in 1964.[437] International debates among communists during the Cold War exacerbated divisions in the local communist parties in the Antilles, distracting from discussions about autonomy and independence.

Out of the four territories, the Cuban Revolution was arguably most significant for Martinique and Guadeloupe. Cuba held symbolic importance for communist and pro-independence groups like GONG. Their Guadeloupean flag resembled the Cuban flag, with green rather than blue stripes. Guadeloupean historian Mérion suggests that it was only after the Tricontinental conference in 1966, which members of GONG attended, that Cuba became more central to GONG's message.[438] In the 1960s, over half the population of Guadeloupe was under twenty and Cuba was hugely influential in this young society.[439] Connections to Cuba were reinforced through family ties from inter-Caribbean migration, through the popularity of Cuban music and dance, and, most significantly, through the romanticisation of the Cuban Revolution by a disenfranchised youth seeking to challenge authority.[440] The French security services greatly feared the power of an organisation like GONG to harness the pro-Cuban sentiment among this important segment of the Guadeloupean population. This view was shared by the Prefect of Guadeloupe who

[435] Edouard de Lépuie, 'Le Parti Communiste et le mouvement ouvrier à la Martinique de 1945 à nos jours' in *Historial Antillais,* Volume VI, A2116, 256, ADG.
[436] *Justice,* Martinique, no. 18, 30 April 1964, 1-3.
[437] Claude Makouke, 'C'était le GONG…' in Autopsie politique du massacre de mai 1967: la Guadeloupe entre violence, terreur et résistance, ed. Julien Mérion (Pointe-à-Pitre: Éditions Jasor), 145–50.
[438] Julien Mérion, *Autopsie Politique Du Massacre de Mai 1967: La Guadeloupe Entre Violence, Terreur et Résistance* (Pointe-à-Pitre: Éditions Jasor, 2017), 70–71.
[439] Cazes, 'Problèmes de population et perspectives économiques en Martinique et en Guadeloupe', 384.
[440] Mérion, *Autopsie Politique Du Massacre de Mai 1967*, 63–80.

perceived the enthusiasm generated by the Tricontinental conference, combined with the geographical proximity to Cuba and the growing agitation in Guadeloupe, to be 'a direct threat to the French departments of the Caribbean and to their national status'.[441]

Cuba had a wider influence on Antillean nationalism and student activism in metropolitan France. The events and debates from the Tricontinental conference were discussed with enthusiasm by Antillean student organisations in mainland France. *Alizés,* the anticolonialist Christian journal, labelled Havana as the capital of the revolutionary Third World, and highlighted the importance of an 'armed struggle' for a Cuban style revolution.[442] Interestingly, though its coverage mentioned the presence of Guadeloupeans and Martinicans at the conference, it did not discuss GONG's resolution on Guadeloupean independence, perhaps for fear of censorship.[443] Trade unionists and independence activists interviewed by the journal saw Cuba as the example for the French Antilles to follow.[444] They argued 'the people see Cuba and they smile'.[445] The focus on emulating a Cuban-style armed struggle caused divisions among Guadeloupean activists in the 1970s. Nationalists fragmented into those who pursued more radical violent action, and those who focused on generating Maoist-style populism through the politicisation of agricultural workers.[446]

The French Antilles had a strategic significance for Franco-American and Franco-Cuban relations during the Cold War. In the late 1960s, Cuba attempted to forge closer connections in the Caribbean region, initially having greatest success with the French departments. Cuban actions in the French Antilles corresponds with recent research suggesting a shift in Cuba's Latin American relations in the late 1960s.[447] Several Cuban delegations visited Martinique and Guadeloupe, and

[441] Pierre Bolotte, 'Souvenirs d'un préfet de la République (1944-2001)', 2000, 513-54, Sciences-Po Archives.
[442] Robert Montsteerlet, 'La Tricontinentale de la Havane', *Alizés,* February 1966, 18-19.
[443] Ibid., 17-20.
[444] 'La nation guadeloupéenne: Pour ou contre?', *Alizés*, January 1968, 15-6.
[445] Ibid.
[446] Bonilla, *Non-Sovereign Futures*, 28–29.
[447] Harmer, 'Two, Three, Many Revolutions?'

Cuban merchant ships stopped regularly at the French islands.[448] Despite Cuba's anti-imperialist rhetoric, it did not directly challenge France's control of Martinique and Guadeloupe in the 1960s. However, this changed in the late 1970s: a statement by the Cuban delegation to the UN in 1979 argued that the 'colonial presence' in the Caribbean should be eliminated.[449] This was accompanied by Cuban efforts at strengthening their relationship with left-wing groups in the French Antilles and fostering sporting and cultural links, such as the Guadeloupe-Cuba and Martinique-Cuba associations. France remained wary of these developments and any activists with ties to Cuba or visiting Cuba were carefully monitored.[450]

Evidently, the Cuban Revolution had an impact on the processes of decolonisation in the overseas territories. This was most evident in the French Antilles, as Marxist independence activists were directly inspired by the Revolution and some sought to emulate Castro's armed struggle. However, anti-communist fears from the French State intensified the surveillance and restrictions placed on pro-independence and left-wing activists. Anti-communism on the part of the state was also apparent in the British territories. Moreover, it was employed by local politicians and commentators in both the British and French territories to criticise opponents.

3. Anticolonial networks and the 'Third World' project

A third global political dynamic, closely entwined with the Cold War, is the development of transnational anticolonial movements, the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the various strands of Third World solidarity in the second half of the twentieth century. Activists and commentators in the overseas territories engaged with these ideas and networks, though their

[448] 'Cuba's changing relationship with Latin America', Weekly Summary Special Report, no. 602, 28 January 1972, General CIA Reports, CIA FOIA ERR, https://www.cia.gov/library/readingroom/document/cia-rdp85t00875r001500040004-4.
[449] Telegram from Jacques Leprette French ambassador to the UN, to Minister of Foreign Affairs, 13 December 1979, 19940221/56, AN.
[450] For example, Report on 'Passage à Basse-Terre d'un attaché commercial cubain', Sureté nationale, Département de Guadeloupe, 19 November 1969, 19940180/196, AN.

engagement varied considerably and also developed over time. By late 1970s, the increase in living standards in these territories compared to other independent states around them, led some to see themselves as separate from the so-called Third World.

The French Antilles

French Antillean students and activists were heavily involved in the development of anticolonial networks in the immediate postwar era, particularly in Paris. Martinican intellectuals were central to the development of twentieth century anticolonial thought. Aimé Césaire, for example, was one of the founders of the interwar intellectual movement *Négritude* and his 1950 essay *Discourse on Colonialism* was a powerful denunciation of European colonialism and the 'civilising mission'.[451] Frantz Fanon was also an important figure in twentieth century anticolonialism through his writings on decolonisation and his involvement in the Algerian War. He advocated violence as a means to achieve decolonisation and inspired independence movements for several decades after his death.[452] His biographer, David Macey, described him as 'the most famous spokesman of a Third Worldism, which held that the future of socialism… was no longer in the hands of the proletariat of the industrialised countries, but in those of the dispossessed wretched of the earth'.[453] Césaire and Fanon are perhaps the two most famous French Caribbean intellectuals who participated in the global twentieth century struggle against colonialism, but many other students and activists from Martinique and Guadeloupe engaged in transnational Third World campaigns.

Antillean engagement in Third World activism in the 1950s was not straightforward. While some students in Paris participated in anticolonial groups calling for independence in other colonies, the debate about the future of the Antilles tended to focus on how departmentalisation could be better

[451] Césaire, *Discours Sur Le Colonialisme*.
[452] Fanon, *Les damnés de la terre*.
[453] David Macey, *Frantz Fanon: A Biography* (London: Verso, 2012), 6.

adapted in order to improve living conditions in the Caribbean.[454] *Alizés,* the newspaper for the Antillean-Guianese Federation of Catholic Students (FAGEC) began in 1951 and was published throughout the period in question, making it a useful window into perspectives from Antillean students in the metropole. In earlier editions of *Alizés*, many students focused on the best way to implement departmentalisation and embraced it as a workable solution to issues in Martinique and Guadeloupe.[455] Meanwhile, in April 1955, Third World leaders from Asia and Africa met in Bandung, Indonesia to promote anticolonialism and Third World cooperation.[456] It is difficult to judge the impact of Bandung among Antillean students, perhaps because much of the discussion remained around how to improve departmentalisation.[457]

However, the 1960s generation of students were more radical than their predecessors and, as well as being more critical of departmentalisation, some engaged more actively in Third World movements. The Algerian War was influential in this change of perspective. Just as the horrors of decolonisation in Algeria captured global attention and motivated independence struggles elsewhere, Antillean perspectives on French colonialism were greatly altered and many began seeking alternative solutions to departmentalisation. Accordingly, *Alizés* contributors in the early 1960s appeared disillusioned with departmentalisation and sought to emulate other anticolonial struggles. For example, a 1962 article on different forms of decolonisation argued that, if France failed to act, Martinique and Guadeloupe would 'inevitably follow African and Caribbean examples'.[458] Many of the articles in *Alizés* in this period focused on Antillean issues of migration, racial inequality and economic dependency.

[454] Daily, 'Race, Citizenship, and Antillean Student Activism in Postwar France, 1946-1968'.
[455] For example, Louis Achille, 'Lettre de Lyon', *Alizés*, December 1951, 3.
[456] Prashad, *The Darker Nations*, 31–50.
[457] Dumont, *L'amère patrie*, 256.
[458] 'Les forms que peut revetir la decolonisation', *Alizés*, December 1962, 7.

Looking specifically at nationalist organisations, the development of the Guadeloupean nationalist movement in the 1960s highlights the ways Guadeloupeans connected with transnational anticolonial networks. There was a strong global dynamic at work in the growth of GONG, the first group to call for Guadeloupean independence, most notably through GONG's connections to Algeria, Cuba and Vietnam. GONG attracted students, Guadeloupean workers based in mainland France, and conscientious objectors who had refused to serve in the Algerian War. The organisation also drew support from veterans, like Ken Kelly, the editor of GONG's journal, who were greatly affected by their experiences of French brutality in Algeria.[459] GONG was a Marxist organisation which had Maoist leanings and sought inspiration from the Cuban Revolution and the war in Vietnam.[460] Like other youth and student protest movements in the 1960s, GONG focused on the Vietnam War as the embodiment of a revolutionary struggle against imperialism.[461] Furthermore, the leaders of GONG were acutely aware of the risks of working openly, having witnessed the swift imprisonment of the Martinican group OJAM (Martinican Anticolonial Youth Organisation) in 1961.[462]

As a result, GONG sought to emulate Algerian and Vietnamese revolutionary tactics, creating cells of activists in the main French cities and operating covertly. The group focused mostly on propaganda, smuggling nationalist material into Guadeloupe.[463] GONG was in direct contact with political figures in China, Belgium, Guinea, Albania, Egypt, Vietnam and, most significantly, Algeria.[464] The government of the newly independent Algeria assisted in the creation of several GONG cadres.[465] Along with other anticolonial groups from Martinique and Guadeloupe, GONG

[459] Ken Kelly, in interview with author, 25 April 2017.
[460] 'Du reformisme du PCG au mythe de la troisieme voie', *GONG Information: Journal du Patriote Guadeloupéen*, no. 5, May 1964, 11.
[461] 'Le people vietnamien vaincra', *GONG Information: Journal du Patriote Guadeloupéen*, no. 19, March-May 1967, 20-23.
[462] Pierre Sainton, *Vie et survie d'un fils de la Guadeloupe* (Gourbeyre, Guadeloupe: Editions Nestor, 2008), 194.
[463] Ibid., 207-17.
[464] Claude Makouke, 'C'était le GONG…', 148.
[465] Ibid.

members attended the 1966 Tricontinental Conference in Havana, gaining recognition for Guadeloupe's struggle against colonialism on an international stage.[466] This highlights the global reach of GONG, who used their international connections to get around restrictions imposed upon them by the French state.

Activists in the Antilles, based both in mainland France and in the Caribbean, participated in several transnational solidarity campaigns in the 1970s. For example, Guadeloupean communists declared their solidarity with Chile after the coup in 1973, while the Victor Schoelcher Circle in Martinique also ran a Chilean solidarity campaign.[467] The Circle, a Marxist group which was named after the famous French abolitionist, campaigned on various global issues, such as the war in Vietnam. In 1976, the Circle ran a campaign supporting Desmond Trotter, a Dominican black power activist who had been sentenced to hang for killing an American tourist.[468] Louis Adrassé, the President of the Victor Schoelcher Circle, wrote to the Prime Minister of Dominica, Patrick John, pleading for Trotter's release.[469] Adrassé argued that as people of the 'Caribbean basin' they were particularly sensitive to this kind of 'injustice'.[470] A Martinican Committee for the Defence of Trotter was established to liaise with groups in Dominica to increase pressure on the Prime Minister to release Trotter.[471] Trotter's sentence was eventually commuted and in 1979 he was freed, in part thanks to pressure groups from across the Caribbean. Martinicans were particularly active in this campaign, staging protest marches and petitioning the Dominican Prime Minister. The Trotter case is a striking example of the success of the transnational activism of French Antilleans.

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[466] 'La Resolution sur la Guadeloupe', *GONG Information: Journal du Patriote Guadeloupéen*, no. 14, February 1966, 18.
[467] *L'Etincelle*, no. 1276, 27 October 1973; *L'Etincelle*, no. 1272, 6 October 1973; Letter from Louis Adrassé to the 'Front de Defense des libertés publiques', 22 November 1973, 36J33, ADM.
[468] See file on 'Trial of Desmond Trotter', FCO 63/1314, TNA.
[469] Letter from Louis Adrassé to Patrick John, 19 March 1976, 36J31, ADM.
[470] Ibid.
[471] Flyer from the Martinican Committee for the Defence of Trotter, 36J31, ADM.

After the Tricontinental Conference in Havana, Martinican and Guadeloupean groups continued to send representatives to Third World meetings and conferences of the Non-Aligned Movement. At the 1979 summit in Havana, two Guadeloupean delegations attended, both of which supported independence. Pro-autonomy groups had also been invited but had apparently declined to attend.[472] Reporting on the conference, *Le Journal Guadeloupéen*, a pro-independence newspaper, argued that, 'faced with the domination of France, the alternative for the people of Guadeloupe is to develop solidarity with those nations who currently constitute the Third World'.[473] Although they were on the margins of the local political scene, these pro-independence groups continued to engage in transnational efforts of Third World solidarity.

Evidently, different political groups in the French Antilles had a complicated relationship with anticolonialism and the 'Third World'. For some, integration into the French Republic distanced Martinique and Guadeloupe from the rest of the colonised and formerly colonised world, and global matters were approached from a French perspective. Other activists, particularly the more radical left-wing organisations which split off from the communist parties, identified more clearly with the Third World and sought to engage in transnational solidarity campaigns. As the global political context changed and developed from 1945 across the decades, so too did the nature of engagement in the French Antilles.

The British Virgin Islands

In comparison to the French islands, it is more difficult to get a sense of the popularity of anticolonial ideas in the British Virgin Islands. This is partly due to the much smaller population size, as well as the fact that there was no local newspaper until 1959. While BVIslanders who had moved to the US to study got involved in student organisations, particularly civil rights campaigns,

[472] Jean-Claude Mado, 'Les non alignés', *Le Journal Guadeloupéen*, no. 2, 21 November 1979, 25.
[473] Ibid.

it is worth bearing in mind that a permanent middle-class intelligentsia did not exist in the BVI itself in the 1960s. There was no secondary school in the territory before 1947 and no higher education college until 1990. While there were a substantial number of graduates and other qualified BVIslanders abroad, most tended to remain away from the islands to pursue employment opportunities. Throughout the 1960s, only five BVI graduates resided permanently in the islands: two teachers, one civil servant, one lawyer, and one engineer.[474] Harrigan suggests that an 'emergent intelligentsia' developed in the territory from those who had gone to school on other islands or had cultivated a world view through migrating overseas.[475] This emergent intelligentsia became more vocal about BVIslander issues, linking them to the global political context.

BVIslander engagement with Third Worldism and anticolonialism is most apparent in the Positive Action Movement of the 1960s and 1970s. The Movement began as a campaign opposing a land development project known as the Batehill Agreement.[476] The group's leader Noel Lloyd displayed a pan-Caribbean perspective in his writings. For example, in an *Island Sun* article entitled 'One People', Lloyd referred to the 1962 Commonwealth Immigration Act restricting Commonwealth citizens from migrating to the UK.[477] He called for 'West Indian unity' in response to Britain closing 'her doors in our faces'.[478] Lloyd identified 'foreign exploitation', as the common issue facing all West Indians and suggested the BVI should welcome Caribbean citizens from across the region in solidarity and in order to develop the BVI.[479]

[474] Norwell Harrigan, 'A Profile of Social Development in the British Virgin Islands', *Caribbean Studies* 10, no. 4 (1971): 89.
[475] Norwell Harrigan, 'The Development of the Political System in the British Virgin Islands: An Overview' (Caribbean Studies Association, St Thomas, USVI, 1981), 17.
[476] The Batehill Agreement and the Positive Action Movement is discussed in greater detail in chapter six.
[477] Noel Lloyd, 'One People', *The Island Sun*, 13 April 1968, 3-8.
[478] Ibid.
[479] Ibid.

Furthermore, an important element of the success of Positive Action Movement came from the international support it garnered. Solidarity groups in the US and USVI were a significant part of the campaign, resembling other 1968 movements where transnational support was crucial. These solidarity groups focused on the Anegada part of the Batehill Agreement and were mostly made up of Anegadians living abroad. Two were established in New York: the 'more extreme' Committee to Save Anegada led by Anegadian Carlyle G. Varlack, and the 'more moderate' Anegada Progressive League.[480] The Anegada Citizens Association headed by Adrian Varlack was based in St Thomas, USVI, and had strong links to the Committee to Save Anegada and to BVI historian Norwell Harrigan.[481] When the BVI Chief Minister visited New York, he spoke to the Anegadian groups in an attempt to reassure them that the BVI Government would guarantee that Anegadian rights were not curtailed.[482]

Like other organisations from colonies and former colonies, BVIslanders used the UN to further their cause. The USVI group of Anegadians caught the British Government's attention when they lobbied the UN General Assembly regarding the Batehill Agreement. A petition circulated at the UN committee on decolonisation requesting an observer be dispatched to monitor the committee of enquiry into the Batehill Agreement.[483] The petition claimed that the 'civil liberties of colonial peoples' were 'seriously threatened'.[484] Representatives from these solidarity groups spoke at the commission of enquiry into the agreement, adding greater pressure on the enquiry to reach a conclusion acceptable to BVIslanders. In 1970, Norwell Harrigan, as well as local politician Ralph O'Neal, informed the Administrator that they were prepared to go to the UN and 'embarrass the United Kingdom' if the Batehill affair was not resolved satisfactorily.[485] The British Government

[480] John Phillips to Len Price, 10 January 1970, FCO 44/454, TNA.
[481] Phillips to Price.
[482] Administrator to Fairclough, 27 January 1970, FCO 44/454, TNA.
[483] UN General Assembly Petition, 13 October 1969, FCO 44/339, TNA.
[484] UN General Assembly Petition.
[485] Administrator to Fairclough, 27 January 1970; John Phillips to FCO, 9 February 1970, FCO 44/454, TNA.

were concerned about these American groups, not only because of their threats to involve the UN, but also in case it attracted the attention of the US. As a result, the solidarity groups were influential in forcing Britain to resolve the dispute. Despite being a relatively small group of islands, actions by BVIslanders in the 1960s and 1970s can be seen as part of the global and transnational mobilisation against colonialism.

The Cayman Islands

The conservative nature of Caymanian society and the conditions which prevented the development of any substantial left-wing intelligentsia meant that Caymanians appeared less engaged in anticolonial movements and Third World activism. The lack of a local newspaper before 1956 was both symptomatic of the lack of alternative leadership outside of the merchant elite, and a contributing factor. Ormond Panton was perhaps the most influential Caymanian of the postwar era who engaged in transnational anticolonial networks, particularly in the Caribbean. Panton developed links with other Caribbean leaders like Manley and Williams, partly through attending the West Indies Federation meetings and conferences. In 1960, Panton had a run in with the British Administrator in Cayman, leading to a court case. Panton pursued the case through two higher courts and eventually won. The process brought him into contact with Jamaican lawyers who were in the politically active group around Norman Manley, the Premier of Jamaica.[486] He demonstrated a more pan-Caribbean perspective in his politics which was unusual in Caymanian politics. Anthropologist Ulf Hannerz described Panton's politics as exhibiting an 'incipient Third World awareness'.[487] After Panton crashed out of Caymanian politics in 1965, no other political leaders emerged who identified with Third World issues. By the 1970s, coverage of global events in the local newspaper tended to present an American perspective, reflecting political and economic interests in the islands. In 1973, for example, an editorial in *The Northwester* referred to a

[486] Panton in interview in Martins, *A Special Son*, 78–85.
[487] Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, 83.

'growing trend for denying that the Cayman Islands are part of the West Indies'.[488] This remained apparent throughout the 1970s, highlighting the lack of engagement of most Caymanians with Third World issues, compared to activists in the French Antilles and the British Virgin Islands.

Among the four territories, Third World solidarity was most popular in Martinique and Guadeloupe. This was most apparent among students and left-wing activists from 1960 onwards. The British Virgin Islands were generally more conservative and concerned with local issues. Yet organisations in the 1960s and 1970s, most notably the Positive Action Movement, engaged directly in anticolonial and Third World issues. The Cayman Islands were noticeably more detached from anticolonial networks and the increasing Americanisation from the 1950s onwards was reflected in Caymanian approaches to international events.

Conclusion

The decolonisation of the French Antilles and the British Overseas Territories in the Caribbean cannot be considered without factoring in the global Cold War. The Cold War was an important context in which decolonisation took place. At times it was merely a backdrop but in other instances it became a crucial part of the political situation. The influence of the US had been growing in the Caribbean region since the Spanish-American War in 1898. After the Second World War, it escalated and took on new Cold War dimensions. The Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands became increasingly Americanised in the 1960s and 1970s. The closeness of American territories like the USVI and Puerto Rico had a huge impact on debates about the BVI's political status. Amalgamation with the US Virgin Islands remained a political possibility throughout the postwar era. Furthermore, the non-independent status of these American islands normalised this form of political arrangement. This relationship with the USVI was the most

[488] 'Apartheid we don't need', Editorial, *The Northwester,* February 1973, 5.

significant influence on the process of decolonisation in the BVI, but cannot be interpreted strictly as a Cold War phenomenon. For the French Antilles, the US remained an opportunity for work and study, as well as an imperial presence for many left-wing politicians and intellectuals. Cold War dynamics were more influential here, and the risk of US intervention if the French Antilles became independent was part of the debate about decolonisation, acting as a deterrent to cutting ties with France.

The Cuban Revolution had a significant impact on the overseas territories. In the Cayman Islands, the landing of anti-Castro Cuban aircraft during the Bay of Pigs invasion caused diplomatic tensions between the US and the UK. It highlighted the closeness of Cayman to Cuba and the vulnerability of British authority. Communists in the French Antilles were greatly divided over issues of the Hungarian Revolution, the Sino-Soviet split and the Cuban Revolution. These divisions hindered chances to provide a united front for autonomy or independence. The Cuban Revolution had a symbolic importance for independence movements in the Caribbean. It was held up as the example to follow and inspired many activists in the overseas territories. At the same time, fear that the Revolution would be reproduced in other Caribbean islands increased the restrictions on independence groups. It provided an excuse to monitor and imprison people who challenged the colonial status quo.

Finally, engagement in anticolonial politics and Third World movements varied greatly across the territories. Students and left-wing activists in the French Caribbean were involved in transnational solidarity campaigns and sought inspiration from other anticolonial organisations. In the British Virgin Islands, local politics appeared less influenced by international anticolonial thought. However, protest movements like the Positive Action Movement did engage with anticolonial ideas and black internationalist networks. In the Cayman Islands, however, the domination of the conservative merchant elite restricted the development of political alternatives who might engage

with anticolonial ideas. Ormond Panton was the exception, but his success was short lived. As the islands became increasingly Americanised, the gap between the Cayman Islands and other 'Third World' countries increased. A similar phenomenon can be observed in the French Antilles in the late 1970s. A higher standard of living and the Francisation of society and infrastructure pushed anticolonial activism to the fringes of politics.

This chapter has highlighted the interaction of the overseas territories with global trends and events, most significantly the Cold War. Yet the Cold War was not the only nor the most important factor shaping decolonisation. More significant were the local political dynamics and the responses of the two imperial powers. The next chapter will explore how Britain and France approached decolonisation in these territories, comparing the impacts of different colonial policies.

Chapter Three

The Colonial State: Assimilation, Interference and Repression

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Continuing the broader focus of the previous chapter, this chapter will look at the role of the colonial state in the process of decolonisation in these Caribbean islands. Through this, it will compare the French and British approaches to their Caribbean colonies and assess the impact this had on debates and decisions about decolonisation. Furthermore, it will compare official national policy with the actions of colonial representatives on the ground in the Caribbean.

The historiography of British and French decolonisation from the perspective of both official metropolitan policy and the role of colonial representatives in the colonies is extensive. Many historians of the British Empire have suggested that decolonisation was orderly and relatively stable, as Britain took a step back from empire without 'destabilising consequences'.[489] Ronald Hyam places greater emphasis on the importance of international pressures leading to the end of empire.[490] However, like Boyce, he paints a picture of a generally orderly retreat through an administrative elite who carried out decolonisation with pragmatism and without being driven by ideology.[491] Conversely, Darwin argues that British decolonisation was 'the untidy, chaotic outcome of a higgledy-piggledy historical process'.[492] Like Darwin, this chapter will demonstrate that decolonisation was, at times, improvised and unsystematic.

Certain French historians have suggested that financial support from France is the principal reason why decolonisation in the French Antilles did not lead to independence. In this line of thinking, French funding has encouraged Martinicans and Guadeloupeans to live beyond their means,

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[489] Boyce, *Decolonisation and the British Empire, 1775-1997*.
[490] Hyam, *Britain's Declining Empire*.
[491] Ibid.
[492] Darwin, *End of the British Empire*, 117.

making cutting ties with France not desirable.[493] However, the situation is far more complex than this simplified notion suggests. Accounts of both British and French decolonisation usually omit the non-independent territories, which get treated separately in histories explaining their anomalous political development and the colonial approach to them.[494] Unlike these accounts, this chapter will consider colonial policy and the approach of the colonial state towards the overseas territories in the context of decolonisation in other colonies.

This chapter will argue that Britain and France influenced decolonisation in three important ways. Firstly, through restrictive measures like repression and censorship, the colonial state, to some extent, controlled aspects of the debate over independence. Pro-independence activists found it difficult to mount legitimate political campaigns without restrictions and intimidation. Secondly, both France and Britain employed certain policies which encouraged assimilation and a sense of loyalty to the metropole from colonial subjects. Thirdly, this chapter will examine colonial attitudes and approaches more generally, including the influential migration policies in the French Antilles which encouraged citizens to move to France to work and study. Colonial policy changed and developed over the postwar decades. French approaches towards Caribbean nationalists hardened considerably from 1960 onwards. British policy also transformed from initially favouring federation, to gradually allowing independence. Constructions of race evidently influenced colonial approaches in both the French and British Caribbean. In the French and British territories, closer ties to the metropole were seen as a way to improve economic development. The influence of the colonial state acted to slow down any pushes towards independence, especially in the French Caribbean.

[493] Pervillé, 'Qu'est-Ce Que La Décolonisation? Pour Une Réhabilitation Des Facteurs Démographiques', 84–94.
[494] For example, John P. Augelli, 'The British Virgin Islands: A West Indian Anomaly', *Geographical Review* 46, no. 1 (1 January 1956): 43–58; Miles, *Elections and Ethnicity in French Martinique*; de Jong and Kruijt, *Extended Statehood in the Caribbean*; Miles, 'Democracy Without Sovereignty'.

Ultimately, this chapter will demonstrate that contradictory colonial policies shaped decolonisation in the overseas territories. Rather than a carefully directed approach which encouraged colonies to choose independence when they were ready, France and Britain meddled in the decolonisation process in inconsistent and uneven ways, adding conflicting influences to local political debates. By 1980, the colonial state had not lost its grip on power in these Caribbean islands.

1. Direct Interference and Repression

Evidently, interference and repression by the colonial state were common in colonies across the world and were not unique to these non-independent territories. Violence was an 'essential element in the management' of modern empires.[495] Moreover, the development of state intelligence was closely tied to empire in Britain and France.[496] The overlap between intelligence gathering and repression was evident in the British and French colonial states.[497] In discussing the high levels of interference and repression, this chapter is not suggesting that repression was greater and more violent than anywhere else in order to explain why these territories could not push for independence. However, the interference and repression of the French and British states, combined with the factors discussed in other chapters, contributed to the way decolonisation developed and is an important part of understanding the present political status of these territories.

The British Territories

The British representative, either the Administrator or Governor, held considerable power in the British territories. Throughout the period in question, despite gradual constitutional reform, the British Governor could intervene in local issues, overrule the Legislative Assembly, and veto any local decisions. One of the most striking instances of colonial interference in decolonisation in the

[495] Jock McCulloch, 'Empire and Violence, 1900-1939', in *Gender and Empire*, ed. Philippa Levine (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004), 220–39. See also Fanon, *Les damnés de la terre*.
[496] Martin Thomas, *Empires of Intelligence: Security Services and Colonial Disorder After 1914* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008), 13.
[497] Thomas, 6.

territories occurred in the Cayman Islands in 1962. Ormond Panton and the NDP won a majority in the elections on the platform of pushing for greater self-government. However, the Commissioner Jack Rose, who had an ongoing feud with Panton, deliberately blocked attempts at self-government and prevented the NDP from gaining power in the Executive Council. Firstly, Commissioner Rose promoted the idea that Caymanians only had two choices on leaving the West Indies Federation: internal self-government under an independent Jamaica or crown colony status with Britain. In reality, several different options were available to be negotiated. Yet Rose claimed that there 'was no third alternative'.[498] This had a significant impact on restricting the debate about self-government and narrowing the options available.

Furthermore, Rose blocked Ormond Panton from obtaining a seat in the Executive Council, after the election of the NDP. As Commissioner, Rose was responsible for choosing the three nominated members to the Legislative Assembly. As leader of the majority party, Panton ought to have been consulted about the nominations. However, Rose chose three new members who were all strongly opposed to Panton. As a result, when it came to electing members to the Executive Council, Panton was not chosen. This tactical move by Commissioner Rose ensured that Panton and the NDP, despite gaining the most seats in the election, did not have the political power to implement any policies which would lead Cayman towards self-government. Senior civil servant, Sybil McLaughlin, suggested that Rose blocked Panton because he thought Panton would impede Rose's plans in the Council.[499] Panton argued that Rose was against the NDP from the outset and did 'everything in the world to attack it'.[500] He even suggested that Rose had encouraged people to use violence against the NDP to break up their meetings.[501] As chapter five will explore in more

[498] Jack Rose in interview conducted by Heather McLaughlin, 18 May 1999, CINA.
[499] Sybil I. McLaughlin in interview conducted by Heather McLaughlin, 18 February 1993, CINA.
[500] Ormond Panton in interview conducted by Mary E. Ebanks, 18 July 1991, CINA.
[501] Ibid.

detail, this step by Commissioner Rose marked a turning point in the fortunes of the NDP and the quest for self-government in the Cayman Islands.

The most significant example of a British Government overreaction to unrest occurred after the 1970 demonstration over land issues in Cayman.[502] On 20th April, more than 500 people marched through George Town in protest at the recent Land Development Law.[503] During the emergency meeting of the Legislative Assembly which was called shortly after, the Administrator took unprecedented measures to demonstrate that Britain would not tolerate any form of protest. The windows of the meeting room were boarded up and armed police were called to protect the Administrator during the meeting. Furthermore, the Administrator had arranged for a British warship to wait in Caymanian waters in case of need. This was a significant overreaction, aimed at proving Britain would not countenance even minor disruption to the peace in the increasingly prosperous territory. This was a common tactic by British officials in the Caribbean to discourage further protest. In Grenada during agrarian unrest in 1950, the British Governor requested a warship as part of the authorities' campaign to restore order.[504]

In the BVI, the interference of British officials in local affairs was often the cause of major protests. In 1967, at a time of increased xenophobia and fear about the pace of change in the islands, the Administrator, Martin Staveley, agreed to lease large parts of the BVI to the development company Batehill Ltd.[505] This controversial move prompted a wave of protests in the islands and eventually led to the development project being overturned at great expense to the BVI Government.[506] Some

[502] The protest itself is dealt with in greater depth in chapter six.
[503] *The Caymanian Weekly*, 23 April 1970.
[504] Spencer Mawby, 'The Caribbean in an International and Regional Context: Revolution, Neo-Colonialism, and Diaspora', in *The Oxford Handbook of the Ends of Empire*, ed. Martin Thomas and Andrew S. Thompson (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2019), 337.
[505] 'Summary of the Report of Commission of Enquiry into the Anegada and Wickham's Cay Agreements', FCO 44/454, TNA.
[506] The protest movement will be discussed in chapter six.

claimed that Staveley was, to a certain degree, anti-American and favoured the Batehill company because of its British partners.[507] Regardless, the agreement offered Batehill Ltd a huge amount of land for a 199-year lease without properly consulting the Legislative Assembly or the local people. It demonstrated a complete disregard for local opinion by the Administrator.

When locals demanded a BVIslander as Governor, in response to British interference, their appeals were ignored. In 1978, BVIslanders took to the streets when the British Governor commuted the death sentence of Sylvester Gaston, who had been convicted of murdering a 67-year old shopkeeper.[508] Protestors demanded the resignation of the Governor and the option to choose a BVIslander for the role. Throughout the 1970s, requests for a BVIslander as Governor were repeatedly rejected by the FCO.[509] Britain further interfered in the development of self-government in the overseas territories by setting conditions on the granting of internal self-government. Britain suggested that BVIslanders would have to commit to independence within two years if they wanted full internal self-government.[510] With politicians cautious about making any major changes to the status quo, forcing a commitment to future change was a disincentive for internal self-government.

Officially, Britain claimed that it was happy to arrange self-government and independence with any territory who wished it.[511] In reality, however, British officials undermined this policy. The Administrators of the BVI in the 1960s and 1970s blocked calls for greater autonomy, advising the FCO that it would be wise to ignore anyone advocating independence. In his outgoing report in 1967, Administrator Staveley expressed the hope that British sovereignty would not only be

[507] Pearl Varlack and Norwell Harrigan, 'Anegada - Feudal Development in the Twentieth Century', *Caribbean Quarterly* 17, no. 1 (1 March 1971): 14.
[508] 'Governor Commutes Gaston's Sentence', *The Island Sun,* 8 July 1978, 1.
[509] Ralph T O'Neal in *Empowerment Through Representation* (2000), 102-3, VINA.
[510] Ibid., 102.
[511] See reports in the following files: 'UK policy in the Caribbean territories', 1954-1956, CO 1031/1937, TNA; and 'British policy in Commonwealth Caribbean', 1971, FCO 44/472, TNA.

maintained in the BVI, but that the British influence would be increased.[512] He suggested that, while there appeared to be a less strong connection to Britishness and the Queen among the younger generation, the connection with Britain ought to be strengthened.[513] He argued that 'the British Virgin Islands will be best off if they stay British'.[514] Administrator Thomson, who succeeded Staveley, echoed these sentiments in his last report as Administrator.[515] These comments contradicted official British policy, as well as the sentiments expressed by the Administrators in communication to BVIslanders. In a 1969 speech to the Legislative Assembly, Thomson claimed 'Britain continues to adhere to the cardinal principle that the wishes of the people concerned must be the main guide to action'.[516]

At the end of the 1970s, British policy towards the remaining overseas territories changed. In 1979, Ted Rowlands the Minister of State for the FCO, argued that British official policy of moving colonies towards independence may no longer be viable.[517] He suggested that, for the remaining territories, links with Britain would be maintained for as long as this was the preferred option of local people. In the case of the Cayman Islands, Britain was aware of the undemocratic dominance of the white merchant elite in local politics, but was disinclined to challenge it. If the merchants expressed a wish to remain British, Britain appeared happy to go along with this arrangement. Thus, consulting the 'local people' in the Cayman Islands amounted to consulting the merchant elite. British actions did little to democratise power in the overseas territories, especially in the Cayman Islands.

The French Antilles

[512] Martin Staveley in letter to Commonwealth Office, 27 April 1967, 16.
[513] Ibid.
[514] Ibid., 14.
[515] Ian Thomson in letter to Douglas Home FCO, 9 January 1971, FCO 44/614, 1-5, TNA.
[516] 'In A Word: Magnificent!', *The Island Sun*, 29 November 1969, 7.
[517] 'Dependencies: a new relationship?', *The Island Sun*, 31 March 1979, 4.

In Martinique and Guadeloupe, surveillance and censorship were pervasive throughout the post-Second World War era and well into the 1980s. The local branch of the 'Renseignements Généraux' (RG), the French intelligence service, monitored all general council meetings and regulated all published newspapers and journals. The RG were responsible for defending the French state against threats from social and political movements, making their work undoubtedly 'political'.[518] They paid particular attention to contributions during general council meetings by communist politicians.[519] Furthermore, any anti-French or anticolonial rhetoric was recorded and relayed to the intelligence service in Paris, as well as to the prefect. They also monitored all union activity, including any meetings and motions by the Antillean unions.[520]

Interference by the police increased after changes to the constitution in 1960 allowed for the arrest of anyone seen to threaten the 'territorial integrity' of the French Republic.[521] A decree in October 1960 gave the Prefects of the Overseas Departments further powers to scrutinise and even deport civil servants.[522] The restrictions placed on civil servants were apparent in the treatment of Alain Plenel, the Vice-Rector of Martinique. As Vice-Rector, Plenel was the most senior person in the administration of education in Martinique, reporting directly to a rector in mainland France. In the aftermath of the 1959 riots in Fort-de-France, *métropolitain* Plenel became increasingly outspoken about Martinican autonomy.[523] As a result, he was summoned to Paris, subject to an investigation and banned from returning to Martinique.[524] In 1965, De Gaulle officially revoked his status as

[518] Laurent Bonelli, 'Renseignements généraux et violences urbaines', *Actes de la recherche en sciences sociales* n° 136-137, no. 1 (2001): 95–96.
[519] For example, 'Au sujet de la situation politique à la veille de la session budgétaire du Conseil Général', Pointe-à-Pitre section of the RG, 14 November 1952, 1347 W 62, 1-2, ADG.
[520] For example, monthly report by the RG of Guadeloupe, 6 October 1958, 1347 W 62, 8-9, ADG.
[521] 'Ordonnance 60-529 du 4 juin 1960', *JORF*, 8 June 1960, Article 86, 5109.
[522] 'Ordonnance 60-1101 du 15 octobre 1960', *JORF*, 18 October 1960, 9483.
[523] The events of *Décembre 59* in Martinique are discussed in depth in chapter six. *Metropolitain* refers to anyone originally from mainland France.
[524] 'Le Peuple Martiniquais est solidaire du Vice-Recteur Alain Plenel', *Justice* (Martinique), 4 February 1960, 1-2.

'Academy Inspector' and demoted him to teacher status through a presidential decree.[525] Writing in the left-wing metropolitan magazine, *France Observateur,* Plenel called for autonomy for the Antilles and suggested that there was a growing consciousness in the Antilles which the French would be foolish to ignore.[526] Plenel was not fully exonerated until 1982.[527]

Monitoring and restrictions on political engagement extended to teachers in Martinique and Guadeloupe. The Ministry for the overseas departments and territories kept an eye on all metropolitan teachers placed in schools in the French Antilles. They were particularly concerned about any politically active teachers and anyone teaching about decolonisation or colonialism in lessons. Any teachers found to be teaching anticolonial material were considered to be 'openly hostile' to the government and were forced to relocate back to metropolitan France, as was anyone involved in political meetings and marches.[528] For example, in 1971, a primary school teacher in Martinique was forced to move back to mainland France after being arrested by police at a political protest meeting.[529] Another teacher was forced out of his job for 'anti-French behaviour' which included setting an essay that asked students to discuss a quotation by Kwame Nkrumah on colonial exploitation.[530] The department of national education appears to have had a zero tolerance policy on any teachers showing an interest in anticolonial politics inside and outside the classroom. This suggests that, throughout the period in question, the French state remained fearful of anything that could encourage political awareness or activity among young people in the Antilles.

[525] 'M. Alain Plenel, de nouveau frappé pour son action en faveur de la décolonisation aux Antilles', *Justice* (Martinique), 25 February 1965, 1-2.
[526] Alain Plenel, 'Autonomie pour les Antilles', *France Observateur,* 6 April 1961, 36J33, ADM.
[527] Alain Plenel in interview with France-Antilles, Martinique, 22 November 2013, http://www.martinique.franceantilles.fr/actualite/une/alain-plenel-j-etais-vu-comme-un-representant-des-revoltes-coloniales-230464.php.
[528] See folder on 'Demande de mutation en metropole de professeurs d'origine metropolitaine exercant dans les D.O.M.', 19940180/20, AN.
[529] Letter from Minister of overseas departments and territories to the Minister of national education, 11 February 1971, 19940180/20, AN.
[530] Ibid.

The close, oppressive surveillance of Antillean students in metropolitan France supports this conclusion that the French state perceived young people to be the most likely cause of pro-independence sentiment and dissent. All students were monitored and the intelligence service kept lists of students' addresses, their parents' details, their university courses and any student associations that they joined.[531] A 1959 report on students from the overseas departments concluded that, although many were not communist or pro-independence, they could quickly become so and therefore a 'counter-propaganda' campaign was needed to prevent this from happening.[532] The paranoia about students had a considerable impact on the ability of students from Martinique and Guadeloupe to get funding for their studies and for travel during their time at university. Sixteen years on from the report, students from the overseas departments were still being investigated by the intelligence service and were blocked from receiving any financial aid if they had any connections to student associations or political organisations. For example, Danila Biabiany, a medical student from Guadeloupe, had her request for a travel bursary denied simply because she was the secretary of the General Association of Students from Guadeloupe (AGEG).[533] Likewise, Liliane Viviane Devassoigne, a Martinican student studying in Nanterre, was blocked from having access to travel funding because the intelligence service suspected that she may be part of a left-wing group that favoured Antillean independence.[534] Students returning from the metropole to Martinique and Guadeloupe were seen as one of the biggest threats to security and a likely cause of unrest, as highlighted in a 1970 police report.[535] The considerable monitoring of students from Martinique and Guadeloupe limited their ability to openly discuss the political status of their islands and to agitate for political change.

[531] See the 1959 study on 'Les Etudiants des departments d'outre mer dans le metropole' by the Directorate of General Intelligence, 19940180/146, AN.
[532] Directorate of General Intelligence, 'Les Etudiants des departments d'outre mer dans le metropole', 19940180/146, AN.
[533] Letter from Secretary of State for the overseas departments and territories to the Director of CNOUS (administrative body responsible for bursaries), 9 May 1975, 19940180/20, AN.
[534] Ibid.
[535] Jacques Richard, 'Inspection de la Légion des Antilles-Guyane', 5 September 1970, 19940180/20, AN.

Restrictions on debates about autonomy were also established through press censorship. The police monitored all newspapers and journals, and banned any Marxist literature. They prohibited articles which had a critical view of France and anything with a revolutionary pan-Africanist perspective, particularly if it was from North Africa.[536] *Le Progrès Social,* a Guadeloupean newspaper with a pro-independence stance, was frequently censored or banned.[537] The communist newspapers *L'Etincelle* (Guadeloupe) and *Justice* (Martinique) were often censored.[538] Other publications which produced anything deemed anti-France or inflammatory were suppressed, such as a 1961 article which was critical of the actions of the army.[539] Censorship made it increasingly difficult to have an open discussion about political futures in the local press.

Censorship extended across many aspects of public life and popular culture in the Caribbean. Using Creole instead of French was discouraged in public spaces, in the press, and in music. Restrictions on expressions of local culture continued until the decentralisation reforms in the 1980s. Radio and television, once it was introduced in the 1960s, were heavily restricted to pro-departmentalisation channels only. Anyone who wished to broadcast on the radio had to pass a detailed police check which included their political affiliations and perceived 'loyalty' to France.[540] One broadcaster, Daniel Philene, was permitted a licence because he had no political affiliations and 'his loyalty seemed assured'.[541] A 1965 report on Guadeloupean television highlighted concern that a news report showing protest in the Dominican Republic could be 'a bad example for a

[536] Prefect of Martinique to General Prosecutor, 'Interdiction d'une publication', 7 January 1961, 1159W1, ADM.
[537] Directorate of General Intelligence, 'Revue mensuelle de la presse politique guadeloupéenne', 5 July 1963, 1347 W 84, 1, ADG.
[538] 'L'Etincelle saisi 2 fois de suite', *L'Etincelle,* 26 January 1963, 1-2; 'Justice saisi!', *Justice* (Martinique), 5 August 1960, 1.
[539] Prefect of Martinique, Announcement supressing edition of *Rivarol,* 30 January 1961, 1159W1, ADM.
[540] For example, Serge Webbe, Police Inspector, report on André Louis Latil requesting radio license, 13 December 1950, 1347 W 83, ADG.
[541] Renseignements Generaux Pointe-à-Pitre, Report on Daniel Philene, 22 April 1964, 1347 W 83, 1-2, ADG.

Guadeloupean youth already impinged upon and under the influence of the political leaders of the Communist Party and other satellite groups'.[542]

Preventing an open dialogue about autonomy was a central aspect of policing in Martinique and Guadeloupe. An inspection report on police forces in the French Antilles is revealing of the police's attitudes towards Martinicans and Guadeloupeans, as well as highlighting more general assumptions common across the French administration. The police commander Jacques Richard identified four key issues facing the French Antilles: 'dangerously explosive' demographic expansion; high unemployment; 'subversive propaganda'; and clashes between police and crowds stirred up by 'professionals of disorder'.[543] Richard also argued that the influence of Cuba and of Black Power in the US could contribute to disturbances and make policing more difficult. It is clear from the report that Richard viewed the police's primary role in the Antilles to be the prevention of any pro-autonomy activity and of any unrest from citizens calling for change.

In order to maintain control, the French state often went further than surveillance and censorship, using violence to assert their authority. Violent repression of dissent was used regularly to discourage challenges to the status quo. In the twentieth century, the police frequently opened fire on demonstrators. In Guadeloupe, for example, violence during protests included: Saint-François in 1900 (three killed); Saint-François in 1910 (five killed); Capesterre in 1910 (nine killed); Petit-Canal in 1925 (five killed); Lamentin and Abymes in 1930 (three killed); Marie-Galante in 1936 (two killed); Basse-Terre and Port-Louis in 1943 (two killed); Le Moule in 1952 (four killed).[544] In all of these cases, the protests involved striking sugar labourers in a dispute with plantation and factory owners. The police violence in 1959 in Martinique and in 1967 in Guadeloupe are the most

[542] Report on television in Guadeloupe, 2 February 1965, 1347W, ADG.
[543] Jacques Richard, 'Inspection de la Légion des Antilles-Guyane', 5 September 1970, 19940180/20, AN.
[544] Schnakenbourg, 'Le Moule, 14 février 1952', 81; Mérion, *Autopsie Politique Du Massacre de Mai 1967*, 97.

famous incidents of violent repression in the twentieth century, but are evidently not isolated examples.[545]

Both the French and British colonial states used considerable surveillance to monitor local activists, students and the press. In all four territories, newspaper articles and protest marches were censored or banned if they were deemed too critical of the government. States are more likely to employ violence when their power is 'in jeopardy'.[546] Thus, state violence was much greater and more frequent in the French Antilles, with protests and strikes broken up by police violence. Protests were much rarer in the British territories and the police forces much smaller. On the unusual occasions where unrest did bubble up, such as in 1968, protestors did complain of beatings from the police. Yet this was evidently on a much smaller scale than in the French Caribbean. In both the British and French territories, intimidation, surveillance and violence acted to discourage advocates of change.

2. Assimilation

Policies of assimilation, which sought to propagate the culture of the colonial power in the colonies, had a significant impact on decolonisation. Echoing many other historians, Westad describes France as 'the most assimilationist of empires', suggesting that it was for this reason that it tried 'longer than others to cling on to its colonies by force'.[547] Certainly, assimilation through education, culture and language had a significant impact in the French Antilles and greatly shaped how Antilleans saw their future.[548] Yet this was not wholly unique to the French Empire and policies which encouraged imperial subjects to identify with the British Empire and notions of

[545] These two protests are discussed in greater depth in chapter six.
[546] Hannah Arendt, *On Violence* (New York: Harcourt, 1970), 56.
[547] Westad, *The Global Cold War*, 44.
[548] Burton, *Assimilation or Independence?*; Aurélie Lacassagne, 'Cultural Policy in France's Overseas: Permanence of Colonial Logics and the Potential for Creole Resistance', *International Journal of Cultural Policy*, 20 May 2015, 1–15.

Britishness were also employed by the British colonial state. In Cayman and the BVI, British officials endeavoured to encourage a sense of loyalty to the Queen and the Empire. This was most successful in the Cayman Islands, where an 'affinity' to Britishness developed, particularly among the merchant elite.[549]

The French Antilles

Much has been written on the 'mission civilisatrice' and the way France sought to spread French culture and language in its empire.[550] Martinique and Guadeloupe were seen as part of the 'Old Colonies', having been part of France before the French Revolution. As such, they had been subjected to centuries of this assimilationist project. The 'mixed-race' middle class which developed in the nineteenth century were encouraged, through education and certain opportunities, to see France as the embodiment of freedom and progress. The French Republic was presented as a solution to the problems of the Antilles and a way out from the racism and restrictiveness of colonial Caribbean society. As a result, by the twentieth century, the political elite which had developed greatly identified with Frenchness and had a vested interest in retaining ties to France.

As detailed in the first chapter of this thesis, assimilationism on the part of France considerably influenced the decision to make the French Antilles departments in 1946. Childers argues that the 'citizens of Martinique voted for assimilation because they genuinely identified with a France of transcendent culture and humane principles' which was 'above the regime of "colonialist jackals"

[549] Roy Bodden, Caymanian historian, in interview with the author, Grand Cayman, 14 July 2016.
[550] John Andrew Tully, *Cambodia Under the Tricolour: King Sisowath and the 'Mission Civilisatrice' 1904-1927* (Clayton: Monash Asia Institute, 1996); Alice L. Conklin, *A Mission to Civilize: The Republican Idea of Empire in France and West Africa, 1895-1930* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1997); Blaise Alfred Ngando, *La France au Cameroun 1916-1939: Colonialisme ou Mission Civilisatrice ?* (Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 2002); Alistair Cole, Gino G. Raymond, and Gino Raymond, *Redefining the French Republic* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2006); Dino Costantini, *Mission civilisatrice: Le rôle de l'histoire coloniale dans la construction de l'identité politique française* (Paris: Éditions la Découverte, 2008).

who claimed to represent France in Martinique'.[551] While this may have been true for the educated middle class who had benefitted, to a degree, from the French education system, it is difficult to claim that all Martinicans, across all sectors of society, clearly identified with this notion of France in the 1940s. Once the change in political status was achieved, greater assimilation was implemented to draw the Antilles closer to France. It should be noted that politicians like Césaire who had campaigned for departmentalisation, wished to see the Antilles assimilated politically and legally into France, but not culturally. This was gradual at first, and many complained about the continued neglect of Martinique and Guadeloupe in the 1950s. However, after protests and nationalism threatened to escalate in the 1960s, the Antilles were subject to increased assimilationist policies. This was particularly evident in the centralised education system which aimed to give a pupil in the Antilles an identical education to a metropolitan child. This had a huge impact on the way Antillean children were encouraged to view the world, studying European maps and history rather than the Caribbean.

The pace of assimilation intensified in the 1970s, as more funding was directed to Martinique and Guadeloupe in order to develop the infrastructure and tourism industry. Price has highlighted the 'Francisation' which accompanied this development, aimed at restructuring and integrating the Antilles further into the French system.[552] Antillean elites were particularly wedded to the idea of Frenchness and the promotion of France as a liberating force. Victor Schoelcher, the Parisian abolitionist was idolised, especially in Martinique, and portrayed as the epitome of French republican values. A group led by communist activist Louis Adrassé who were dedicated to fighting instances of police brutality, colonial violence and injustice, named themselves the 'Victor Schoelcher Circle' and repeatedly invoked the 'memory of the great French abolitionist' in their

[551] Childers, 'Citizenship and Assimilation in Postwar Martinique', 285.
[552] Richard Price, 'Modernity, Memory, Martinique', in *The African Diaspora: African Origins and New World Identities*, ed. Isidore Okpewho (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 1999), 76.

correspondence and writings.[553] A 1968 conference in Martinique on the subject of assimilation highlighted that this 'act of faith' in Frenchness and the French republic was crucial to the support for departmentalisation in the 1940s.[554]

Another assimilationist tendency manifested through the local press. *France-Antilles* was established in 1964 and was linked to the right-wing, pro-departmentalisation parties. It quickly became the most widely read daily newspaper in the Antilles. It is firmly pro-France and contributed to the continuing cultural assimilation of Martinique and Guadeloupe. The paper frequently featured speeches and interviews with French ministers, the prefect and members of the Gaullist party (RPR) which reinforced the idea of Martinique and Guadeloupe being intrinsically French. A 1974 interview with the Minister for the overseas departments and territories, Bernard Stasi, promoted the idea that it was impossible to be in favour of 'independence and social security' at the same time.[555] This was a common argument that the social security offered by France was the only viable option for the Antilles. *France-Antilles* firmly discouraged protests, strikes and any challenge to France's authority in the Caribbean. For example, the paper was highly critical of unrest in Fort-de-France in 1974, suggesting that those involved were well-versed in causing trouble in the city.[556] Other newspapers make their affiliations clear with names like *France Émeraude, France Immortelle, France Toujours* and *La Petite Patrie.*[557]

The office of prefect, established in 1947 after departmentalisation, was also used to implement French assimilationism. The prefect, appointed in Paris, had extensive powers in the Antilles as the state's principal representative in the department. The prefects encouraged and maintained

[553] 'Appel au Peuple Martiniquais', Victor Schoelcher Circle, 1 February 1962, 36J31, ADM.
[554] 'Plaidoyer pour les Antilles esquisse d'une psychosociologie de l'assimilation et de l'autonomie', Conference sur l'assimilation et l'autonomie 1968, Fonds Louis Adrassé, 36J31, 2, ADM.
[555] Interview with Bernard Stasi, *France-Antilles* (Martinique), 25 February 1974, 1.
[556] 'Des commandos gauchistes intimident les commerçants et provoquent les policiers', *France-Antilles* (Martinique), 14 February 1974, 1.
[557] See PG 1045, ADG; PG 1060, ADG; PER 238, ADM; PER 144, ADM.

close ties to France, and the rhetoric of Frenchness was common in prefectural speeches. In one of the first prefectural speeches, the Guadeloupean Prefect Henry Pougnet referred to Guadeloupe as the 'jewel of Republican France, of a democratic and humane France'.[558] In a radio speech at the end of 1947, the new prefect Gilbert Philipson described the French community as the 'symbol of human fraternity and freedom'.[559] This rhetoric was used by prefects throughout the postwar period to encourage a sense of Frenchness among Antilleans citizens.

The British Territories

Across the British Caribbean, colonialism was accompanied by a culture of Britishness that encouraged Caribbean peoples to identify with Britain, the Empire and the monarchy.[560] The British Virgin Islands and the Cayman Islands were no different. Visits from members of the Royal family were huge events, designed to generate enthusiasm and excitement from local people. These moments were highlighted and exaggerated in colonial reports. For example, a 1973 visit to the Cayman Islands by Prince Charles was apparently 'the most pleasurable event'.[561] In his report, the Administrator emphasised that the 'people of the islands, being very loyal to the Crown, were happy to have this opportunity'.[562] This was part of the British administration's emphasis on loyalty to the Queen and Britain. When the Queen visited the BVI in 1966, children were encouraged to stand in the streets waving union jacks and were given souvenir coins to commemorate the day.[563]

In the Cayman Islands, British officials commented on the loyalty and affinity to Britain expressed by Caymanians, particularly the merchant elite. This was further encouraged by the administration

[558] Henry Pougnet, 'Discours à l'ouverture de la 2e session ordinaire du Conseil général', *Recueil Des Actes Administratifs,* no 4, 8 November 1947, 1-2.
[559] Gilbert Philipson, 'Allocution Radiodiffusée', 29 December 1947, *Recueil Des Actes Administratifs*, no 1, 3 January 1948, 1-2.
[560] Rush, *Bonds of Empire*, 1–15.
[561] Colonial Office Report on the Cayman Islands, 1973, 3, CINA.
[562] Ibid.
[563] Andria Flax, *The Way We Were: Treasured Childhood Memories and Poetry of Earlier BVI Times* (Tortola, BVI: Andria Flax, 2010), 181.

as those who appeared sympathetic to Britain were more likely to gain civil service positions. In the British Virgin Islands, British officials in the postwar years commented on the relative weakness of loyalty to Britain compared to many other West Indian islands.[564] Administrator Staveley described the 'cynicism and disillusionment' of BVIslanders in their approach towards British rule.[565] Staveley undertook certain measures to counteract the 'absence of normal respect' toward the office of British Administrator which he observed on his arrival.[566]

He felt that the state of disrepair of Government House, the Administrator's official residence, was emblematic of this apparent lack of respect and so took measures to alter this. He was horrified to find that 'pigs belonging to domestic staff' were left to 'scuttle into the drawing room' of Government House.[567] As well as refurbishing the residence, Staveley put in place a full-time police orderly to accompany the Administrator and drive his official car. Having undertaken various measures to make the British Administrator appear more important, Staveley was happy that 'the dignity of the office and its accoutrements' were, on his departure, 'more widely appreciated than previously'.[568] These steps to boost the apparent importance and formality of the role of British officials in colonies were common across the British Empire, in an effort to make British rule appear more important and necessary. It seems to have worked to a certain degree in the British Virgin Islands, and evidently was very successful in the Cayman Islands. In Cayman, local commentators and journalists frequently remarked on the impressive attire and manner of British officials and the royal family.[569]

[564] Martin Staveley in letter to Commonwealth Office, 27 April 1967, FCO 44/104, 1-16, TNA.
[565] Ibid., 1-2.
[566] Ibid., 13.
[567] Ibid.
[568] Ibid.
[569] For example, 'Royal elegance - off the peg', *The Northwester,* July 1974, 16-19.

Like the use of education in the French Antilles to encourage assimilation into French culture, in the BVI and Cayman, the British used the education system to generate feelings of loyalty to the Queen and Empire. BVI poet Andria Flax recalls how children were required to attend school on the morning of Empire Day, an annual public holiday, and encouraged to dress up for an official ceremony.[570] The children were then made to march in the hot sun and sing 'Land Of Our Birth We Pledge To Thee', 'My Country 'Tis of Thee' and of course, 'God Save Our Gracious Queen".[571] Virgin Islands historian Norwell Harrigan described this process at school as a 'political socialisation' in which he was made to understand that he 'was a British subject first, last and always'.[572] He remembered 'children who fainted from standing in the blazing sun listening to some English Commissioner or parson citing Nelson's duty and the enterprise of Drake'.[573]

Throughout the colonial era in the British and French Caribbean, policies encouraged the assimilation of islanders, promoting a sense of French or Britishness. This was more apparent in the French Caribbean where Antilleans could acquire certain citizenship rights by adopting French language and culture. Assimilationism undoubtedly influenced the political elite who promoted departmentalisation in 1946. Following more intense unrest, the pace of 'Francisation' in Martinique and Guadeloupe greatly increased in the 1970s, through development schemes which restructured and further integrated the islands into the French Republic.[574] This greater economic integration with the metropole increased the dependency on France and made it harder to argue for independence. In the Cayman Islands, the sense of affinity with Britain was particularly strong among the merchant elite, greatly shaping decisions about decolonisation. Assimilation was least evident in the BVI, given its isolated position within the British Empire, but efforts to foster Britishness were undertaken by the British administration.

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[570] Flax, *The Way We Were: Treasured Childhood Memories and Poetry of Earlier BVI Times*, 181.
[571] Ibid.
[572] Norwell Harrigan, 'On Being A Virgin Islander', *The Island Sun,* 11 November 1967, 3.
[573] Ibid.
[574] Price, 'Modernity, Memory, Martinique', 76.

3. Colonial Attitudes and Approaches

The approaches and attitudes of colonial representatives had an impact on the processes of decolonisation. Attitudes were evident in correspondence and reports, showing that both French and British officials saw themselves as superior to the local population. The belief that European bureaucrats were better at running the government than local representatives was widespread. This affected local confidence in governing capabilities, and appeared in discussions about independence and decolonisation. This section will discuss the variety of colonial approaches which shaped decolonisation including: neglect, underfunding, migration policies, social security, racism, and the belittling of local politicians.

The French Antilles

Between 1945 and 1980, French policies towards the Antilles varied between neglect and tactical funding to reduce discontent. This helped to cement the idea that France was the solution to the Antilles' problems and the source of wealth and opportunity. Economic policies over the decades increased the dependency of the Antilles on France. As one article in *Alizés* argued, 'commercial exclusivity with France, just like the rest of the Caribbean with their old colonial powers, prevents all attempts at inter-Caribbean exchanges and even more so at an international level'.[575] At moments when there was significant unrest, such as December 1959 in Martinique, the French government responded with a combination of repression and economic intervention. Immediately after, they increased the SMIG (salaire minimum interprofessionnel garanti), the minimum wage, in the Antilles to pacify opposition.

The migration policies of the French state in the postwar years had a significant social, economic and political impact. It contributed to discontent towards France, but at the same time reduced

[575] 'La nation guadeloupéenne: pour ou contre?', *Alizés*, January 1968, PA 37, 7, ADG.

the concentration of unemployed and unhappy youth in the Antilles, thus decreasing the population likely to push for independence. The policy of encouraging young workers from the Antilles and the other overseas departments to migrate to France for employment was known as BUMIDOM, as it was run by the *Bureau pour le développement des migrations dans les départements d'outre-mer* (Office for the Development of Migration in the Overseas Departments). There is extensive literature on the impact of BUMIDOM.[576] It garnered considerable opposition due to its socio-economic impact on the Antilles, as they lost much of the young workforce.[577] Furthermore, many Antilleans encountered significant difficulties, prejudice and racism in mainland France once they arrived.[578] BUMIDOM was proposed by the government as a solution to unemployment in the Caribbean.[579] However, it failed to address the real economic issues facing the Martinican and Guadeloupean economies, instead making them even more dependent on the metropole.

At the same time as 'BUMIDOM' encouraged young Antilleans to move to mainland France, *métros*, from the metropole, were encouraged to work in the growing French bureaucracy in Martinique and Guadeloupe.[580] They were offered pay incentives and other bonuses to facilitate the move. This caused increasing tension in Martinique and Guadeloupe as the newly arrived white metropolitan workers often brought colonial, racist attitudes and failed to integrate into Antillean society. The civil service was a crucial resource for local employment and the recruitment of so

[576] For example, Stéphanie Condon, 'Travail et genre dans l'histoire des migrations antillaises', *Travail, genre et sociétés* 20, no. 2 (3 December 2008): 67–86; Kristen Stromberg Childers, 'Departmentalization, Migration, and the Politics of the Family in the Post-War French Caribbean', *History of the Family* 14, no. 2 (2009): 14; Felix Germain, 'Jezebels and Victims: Antillean Women in Postwar France, 1946–1974', *French Historical Studies* 33, no. 3 (20 June 2010): 475–95; Daily, 'Race, Citizenship, and Antillean Student Activism in Postwar France, 1946-1968'; Sylvain Pattieu, 'Un traitement spécifique des migrations d'outre-mer: le BUMIDOM (1963-1982) et ses ambiguïtés', *Politix* 116, no. 4 (2016): 81–113; Marine Haddad, 'L'effet d'une politique d'État sur les migrations DOM-métropole. Les enseignements des recensements de 1962 à 1999', *Population* 73, no. 2 (18 October 2018): 191–224; Sylvain Pattieu, 'Migrants citoyens, migrants vacanciers', *Genèses* 111, no. 2 (10 July 2018): 70–91.
[577] 'Problèmatique de l'émigration', *Alizés*, January 1966, PA 37, 6, ADG.
[578] Letter from the Groupe Revolution Socialiste to the Cercle Victor Schoelcher, 30 June 1973, 36J31, ADM.
[579] 'Problèmatique de l'émigration', *Alizés*, 6.
[580] Jacques Dumont, 'La quête de l'égalité aux Antilles: la départementalisation et les manifestations des années 1950', *Le Mouvement Social*, no. 230 (23 April 2010): 90–92.

many metropolitan bureaucrats angered Antilleans.[581] The tensions between the children of these *métros* and Antillean children led to clashes at schools. One infamous incident in Guadeloupe in 1979 led to violent conflict between metropolitan and Guadeloupean students at the Lycée Baimbridge.[582] A metropolitan student reportedly proclaimed 'Je suis raciste, vive le racisme' outside the school.[583] Several incidents between Guadeloupean and metropolitan students occurred over the following months, including some metropolitan students apparently wearing t-shirts bearing the slogan 'Je suis raciste'. After heavy clashes one day, the scooters outside the school were set alight. A strike was held by the Guadeloupean students calling for the expulsion of any racist white students, leading to several expulsions and suspensions. Through its migration policies, France increased tensions between the Antilles and France, disrupting existing class and racial hierarchies, but also increasing the economic dependency of the Antilles on France.

In order to prevent independence movements from gaining ground, the French State combined the restrictive and repressive measures of the police and intelligence services with a gradual extension of social rights to bring Martinique and Guadeloupe in line with metropolitan France. A 1970 report acknowledged that this had been official policy since 1962.[584] It is worth noting that emphasis was placed on achieving greater parity, not when departmentalisation was introduced in 1946, but later in 1962 after nationalism and general unrest increased. Some historians have suggested that this policy of increasing funding to Martinique and Guadeloupe to help with social welfare is the main reason independence has never been popular with most Antilleans.[585] However, the improvement of social welfare only really began after unrest had increased in the Antilles, in response to the rise in nationalism. Furthermore, the lack of a mainstream nationalist party is as a

[581] 'La question des fonctionnaires', *Justice,* Martinique, 15 November 1951, 1-3.
[582] 'A propos des evenements du lycée Baimbridge', *Clin-Din-Din*, March 1979, PG 51, 11-13, ADG.
[583] Ibid.
[584] 'Bilan de la politique sociale menée dans les D.O.M. jusqu'en 1969 et perspectives', April 1970, 19940180/20, AN.
[585] Pervillé, 'Qu'est-Ce Que La Décolonisation? Pour Une Réhabilitation Des Facteurs Démographiques'.

result of a variety of factors, not least the repression of anticolonial activity, as well as the other elements discussed throughout this thesis.

Although ideas about race were less openly or explicitly discussed in French reports, compared to in British correspondence, racism and constructions of race undoubtedly influenced French approaches. For example, the intelligence service carefully monitored and reported on a cultural festival in Fort-de-France, Martinique in 1979 purely because it was dedicated to the struggle of African-Americans. A range of intellectuals and campaigners from the US and the Caribbean spoke at the festival, including Yolande King, the daughter of Martin Luther King.[586] The festival was portrayed as a security issue by the police and the speakers were treated with suspicion. It is clear that, in the eyes of the intelligence service, the fact that the speakers were African-American instantly made them a potential threat to local security and public order. Notions of race evidently shaped approaches by French officials to the French Antilles and its citizens.

Finally, the French state were anxious that the issue of autonomy could become more popular among the general public. The Ministry of the Interior kept tabs on the popularity of autonomy in the French Antilles. In 1977, a report acknowledged that the idea of autonomy was gaining ground, even in moderate circles.[587] This fed into the increased pressure on the need for decentralisation, which was eventually introduced in 1982. Though decentralisation was also a response to problems in metropolitan French departments, for the French Antilles, it was hoped it would put to bed the question of greater autonomy. Therefore, a variety of attitudes and approaches were employed by the state in the French Antilles. Most notably, migration policies, which aimed at relocating young Antilleans to mainland France to tackle unemployment in the Caribbean, had mixed results. These policies hampered the development of nationalist groups in the Caribbean, as so many young

[586] Directorate of General Intelligence in Martinique, 'Ouverture de la 8ème Festival Culturel de Fort-de-France', 4 July 1979, 19940180/84, AN.
[587] Report from Ministry of the Interior, 12 July 1977, 19940180/84, AN.

Martinicans and Guadeloupeans moved to the metropole, but they also increased tensions between Antilleans and metropolitans.

The British Territories

Due to their isolated positions within the British Empire, the BVI and Cayman suffered significant neglect and underfunding from the metropole. This was particularly apparent in the first half of the twentieth century because, as dependencies of other colonies, these territories were more isolated from the metropole than other Caribbean colonies. As a result, resentment at the lack of funding and support was directed towards the administration in the other colonies, Antigua and Jamaica respectively, rather than at the distant metropole. The islands only became more prosperous once the tourism and financial services sectors had developed, which occurred earlier in the Cayman Islands compared to the BVI.

Colonial reports from the Administrators and Governors of the BVI and Cayman demonstrate the extent to which notions of race were a factor in colonial approaches and policy. Anyone who raised the issue of racial inequality or racism in the British territories was treated with suspicion and seen as potentially subversive. Indeed, the monthly intelligence reports for the British Virgin Islands throughout the 1970s contained a section entitled 'Black power and associated racialism'.[588] When the Attorney General was dismissed in the BVI after she challenged a decision by the British Governor not to follow usual procedure following the death of an American in the islands, some BVIslanders raised this as an issue of racial discrimination. The Attorney General was a black Jamaican civil servant who seemed to have been dismissed for challenging the Governor's authority. She had considerable support from various groups in the BVI who challenged the dismissal. However, the Governor's attitude to this 'racialist issue' was disdainful and attempts to

[588] For example, BVI Local Intelligence Reports, 1979, FCO 44/2127, TNA.

challenge the decision were refused.[589] The administration lumped any raising of racial discrimination issues into the 'black power' box and instantly interpreted it as potentially subversive.

The attitude towards Rastafarianism further demonstrates the racist attitudes of the colonial administration. Like elsewhere in Caribbean, Rastafarianism was treated with suspicion and was referred to as 'the Rastafarian cult' in reports.[590] The Governor of the BVI argued that 'the presence of a Rastafarian element in the British Virgin Islands is a matter of some concern'.[591] This statement was made with little concrete evidence other than the association of Rastafarianism with criminality by many Caribbean governments. Similarly, in the Cayman Islands, it was treated as a potential criminal issue and a report was issued to investigate the 'so-called Rastafarian problem'.[592] The report argued that 'many criminals have invaded their ranks using the cult as a cloak'.[593] It suggested that an increase in Rastafarians in Cayman had led to reports of housebreakings, and included a list of all suspected Rastafarians in the islands. The report recommended two actions as a response: increased immigration controls on 'obvious Rastafarians'; and further police harassment of any gatherings of people who looked like Rastafarians.[594]

As well as prejudice towards Rastafarians, Governors in the BVI and Cayman were wary of politically active people from other Caribbean islands. The British administration showed far greater concern when it came to Afro-Caribbean visitors to the islands, compared to white immigrants. James Davidson, the Governor in 1979, argued that people from other Caribbean

[589] BVI Local Intelligence Report, October 1979, FCO 44/2127, TNA.
[590] BVI Local Intelligence Report, December 1979, FCO 44/2127, TNA.
[591] Ibid.
[592] Special Branch, Cayman Islands Police Force, 'The Rastafarian Movement in the Cayman Islands', 23 August 1979, FCO 44/2011, 3, TNA.
[593] Ibid., 2.
[594] Ibid., 6.

islands ought to be monitored as they 'may incite tiresome activity'.[595] He was concerned that a lawyer from St Kitts who had been assisting the BVI Civil Service Association would stir up trouble.[596] The government went as far as deporting people, such as Noel Henwood, an Antiguan man who supported BVI independence and was deported for being 'an undesirable character'.[597] In terms of the impact on decolonisation, colonial approaches to people from other Caribbean islands reinforced the divisions between BVIslanders and the rest of the Caribbean. This curbed the potential for political activists in the BVI to engage with decolonisation discussions elsewhere and to strengthen their protest movements through the experiences and advice of other Caribbean activists.

The British Governors and the civil servants at the FCO exhibited a dismissive, patronising attitude towards local politicians and ministers in the BVI and Cayman. Mawby argues that this disdainful attitude is evidence of British bigotry, as the 'quotidian belittlement of Caribbean sensibilities which litter the minutes and memoranda of the day certainly evince an innate sense of superiority'.[598] This was evident in correspondence from the BVI, such as the description of the Deputy Governor, a BVIslander, by Governor Davidson as 'a good fellow… though they may not be the world's best wordsmith'.[599] This attitude could have had a knock-on effect on constitutional development, as Governors assumed local politicians were not competent enough to be offered greater responsibilities. For example, in 1972 constitutional reform was delayed because the Governor believed 'HMG is unlikely to accept proposals which will hand over financial responsibility to a minister'.[600] Colonial officials were even more dismissive when it came to female politicians. A 1962 report which announced the election of the first female representative in the

[595] Letter from Governor of BVI to FCO, 15 October 1979, FCO 44/2127, TNA.
[596] Ibid.
[597] BVI Local Intelligence Report, March 1972, FCO 44/812, 1, TNA.
[598] Mawby, *Ordering Independence*, 247.
[599] Letter from Governor of BVI to FCO, 25 May 1979, FCO 44/2127, TNA.
[600] Letter from Governor of BVI to FCO, 28 December 1972, FCO 44/812, TNA.

Cayman Islands suggested that her 'choice as a candidate by the winning National Democratic Party was more an indication of the paucity of suitable candidates in the area than appreciation of her ability in public life'.[601] This lack of belief in the capabilities of the representatives and civil servants of the islands filtered through to local opinion. It manifested in local politicians declaring that the islands should not become independent because there were no local people capable of managing government effectively.[602] This colonial attitude clearly had an impact on the process of decolonisation.

Finally, the British Government was mistrustful of any trade union activity in the overseas territories. Unions were slow to develop in the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands, but once they did emerge in the 1970s, Governors treated them with suspicion. Correspondence from Governors presented unions and their members as potential trouble makers. Monthly intelligence reports in the 1970s contained a separate section to detail any suspicious or troublesome union activity by the newly established Civil Service Associations in both groups of islands.[603] These associations were used to challenge government policies, issues of racial discrimination, and to push for change.[604] However, the colonial approach to unions limited their ability to harness local sentiment and advocate change.

Therefore, in both the French and British territories, the colonial approaches and attitudes shaped the processes of decolonisation. In the French Antilles, the state gradually increased social security to the Caribbean in response to unrest. This increased the economic dependency of the Antilles on France and made it more difficult for advocates of independence to successfully argue in favour

[601] Cayman Islands Monthly Intelligence Report, November 1962, CO 1031/3733, TNA.
[602] Annie Bodden, Minutes of Legislative Assembly Meeting, 4 January 1963, Legislative Assembly Storeroom, Box 31, CINA.
[603] See Reports of the Cayman Islands Intelligence Committee, 1979, FCO 44/2011, TNA; BVI Local Intelligence Reports, 1979, FCO 44/2127, TNA.
[604] For example, BVI Local Intelligence Report, October 1979, FCO 44/2127, TNA.

of cutting ties to France. In the British territories, the dismissive approach of colonial officials towards the local population was evident in correspondence and reports. This trickled down into public opinion in the islands, reducing the confidence in local representatives and their ability to manage governmental responsibilities. Both British and French colonial officials were influenced by notions of race and exhibited greater suspicion towards black Caribbean citizens. This was particularly influential in the policing of the territories and was evident in the criminalisation of black citizens and new arrivals.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the different ways colonial policy influenced the process of decolonisation in the overseas territories. The actions of officials on the ground often differed from official policy, adding conflicting influences to local debates and experiences. Acts of monitoring, repression and interference reduced the likelihood of open discussion about independence. Advocates of autonomy and independence were often placed under surveillance or subjected to censorship and violence if they campaigned or spoke openly. The massacre of May 1967 in Guadeloupe is a startling and disturbing example of the lengths the French state went to in order to maintain control and put an end to unrest. The imprisonment of independence activists unfairly blamed for the violent nature of this incident highlights the desire of the state to prevent nationalist activity. This demonstrates that France feared losing the French Antilles after the trauma of the Algerian War of Independence. Colonial rule in the British territories in the twentieth century was less violent, perhaps due to the relative lack of protest and unrest. The British state closely monitored local newspapers, political activists and unions to ensure British control.

Centuries of assimilation in the French Antilles encouraged many Antilleans, especially the middle-class, to see France as the solution to their problems. It gave local political elites a vested interest in maintaining links to France. In the British territories, islanders were encouraged to feel a sense

of loyalty to the Queen and the British Empire through the education system, public holidays and celebrations, as well as the veneration of royal visits. This was particularly successful in the Cayman Islands where the merchant elite expressed a real sense of affinity to Britain and Britishness. In the British Virgin Islands, whilst many expressed a fondness for the Queen, the proximity of the US Virgin Islands countered the British influence.

Finally, colonial rule in the Caribbean involved a variety of arrangements and approaches. French and British attitudes towards the overseas territories were contradictory and inconsistent. Prefects and governors had considerable power to manipulate local debates and to direct developments according to their beliefs rather than official policy. Although attitudes towards race are less explicitly discussed in French correspondence, racial discrimination influenced both colonial states and the reporting of issues in the islands. In all four territories, the islands were generally neglected by the colonial state in terms of economic assistance and support. Nonetheless, rather than seeking independence as an antidote to this, many islanders expressed the opinion, reinforced by France and Britain, that the islands were not economically prosperous enough to become independent.

As this chapter has highlighted, colonial policies and approaches changed and developed during the period under consideration. The French state became more restrictive after the changes to the constitution in 1960 effectively prohibited campaigning for Antillean independence. British negotiators initially favoured federation, especially for the smaller states in the Caribbean. By the mid-1960s Britain was encouraging gradual independence, even for smaller states. Yet, in 1979, the Foreign Office acknowledged that not all territories desired independence. Despite this changing policy, Administrators and Governors in the British territories encouraged and fostered the territories' continued connection to Britain throughout this period. Crucially, this chapter has discredited the argument that these territories were given the opportunity to choose their own manner of decolonisation, unconstrained by metropolitan influences and restrictions, and simply

never wished to become independent. A fair and open debate on the subject was never permitted throughout the postwar era and into the 1980s.

Colonial policies and attitudes, combined with the different influences discussed in the other chapters of this thesis, contributed to how the process of decolonisation developed in these territories. The actions of the colonial state slowed down the pace of change and reduced any momentum gained by anticolonial movements. Having explored developments from a macro level, this thesis will turn next to the local dimensions of decolonisation. The ways local elites engaged with the colonial state is crucial to understanding the processes of decolonisation in the overseas territories.

Chapter Four

Local Elites: Economic and Political Power Factions

While the previous chapter demonstrated the importance of the colonial state in the process of decolonisation in Martinique, Guadeloupe, the Cayman Islands, and the British Virgin Islands, this chapter will turn to the role of local elites. Some elite groups collaborated with the colonial state to maintain these territories' links to Britain and France. The role of local elite groups in the Caribbean islands is central to explaining the nature of decolonisation. Their impact reveals the long-term historical transformations in local society which shaped twentieth century events.

Local elites played a crucial part in negotiating and directing decolonisation, as a recent collection by Dülffer and Frey has highlighted.[605] Across the Caribbean region, islands chose different forms of decolonisation and varying relationships with the former colonial power.[606] These relationships cannot be understood without delving into the intricacies of local society and the way debates about political status were shaped and communicated in the islands. In their approaches to decolonisation, historians are moving past the traditional focus on the actions and intentions of colonial politicians, policy-makers and civil servants, to understand the local context and how local political actors engaged with the colonial state.[607] However, studies of local politics in either the

[605] Jost Dülffer and Marc Frey, eds., *Elites and Decolonization in the Twentieth Century* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011), 2.
[606] Johnson, 'The British Caribbean from Demobilisation to Constitutional Decolonisation'; Oostindie and Klinkers, *Decolonising the Caribbean*; Jason C. Parker, *Brother's Keeper: The United States, Race, and Empire in the British Caribbean, 1937-1962*; Q. Swan, *Black Power in Bermuda: The Struggle for Decolonization* (New York, 2009); Tennyson S. D. Joseph, *Decolonization in St. Lucia: Politics and Global Neoliberalism, 1945–2010* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2011); David Killingray, '"British Decolonisation and the Smaller Territories: The Origins of the UK Overseas Territories"', in *The Non-Independent Territories of the Caribbean and Pacific: Continuity or Change*, ed. Peter Clegg and David Killingray (London: The Institute of Commonwealth Studies, 2012), 1–18; Mary Chamberlain, *Empire and Nation-Building in the Caribbean: Barbados, 1937-66* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013); Childers, *Seeking Imperialism's Embrace*.
[607] See Connelly, 'Rethinking the Cold War and Decolonization'; James D. Le Sueur, *The Decolonization Reader* (New York: Routledge, 2003); Prasenjit Duara, ed., *Decolonization: Perspectives from Now and Then* (London: Routledge, 2004); Michael Adas, 'Contested Hegemony: The Great War and the Afro-Asian Assault on the Civilizing Mission Ideology', *Journal of World History* 15, no. 1 (2004): 31–63; Philip D. Morgan and Sean Hawkins, eds., *Black Experience and the Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006); Cemil Aydin,

French or British Caribbean rarely take a comparative perspective and often remain within the linguistic boundaries of the region.[608] Unlike previous studies of local elites in the Caribbean, this chapter will adopt a comparative lens, drawing out the links and differences between powerful groups and their impact on the process of decolonisation in these non-independent territories.

Power in these territories operated in a manner that was specific to the Caribbean. Caribbean societies are often structured in a three-tiered framework which Premdas has labelled a 'colour-class system of stratification'.[609] Whilst Caribbean societies vary from island to island, this typically produces a white planter minority at the top, a *métis* or mixed-race middle class, and a black working class.[610] The case study territories adhere to these trends to some extent, with Martinique fitting most clearly into this regional pattern. The British Virgin Islands, on the other hand, are quite unusual in that land redistribution after abolition created a relatively equal society, compared to the land and inequality issues in Jamaica, for example.[611] At the same time, as this chapter will highlight, local elites in these islands engaged in transnational and global exchanges and networks

The Politics of Anti-Westernism in Asia: Visions of World Order in Pan-Islamic and Pan-Asian Thought (New York: Columbia University Press, 2007); Jean Allman, 'Nuclear Imperialism and the Pan-African Struggle for Peace and Freedom: Ghana, 1959–1962', *Souls* 10, no. 2 (13 June 2008): 83–102; John Darwin, *After Tamerlane: The Global History of Empire* (London: Allen Lane, 2008); Jonathan Derrick, *Africa's 'Agitators': Militant Anti-Colonialism in Africa and the West, 1918-1939* (London: Hurst, 2008); Jeffrey S. Ahlman, 'Road to Ghana: Nkrumah, Southern Africa and the Eclipse of a Decolonizing Africa', *Kronos*, no. 37 (2011): 23–40; Pankaj Mishra, *From the Ruins of Empire: The Revolt Against the West and the Remaking of Asia* (London: Allen Lane, 2012).

[608] Bishop, *The Political Economy of Caribbean Development*, 4–5.

[609] Ralph R. Premdas, 'Ethnicity and Identity in the Caribbean: Decentering a Myth', Working Paper 234, Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies (Notre Dame, Indiana, 1996), 6.

[610] See Mervyn C. Alleyne, *The Construction and Representation of Race and Ethnicity in the Caribbean and the World* (Kingston: University of West Indies Press, 2002); Henke and Reno, *Modern Political Culture in the Caribbean*; Brian L. Moore et al., eds., *Slavery, Freedom and Gender: The Dynamics of Caribbean Society* (Kingston: University of West Indies Press, 2001); Eric Doumerc, *Caribbean Civilisation: The English-Speaking Caribbean Since Independence* (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 2003); Anton Allahar, ed., *Ethnicity, Class, and Nationalism: Caribbean and Extra-Caribbean Dimensions* (Lanham, 2005); Bernardo Vega, ed., *Dominican Cultures: The Making of a Caribbean Society* (Princeton: Markus Wiener, 2007).

[611] See Abigail B. Bakan, *Ideology and Class Conflict in Jamaica: The Politics of Rebellion* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1990), 40–46; Patrick E. Bryan, *The Jamaican People, 1880-1902: Race, Class, and Social Control* (Kingston: The University of the West Indies Press, 2000), 67–88; Jimmy K Tindigarukayo, 'An Attempt to Empower Jamaican Squatters', *Environment & Urbanization* 16, no. 1 (2004): 200.

in the twentieth century. Therefore, the role of local elites demonstrates that the processes of decolonisation in these territories must be understood within a local, regional and global context.

This chapter will argue that local elites had a disproportionate influence on decolonisation debates and negotiations through their privileged positions in society. Local elites are defined as any 'social groups who command certain resources in a given social entity'.[612] As such, this chapter will demonstrate how different elites exercised power through three key means of leverage: economic dominance; control of the political scene; and the influence certain educated elites had due to their elevated status in society as intellectuals. The rhetoric of local elites on decolonisation was influenced by the racial and gender dynamics of these societies and had leverage over decolonisation developments. In line with recent works on women in the Caribbean, the analysis of elite power will also adopt a gendered lens.[613] In the case study territories, women's struggles to gain the right to vote were caught up in attempts by political elites to maintain the status quo. This chapter will demonstrate that local elites are central to our understanding of how decolonisation was negotiated and developed in the Caribbean.

This research on local elites has adopted a range of sources, with a particular focus on individual life stories and histories. Many of the politicians discussed in this chapter wrote memoirs offering a useful insight into their lives and their impressions of other political figures. When compared as a collection of memoirs, they offer a window into political dynamics, allegiances and tensions

[612] Dülffer and Frey, *Elites and Decolonization in the Twentieth Century*, 2.
[613] See Verene Shepherd, Bridget Brereton, and Barbara Bailey, eds., *Engendering History: Caribbean Women in Historical Perspective* (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1995); Consuelo López Springfield, ed., *Daughters of Caliban: Caribbean Women in the Twentieth Century* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1997); Briggs, *Reproducing Empire*; Lara Putnam, *The Company They Kept: Migrants and the Politics of Gender in Caribbean Costa Rica, 1870-1960* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 2002); Anne S. Macpherson, *From Colony to Nation: Women Activists and the Gendering of Politics in Belize, 1912-1982* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2007); Juanita De Barros, *Reproducing the British Caribbean: Sex, Gender, and Population Politics After Slavery* (Chapel Hill: UNC Press Books, 2014); Nicole C. Bourbonnais, *Birth Control in the Decolonizing Caribbean: Reproductive Politics and Practice on Four Islands, 1930–1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

between different leaders and factions. While the nature of political elites and political power is more apparent in archival sources, it can be more difficult to investigate the ways in which economic elites influenced political decisions. This is particularly the case with the economic elite in Martinique. As a result, I have had to rely on a combination of newspapers, documentary films and secondary sources for parts of this chapter on Martinique's white planter elite. Furthermore, given the nature of the historical record, it is often more straightforward to build up a picture of the economic and political elites in a colony, whereas the voices of other groups can remain elusive. However, as Villaverde et al. suggest, there are certain dangers to elite-focused research.[614] Elites were certainly not the only local group to shape debates around decolonisation and chapter six will explore in more detail the role of other local actors involved in public protests and other non-state action. Nevertheless, a clearer understanding of local elites reveals how power manifested in these societies and how those with power were able to influence political changes to their benefit. As many have suggested, decolonisation did not completely disrupt the power structures of colonial societies. This is particularly apparent in states that have maintained political ties with the metropolitan power. The non-independent status of these territories cannot be understood without exploring how the self-interest of local elites led them to strive to maintain ties with the metropole.

1. Economic Power Groups

Economic dominance allowed certain elites to wield disproportionate influence over local debates about political status, often for perceived personal gains. Like many Caribbean societies, in Martinique and the Cayman Islands a white elite which had established its power and wealth during the era of slavery, maintained a significant level of economic power throughout the twentieth century. Revolutions and rebellions in Guadeloupe and BVI during the eighteenth and nineteenth

[614] Leila A. Villaverde, Joe L. Kincheloe, and Frances Helyar, 'Historical Research in Education', in *Doing Educational Research*, ed. Kenneth Tobin and Joe L. Kincheloe (Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2006), 325.

centuries disrupted this white minority monopoly of the economy, complicating the structures of economic power.

The Cayman Islands

Among the case study territories, the Cayman Islands is particularly striking in that a mostly white minority managed to retain both political and economic dominance. In the first half of the twentieth century, an elite group of white merchant families controlled the economy and the Legislative Assembly. This group is often referred to as the merchant class, because they owned the main merchant businesses, which gave them command over imports and exports in the islands, as well as over any passengers wishing to leave or return to Cayman. The power of the merchant class created a vertical societal structure, where most Caymanians were dependent on the merchants for goods, supplies and if they wished to travel. Hannerz aptly refers to this social elite as 'gatekeepers of the wider world'.[615] In the 1950s, the impoverished Cayman Islands became wealthier, as the reputation of Caymanians as skilled mariners helped many to find jobs in the Canal Zone and in American shipping companies.[616] During this crucial period in Cayman's economic history, the merchants cemented their position within politics and the economy. As one George Town politician put it, 'all the ships was owned by white men'.[617] Families like the McTaggarts and the Merrens solidified their positions of power during this decade, and their hegemony remained largely unchallenged. As there were no newspapers in the Cayman Islands, until *Cayman Times* in 1956, it is hard to get an idea of local opinion outside of discussions in the Cayman Assembly. However, this very fact helps to demonstrate the lack of alternative intellectual leadership in the islands, highlighting the power of the merchant oligarchy and the indifference and disenfranchisement of the rest of the population.[618]

[615] Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, 42.
[616] Colonial Office Annual Report on the Cayman Islands, 1946, CO 1071/93, 3, TNA.
[617] Ormond Panton, in interview conducted by Mary E. Ebanks, 29 July 1991, 3, CINA.
[618] Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, 48.

Ducan Merren is central to understanding the Caymanian elite, as one of the most influential figures among the merchant class in the 1950s. Descended from a Liverpudlian mariner shipwrecked in Cayman in the early 1800s, Ducan Merren began his career working for an oil company in Louisiana.[619] On his return to Cayman to run the family business, he maintained key contacts in the US and was keen to protect Cayman's special visa relationship. The Merren family ran the biggest trading company in the Cayman Islands, fixed 'all retail prices in the Caymans and there is no other merchant strong enough to stand against them'.[620] Their dominance in the shipping industry was to such an extent that they could effectively control all traffic between the Cayman Islands and the US. The Merrens also moved into the developing tourism sector, starting off by running the Pageant Beach Hotel.[621] Their continued wealth and position in society throughout the period in question was highlighted in a 1975 *Northwester* special supplement which detailed their success in shipping and tourism.[622]

Alongside Merren, Roy McTaggart wielded considerable influence over Cayman's decolonisation in the postwar decades. McTaggart was Merren's business rival, though his family were more recent additions to the Caymanian elite. McTaggart's father, a white Jamaican, had come to Cayman in 1862 as a preacher and teacher.[623] Roy McTaggart gained a unique education for a Caymanian of that time, going to school in Jamaica and then studying dentistry in the US.[624] He returned to Cayman to work as a dentist, run a general store and also to build up a shipping fleet involved in fishing, passengers and freight.[625] Merren, McTaggart and other members of this

[619] Ibid., 40.
[620] Governor of Jamaica to Colonial Office, 17 November 1955, CO 1031/1697, TNA.
[621] Ibid.
[622] *The Northwester,* 4, February 1975, special supplement.
[623] Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, 40.
[624] F. A. Stockdale, 'Notes of interviews with Mr Panton, Acting Commissioner', 30 August 1941, CO 318/450/15, TNA.
[625] Ibid.

merchant elite had a vested interest in maintaining their position at the top of Caymanian society. Through their dominance in the Caymanian Assembly, they promoted the benefits of no taxation, Cayman's profitable links with the US and were actively 'opposed to anything which will raise the standard of living of the poorer people'.[626] Although political changes in the 1960s and the increasing number of wealthy foreign residents in Cayman somewhat diluted the monopoly of the merchant class, by the end of the 1970s they remained dominant figures in the Cayman economy, society and political arena.

Martinique

In Martinique, like in many other Caribbean islands, a well-established white planter class descended from plantation owners during the era of slavery owned a majority of the island's economy throughout the twentieth century.[627] Known as the *Békés*, they used their economic power to exercise a certain degree of political influence.[628] During the era of slavery, the plantation owners held a strong grip on local politics. However, after abolition in 1848, an educated *métis* middle class developed which became increasingly involved in the local councils. As certain citizenship rights were extended to black Antilleans, the domination of the white planter class in the political sphere was somewhat diminished. However, as many historians of the French Antilles have noted, the *Békés* have been remarkably persistent and successful in maintaining their power, wealth and influence well into the twenty-first century.[629]

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[626] Hugh Foot to Philip Rogers, 17 November 1955, 31.
[627] For other Caribbean islands see Howard Johnson and Karl S. Watson, eds., *The White Minority in the Caribbean* (Kingston: Ian Randle, 1998).
[628] Laurent Coste and Sylvie Guillaume, eds., *Élites et crises du XVIe au XXIe siècle: Europe et Outre-mer* (Paris: Armand Colin, 2014), 21–27.
[629] See Jean Benoist and Edith Kováts-Beaudoux, 'Les Blancs Créoles de La Martinique', in *L'Archipel Inachevé. Culture et Société Aux Antilles Françaises*, ed. Jean Benoist (Montreal: Presses Université de Montréal, 1972), 106–32; Jean-Luc Jamard, 'Les Békés Sont Des Judokas...', *Les Temps Modernes* 39, no. 441 (1983): 1872–94; Guy Cabort-Masson, *Les Puissances d'argent En Martinique* (Martinique: Laboratoire de recherches de l'A.M.E.P., 1984); Fred Constant, 'French Republicanism under Challenge: White Minority (Béké) Power in Martinique and Guadeloupe', in *The White Minority in the Caribbean*, ed. Howard Johnson and Karl S. Watson (Kingston: Ian Randle, 1998), 168–77; Edith Kováts-Beaudoux, *Les blancs créoles de la Martinique: une minorité dominante* (Paris, 2002).

After abolition, the Martinican white elite cemented their economic position, adapting to any changes in the economic and political environment. As the technologies of sugar processing changed towards the end of the nineteenth century, the *Békés* maintained control of the industry through ownership of the new sugar refineries, as well as the old sugar plantations.[630] In the 1930s, they diversified from solely sugar and rum, to banana production. Once bananas became a more significant part of the Martinican economy, many of the most influential banana growers were *Béké* businessmen.[631] The *Békés* have also entrenched their power in the banking system through shareholdings and directorships.[632] The bank Crédit Martiniquais, established in 1924, is mostly owned by *Béké* members and it forms a central part of their continued economic success.[633]

The Martinican elite were strongly against the move to departmentalise in 1946, as they feared this would place greater power in the hands of the black majority.[634] However, once the departmentalisation law was passed, they successfully delayed the extension of social benefits to Antillean citizens. Since the 1940s, the *Békés* have adeptly taken advantage of the intervention of the French state in the new Caribbean departments, particularly in terms of the transfer of funds for development. A 1953 decree aimed at helping local businesses directly benefitted the white elite as it gave tax exemptions to earnings from housing construction and new businesses, which were mostly run by *Békés*.[635] Furthermore, a 1960 decree which appeared to offer Martinicans a greater influence in local affairs, in fact permitted the Chamber of Commerce and the Chamber

[630] Bernard Petitjean Roget, 'Aperçu sur l'évolution économique de la Martinique au début du vingtième siècle', in *Historial Antillais,* Volume V, 1980, A2116, 130, ADG.
[631] Emily Vogt, 'Ghosts of the Plantation: Historical Representations and Cultural Difference among Martinique's White Elite' (University of Chicago, 2005), 242–3.
[632] Paul Sutton, *Dual Legacies in the Contemporary Caribbean: Continuing Aspects of British and French Dominion* (London, 2005), section 9.
[633] Vogt, 'Ghosts of the Plantation: Historical Representations and Cultural Difference among Martinique's White Elite', 226.
[634] Childers, 'The Second World War as a Watershed in the French Caribbean', 411–3.
[635] Armand Nicolas, 'Par les décrets du 26 Avril le gouvernement donne des pouvoirs accrus aux békés', *Justice* (Martinique), no. 21, 26 May 1960, 1-3.

of Agriculture to advise the Minister of State on local economic and social matters.[636] As these two chambers were predominantly made up of *Békés*, it allowed them to bypass the local General Council and negotiate directly with ministers in Paris.[637]

The Martinican *Békés* have benefitted from the campaigning of both right-wing and left-wing local politicians, making the most of subsidies designed the protect and improve the agricultural industry.[638] Like other economic elites in the Caribbean, such as Jamaica and Barbados, the *Békés'* control of land has been instrumental in their maintaining power and influence.[639] As the debate over involvement in the European Community hit the French Antilles in the 1970s, the *Békés* initially opposed integration.[640] However, they soon recognised the possibilities for obtaining subsidies from Europe and have become a powerful lobby within the European Union.[641] Through lobbying in local and national assemblies, through their power locally as major employers and landowners, and through funding politicians on both sides of the political spectrum, the *Békés* wielded considerable political influence throughout the twentieth century. Since departmentalisation, they opposed any major change to political status that would upset their position and the benefits they gain from the French state. Their power was well established in Martinique, but they also exerted substantial influence in Guadeloupe.

Guadeloupe

Since the French Revolution, Guadeloupean society has developed differently from Martinique. Whereas the *Békés* had managed to maintain control in Martinique during the Revolution through

[636] *JORF,* 23 June 1960, 1462.
[637] Armand Nicolas, 'Par les décrets du 26 Avril le gouvernement donne des pouvoirs accrus aux békés', *Justice* (Martinique), no. 21, 26 May 1960, 1-3.
[638] Constant, 'French Republicanism under Challenge: White Minority (Béké) Power in Martinique and Guadeloupe', 170.
[639] Sutton, *Dual Legacies in the Contemporary Caribbean*.
[640] Constant, 'French Republicanism under Challenge: White Minority (Béké) Power in Martinique and Guadeloupe', 175.
[641] See Romain Bolzinger, *Les Derniers Maîtres de la Martinique* (France: Canal +, 2009), documentary film.

British protection, most of the white planters in Guadeloupe fled or were killed during the regime of Victor Hugues from 1794 to 1798.[642] Without such a powerful white minority and without the development of such a significant *métis* middle class, Guadeloupean society became less starkly stratified in terms of race and class than Martinique. Once slavery was reinforced in 1802, Martinican *Békés* began taking over plantations and businesses abandoned by Guadeloupean planters, but they did not have such a cemented economic foothold as in Martinique and were in smaller numbers.[643] Nonetheless, by the Second World War, the Guadeloupean economy was mostly controlled by this small group of Martinican *Békés*, along with metropolitan business interests. Following Algerian independence in 1962, several important businesses were taken over or developed by Algerian *pied-noirs*.[644] This disrupted the structures of Guadeloupean society and caused new forms of racial tension, which were particularly apparent during the major unrest of 1967. In terms of ethnicity and class, Guadeloupe was more similar to the British Virgin Islands, as both had a larger black working-class population than the other islands.

The British Virgin Islands

Unlike the French Antilles and the Cayman Islands, the British Virgin Islands did not have a distinct economic elite in the first half of the twentieth century. Frequent severe hurricanes in the early nineteenth century, followed by emancipation in 1834, and the 1853 uprising against oppressive taxation on cattle led most white plantation owners to leave the islands.[645] By the 1901 census, the permanent white population was recorded as just two persons, compared to 1300 in 1805.[646] From the post-emancipation era until the Second World War, the BVI struggled economically and most BVIslanders emigrated to the Dominican Republic, Puerto Rico and the

[642] Lacour, *Histoire de La Guadeloupe*.
[643] Constant, 'French Republicanism under Challenge: White Minority (Béké) Power in Martinique and Guadeloupe', 170–3.
[644] Félix Rodes, *Liberté pour la Guadeloupe: 169 jours de prison* (Paris: Éditions du Témoignage Chrétien, 1972), 19.
[645] Harrigan, 'A Profile of Social Development in the British Virgin Islands'.
[646] From Census Reports reproduced in Harrigan, 79.

US Virgin Islands in search of work.[647] Contemporary commentators often suggest that this led to a 'classless' society developing in the BVI.[648] Whilst it is true that society was not stratified quite as strictly as in Martinique or the Cayman Islands, or indeed in many Caribbean islands, class distinctions did develop in the twentieth century. Noel Lloyd argued that 'most people in Road Town were the descendants of slave masters', which resulted in the development of a lighter-skinned elite in the capital.[649] He acknowledged that there 'were attempts to make class distinctions but all of us were poor'.[650] Maurer highlights the period of migration before World War Two as key to the development of a small merchant class.[651] Those who emigrated to the Hispanic islands, particularly the Dominican Republic returned with sufficient capital to set up or run the main businesses in Road Town. Many of the Road Town elite profited from smuggling during the Prohibition era.[652] Meanwhile, the islanders who worked in the US Virgin Islands during the war developed a sense of proletariat consciousness and were mobilised by the merchant class in postwar demonstrations for local autonomy.[653]

This Road Town elite instigated the first major local political organisation in the twentieth century, establishing the Civic League in 1938. They continued to influence debates about political status throughout the period in question.[654] Once the Legislative Assembly was re-established in 1950, it was dominated by Road Town businessmen. It was not until the 1960s with the battles between the 'Town Boys' and the 'Country Boys' that political power became less concentrated in Road Town.[655] Maurer argues that early conflicts between the Road Town elite and workers who had

[647] The term 'BVIslander' to refer to citizens of the BVI is a relatively recent phenomenon. See Maurer, *Recharting the Caribbean*, xiv.
[648] Angel Smith, Director of Virgin Islands Studies at H. Lavity Stoutt Community College, in interview with the author, Tortola, 6 June 2017.
[649] Noel Lloyd, *The Positive Action Movement 1968*, (Tortola: Government of the Virgin Islands, 2000), 9.
[650] Ibid.
[651] Maurer, *Recharting the Caribbean*, 39.
[652] Penn, *Memoirs of H. R. Penn*, 13.
[653] Ibid.
[654] O'Neal, *Life Notes*, 71–3.
[655] Cyril B Romney, 'Evolution of the Ministerial System', *Empowerment Through Representation* (2000), 90, VINA.

emigrated to the USVI 'later translated into political factions'.[656] Though it would not be accurate to suggest that a wealthy exclusive elite group held economic power in the BVI in the twentieth century, it is certainly clear that a burgeoning group of Road Town businessmen dominated BVI politics from 1940, and well into the 1960s.

In the British Virgin Islands and across the other territories, economic elites played a major part in influencing the process of decolonisation and ensuring the political status of their islands suited the continuation of their economic dominance. This was most apparent in the Cayman Islands, where a white merchant oligarchy pursued a political status which would suit both their business interests and their sense of affinity with Britain. In Martinique, on the other hand, the *Békés* initially opposed integration with France. However, once departmentalisation became inevitable, they proved highly adaptable, using local and national assemblies to lobby and promote their own agenda. These Martinican *Békés* also established a foothold in the Guadeloupean economy, where they similarly work to obstruct any major change to the status quo or any threat to the subsidies their businesses received from France. Rather differently to the other territories, the BVI did not retain a wealthy white minority after abolition. It is perhaps more surprising then, that the burgeoning group of local businessmen promoted a rhetoric of respectability and conservativism, and sought greater political representation within rather than outside the colonial state.[657] The lines between economic elites and the political sphere were often blurred, particularly in Cayman and BVI.

[656] Maurer, *Recharting the Caribbean*, 39.
[657] Maurer has argued that, in more recent literature, this Road Town group which controlled the Legislative Assembly in the 1950s have been defined as 'black'. However, in reality, some were white and the important difference between them and the members of councils in the nineteenth century was that they were local BVIslanders. See Maurer, 240–2.

2. Elite Political Power

Whilst in Martinique, Guadeloupe and the BVI, politics became dominated by a black and *métis* middle class in the twentieth century, in Cayman the white minority maintained a hold over political power. The influence that political elites had in debates about political status and decolonisation is the most obvious and easy to trace among the different forms of local elite power. As the colonial state negotiated with local political leaders to determine the future political status of the islands, elected and nominated representatives held a privileged position and could promote their own interests.

The Cayman Islands

In some Caribbean islands, political and economic power was held among different social groups, whereas in the Cayman Islands it lay firmly with one faction. Politics in Cayman was dominated by the merchant elite from the very first meeting to discuss the establishment of a local Assembly in 1831. It is striking that those most influential families of the merchant class highlighted by Hirst, the Commissioner of the Cayman Islands, in 1910 were still important figures in Caymanian politics between 1945 and 1980.[658] Furthermore, once a politician was elected they were likely to continue to be elected until retirement, a phenomenon Bodden has described as 'hegemonic dynasties'.[659] This tendency is common in many small island states. Both Merren and McTaggart played active roles in the Legislative Assembly, shaping debates about the West Indies Federation and decolonisation. As a key member of Cayman's Federation delegation, Merren was open in declaring he saw 'no benefit derived from the Federation'.[660] McTaggart was similarly vocal in his scepticism of the Federation, claiming 'nothing could be gained' from Cayman's joining.[661]

[658] Hirst, *Notes on the History of the Cayman Islands*.
[659] Bodden, *Patronage, Personalities and Parties*, 7.
[660] Ducan Merren, Minutes of Legislative Assembly Meeting, 16-18 August 1960, Legislative Assembly Storeroom, Box 10, 21, CINA.
[661] Roy McTaggart, Minutes of Legislative Assembly Meeting, 19 March 1960, Legislative Assembly Storeroom, Box 10, 1, CINA.

Throughout the Federation negotiations, the Caymanian elite promoted the idea of 'racial harmony' within the Cayman Islands and they brought anti-immigration issues to the top of the agenda.[662] They feared anything that might disrupt the societal structures which benefitted them so well. As a result, Cayman's relationship with the Federation and Jamaica was greatly influenced by the self-interest of the merchant class.

McTaggart's most decisive role came during the disintegration of the West Indies Federation in 1961. Vehemently opposed to Cayman adopting self-government under Jamaica's tutelage, McTaggart used his influential position in society to obtain a petition signed by over three thousand Caymanians in favour of crown colony status under Britain.[663] The petition and his speech in the Legislative Assembly helped to swing the vote in favour of crown colony status.[664] McTaggart later intervened in constitutional matters in similar fashion in 1967, putting together a petition opposing any constitutional change that would move Cayman towards greater autonomy.[665] As an influential, conservative, pro-British businessman, McTaggart had a huge impact on the course of Caymanian decolonisation. Greatly admired by many Caymanians, he has been referred to as 'the Winston Churchill of the Cayman Islands'.[666]

At the opposite end of Caymanian politics was Ormond Panton, a 'firebrand populist' who favoured independence.[667] He broke the mould of the white, conservative merchant politician. Panton is a fascinating figure within the Caymanian elite: both a merchant insider and yet treated as an outsider by many merchants due to his family's black heritage.[668] In many ways, Panton had

[662] John D. Jeffereson, Minutes of Legislative Assembly Meeting, 18 March 1975, 11, CINA.
[663] Nolan Foster, in interview, 2 April 1999, 7-8, CINA.
[664] Sybil I. McLaughlin, in interview conducted by Heather McLaughlin, 11 February 1993, 5-10, CINA.
[665] Minutes of Legislative Assembly Meeting, 30 March 1967, Legislative Assembly Storeroom, Box 34, 5-8, CINA.
[666] George O. W. Hicks, in letter to the editor, *The Northwester,* 1 (February 1972), 6, CINA.
[667] Martins, *A Special Son*, 116–22.
[668] Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, 68–70.

a similar background to McTaggart, as his father, a Jamaican preacher, arrived in Cayman in 1862. A key difference, however, was that the Pantons were known in Cayman as a 'coloured' family.[669] Despite Ormond Panton 'passing' for white, the merchants regarded his family as clients rather than equals within Caymanian business circles. Panton frequently clashed with the British administration, first in 1954 when he accused Commissioner Gerrard of a conflict of interest during an Assembly debate about the Commissioner's salary and pension.[670] A later legal case against the colonial administration in 1960 brought Panton into contact with the politically active lawyers in Norman Manley's circle of associates.[671] Greatly influenced by these connections, Panton was alone among the merchant elite in advocating politics which involved incipient Third World awareness and in debating issues of imperialism affecting other postcolonial nations.[672] As the next chapter on party politics will discuss in more detail, Panton created the NDP (National Democratic Party) in 1961 and pushed for greater autonomy. Although he was ultimately unsuccessful in achieving the independence that he desired, Panton is a crucial figure for understanding Caymanian politics and decolonisation. Through his engagement with wider issues of anticolonialism, he demonstrates that decolonisation in the Cayman Islands did not develop in an isolated bubble away from global, anticolonial trends. Notions of Caribbean nationalism and anticolonialism did spread to the Cayman Islands in the 1960s. Their suppression and Panton's political failure highlights how powerful the white merchant elite were within Caymanian society and politics.

The ways in which the merchant oligarchy used their power and influence reveals, not just the racial dynamics, but also the gender dimensions of local society and power structures. The Caymanian elite were fearful that extending the right to vote to women would disrupt their

669 Ibid.
670 Ormond Panton, in interview with David Martins, reproduced in Martins, *A Special Son*, 78–85.
671 Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, 71.
672 Ormond Panton, Minutes of Legislative Assembly Meeting, 29 June 1962, Legislative Assembly Storeroom, Box 31, 6, CINA.

monopoly over the political system. After the Second World War, only men voted for the local Assembly, which angered many women who had played prominent roles in society while men were away at sea. British officials imposed a British patriarchal understanding of society onto the very different framework of Caymanian daily life, which Bodden has described as 'matriarchal'.[673] In their reports, colonial officials suggested that, although legislation did not explicitly restrict women from voting, it was traditional for only the men to vote.[674] Caymanian women began protesting against this injustice in the postwar elections in 1948. They wrote to the Commissioner and argued that, having checked the Constitution, it did not mention anything which denied women the 'fundamental Human Right of taking part in deciding who shall govern us'.[675]

However, the women's demand for the right to vote became tied up in the merchant oligarchy's concerns about maintaining their power in a changing society.[676] The women were supported in their campaign by Jamaican pharmacist, Dr Rose, a founding member of the Cayman Vanguard Progressive Party, who also campaigned to allow greater political representation for black Caymanians.[677] The merchant elite, particularly Ducan Merren, were fearful of Rose and went to great lengths to slander his reputation. Merren and his associates were concerned that if women had the right to vote they might support more liberal candidates like Dr Rose. Commissioner Donald participated in this vilification of Dr Rose, reporting to the Governor of Jamaica, 'You have…heard mention of the notorious "Dr." Rose… He has a shocking reputation here… He is a leading light in the Vanguard Progressive Party… He is said to be very anti-white'.[678] As a result of the obstructions of the merchant elite and the Commissioner, women had to wait until 1958 to

[673] Bodden, *Patronage, Personalities and Parties*, 47.
[674] Colonial Office Annual Report on the Cayman Islands, 1946, CO 1071/93, 28, TNA.
[675] Letter to the Commissioner of the Cayman Islands, 19 August 1948, in 'A History of Elections in the Cayman Islands', Elections Office Cayman Islands, https://portal.elections.ky/index.php/publication/history-of-elections-in-the-cayman-islands, accessed 21 April 2018.
[676] Bodden, *Patronage, Personalities and Parties*, 47–52.
[677] Bodden, *The Cayman Islands in Transition: The Politics, History, and Sociology of a Changing Society*, xvii-xviii.
[678] Commissioner Donald to Kenneth Blackburne (Governor of Jamaica), 16 September 1958, 'Political Rights of Women' File, Transfer 68, Box 2, CINA.

gain the right to vote. Like Panton's failure, the difficulties women faced in gaining the right to vote demonstrate the lengths the merchants would go to to maintain the status quo.

The British Virgin Islands

Unlike Cayman, the principal political actors in the British Virgin Islands in the twentieth century were from a recently developed group of businessmen. Whilst unrest broke out across much of the British West Indies in the 1930s, in the BVI no major protest or trade union action arose.[679] However, the emerging merchant class did begin to place increased pressure on the Commissioner to reinstate the legislative council. Hope Stevens, a Tortolian lawyer, established the Civic League in 1938 in an attempt to generate political change.[680] Stevens set up the League along with the Road Town merchants and businessmen, Howard Penn, David Fonseca, Charles Georges and Joseph O'Neal. Some League members, like Stevens, had worked or studied in New York, and had been influenced by the Harlem Renaissance in the 1920s.[681] Others had gained experience in political organisation by attending labour congresses in other Caribbean islands.[682] Though this burgeoning political class were influenced by American and other Caribbean political movements, they remained conservative in approach. The Civic League prepared a petition with hundreds of signatures from BVIslanders calling for a legislative council, but it was rejected by the Secretary of State for the Colonies.[683]

Civic League member Howard Penn was emblematic of this generation of political leaders who advocated a certain degree of change without directly challenging the colony status of the BVI.

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679 Hart, *Labour Rebellions of the 1930s in the British Caribbean Region Colonies*.
680 Pickering, *A Concise History of the British Virgin Islands*, 71.
681 For Harlem Renaissance, see Nathan Irvin Huggins, ed., *Voices from the Harlem Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1976); Harold Bloom, ed., *The Harlem Renaissance* (Philadelphia: Chelsea House Publishers, 2004); Lean'tin L. Bracks and Jessie Carney Smith, eds., *Black Women of the Harlem Renaissance Era* (London: Rowman & Littlefield, 2014); Cherene Sherrard-Johnson, ed., *A Companion to the Harlem Renaissance* (London: Wiley Blackwell, 2015).
682 Penn, *Memoirs of H. R. Penn*, 23–25.
683 *The Daily News*, St Thomas, 8, no. 3004, 21 June 1938, 1.

Penn ran a groceries store in Road Town and had begun his career working for Fonseca in his liquor shop, profiting from the smuggling networks in the region during the Prohibition era. Penn was initially reluctant to get involved in politics, arguing that he was only concerned with the economic prosperity of the islands.[684] His memoir demonstrates a conservative outlook and emphasises his white ancestry, celebrating his forefather, the Englishman William Penn who gave his name to Pennsylvania.[685] Following the reinstatement of the Legislative Council in 1950, Penn served as an elected representative until 1960 and then as a nominated member until 1975.[686] Like many other conservative BVI politicians of his age, Penn promoted a rhetoric of independent spirit without actual independence, portraying BVIslanders as 'law-abiding, land-owning people, in control of our own destiny'.[687] As was common in politics across the case study territories, family connections were important and political families tended to have several members in the local assemblies. Penn's cousin Andre became a representative in the Assembly in 1995 and another cousin Dancia became BVI's first female Attorney General.[688]

Other influential figures remained ambiguous when it came to decolonisation. Fellow Civic League founder, Joseph O'Neal, known as J. R., ran the family general store in Road Town in the 1930s and 40s, having first trained as a pharmacist in St Kitts. He too had benefitted from the economic opportunities of the Prohibition era. At the same time as becoming involved in the Civic League, O'Neal launched the short-lived newspaper *The Torch* because there was no local newspaper in the islands.[689] He was later nominated to the Executive Council in 1948 and then served as a nominated member in the Legislative Assembly from 1950 to 1970. O'Neal did not advocate independence whilst on the Legislative Assembly, promoting the economic development of the islands as

[684] Penn, *Memoirs of H. R. Penn*, 20–21.
[685] Ibid., 11.
[686] Election Information and Results 1950-2011, Office of the Supervisor of Elections, Government of the Virgin Islands, 2011, 47.
[687] Penn, *Memoirs of H. R. Penn*, 68.
[688] Cyril B. Romney, 'Comments', *Empowerment Through Representation*, 88.
[689] O'Neal, *Life Notes*, 73–74.

paramount. He was vague in his approach to BVI's political status, suggesting in 1992 that independence may occur in the future but that he did 'not recommend following directly in the path of some of our Caribbean neighbours, but selecting carefully what is best for the BVI'.[690]

Several key BVIslanders were involved in Caribbean regional conferences and discussions about federation and independence. Following David Fonseca's involvement in the Civic League, his son Glanny, or I. G. Fonseca, represented the BVI at the 1947 Caribbean Labour Conference in Jamaica. It is striking that sharing a platform with Jamaican and other Caribbean anticolonialists did not encourage Fonseca to call for outright independence. Although it is important to remember that, at this stage, many Caribbean leaders were focused on federation rather than independence. Fonseca's long political career saw him elected to the Legislative Assembly from 1950 to 1971. Glanny Fonseca became Penn's political rival and he favoured greater constitutional change.[691] Whilst he campaigned for 'further recognition of the BVI's rights for improved self-government', he did not push for full independence.[692] As the dominance of the Road Town politicians began to be challenged by the 'Country Boys', Fonseca formed the 'United Three' in 1965 with Arnando Scatliffe and Dr Qwominer William Osborne. Scatliffe, owner of the oldest laundry and dry-cleaning service in Road Town, served in the Legislative Assembly from 1963 to 1967. He later acted as a Justice of the Peace and was actively involved in the local Rotary Club.[693] Osborne, originally from Montserrat, began working as a medical officer in the BVI in 1955 and was frequently the only doctor residing in Tortola. He ran businesses across Tortola and Virgin Gorda, and was seen as part of the Road Town elite.[694] He later split from Fonseca to form the BVI Democratic Party, and also supported the Positive Action Movement (PAM) protesting

[690] Joseph O'Neal, 'Reflections', *Twenty-Five Years of Ministerial Government* ed. Rita Frett-Georges, Government of the British Virgin Islands (November 1992), 146.
[691] *The Island Sun,* no. 444, 15 May 1971, 3.
[692] Ibid.
[693] *Twenty-Five Years of Ministerial Government*, 169.
[694] Cyril B. Romney, 'Evolution of the Ministerial System', *Empowerment Through Representation*, 90-92, VINA.

against neo-colonialism and racism in 1968.[695] It is striking that this circle of respected Road Town businessmen dominated the local political scene until the mid 1960s and promoted notions of respectability, the Church, the British monarchy and abiding by the law.[696] Furthermore, their awareness that the majority of BVI workers emigrated to or had previously worked in the USVI meant that BVI's relationship with the US islands remained prominent in political debates.

Countering the dominance of the Road Town elite, the 'Country Boys' emerged as a political force in the 1960s. Most significant among them, Hamilton Lavity Stoutt was the BVI's first Chief Minister and was the longest serving parliamentarian in the Caribbean on his death in 1995.[697] Stoutt was born in Long Bay, Tortola and left school early to work in boat building, later establishing a career in wholesale and retail.[698] Common to many BVI politicians, he was a Methodist and lay preacher.[699] Noel Lloyd describes him as an ordinary BVIslander who 'tried hard to speak like an educated Englishman'.[700] In his later years, Stoutt argued in favour of eventual independence, but took a more conservative view for most of his political career.[701] As one of the most influential politicians in BVI history, his birthday is now a public holiday. Alongside Stoutt in the 1960s, another lay preacher, Terrance Lettsome, became a local Assembly representative as one of the 'Country Boys'. As a child, Lettsome was fostered by extended family in Long Look, Tortola, and he later set up a block plant in the island after learning block laying in the USVI.[702] Lettsome was vocal in his disapproval of any form of protest or dissent that he perceived as unlawful or disruptive, such as the Positive Action Movement.[703] Through their privileged positions in BVI society, representatives like Lettsome discouraged protest and fostered an

[695] Noel Lloyd, *The Positive Action Movement 1968*, 27.
[696] See memoirs of Road Town politicians: Penn, *Memoirs of H. R. Penn*; O'Neal, *Life Notes*.
[697] Kenneth Bain, 'Obituary: H. Lavity Stoutt', *The Independent,* 22 May 1995.
[698] *Twenty-Five Years of Ministerial Government*, 149-150.
[699] Ralph O'Neal, letter in *Twenty-Five Years of Ministerial Government*, 14.
[700] Noel Lloyd, *The Positive Action Movement 1968*, 19.
[701] Hamilton Lavity Stoutt, letter in *Twenty-Five Years of Ministerial Government,* 13.
[702] Lettsome, *The Untold Story*, 7–9.
[703] Ibid., 15-16.

environment where major anticolonial movements would be seen as radical and illegitimate. Like Stoutt, Lettsome did not push for independence during his time in office but did advocate greater autonomy for the future, arguing in 1992 that 'it is time the we prepare ourselves to run, fully, our own affairs'.[704]

Even politicians who were deemed to be more in touch with local people, like Ivan Dawson, discouraged protest and dissent. The third 'Country Boy', Dawson was a carpenter and preacher from Cane Garden Bay. Despite having 'no interest in politics', he stood for office in 1957 after the incumbent member of the assembly, Brudnell-Bruce, invited Dawson to take his place on stepping down.[705] Dawson was educated in St Thomas and, like many BVIslanders, worked on the USVI Defence Project in 1941.[706] Noel Lloyd described him as 'the only politician that everyone trusted'.[707] Dawson focused on economic development, particularly for his district, during his time in office and, although he was not opposed to the PAM, he argued 'peaceful means should be followed'.[708] Most BVI politicians were opposed to any disruptive protests or agitation that would push for political change, such as those adopted in many colonies to fight for independence.

Noticeable across the political spectrum in the BVI was the importance of respectability. Politicians almost always came from a respected position in society, either as doctors, the owners of the local shop or most commonly as a lay preacher. The Church was hugely important in BVI society and politics, and was seen as legitimising the role and importance of a public figure. The early years of the Legislative Assembly were dominated by a conservative Road Town elite. These crucial years in the 1950s and early 1960s, were hugely influential in terms of decolonisation. Through figures like Penn and O'Neal, local debates about the West Indies Federation centred on

[704] *Twenty-Five Years of Ministerial Government,* 152.
[705] Dawson, *A Brief Outline of a Humble Life*, 23.
[706] Ibid., 11-18.
[707] Noel Lloyd, *The Positive Action Movement 1968*, 19.
[708] *The Island Sun,* no. 294, 4 May 1968, 1-8.

fears of immigration and economic concerns. With politicians well aware that their support base came from islanders working in the USVI, the relationship with the American islands took centre stage and greatly influenced the decision not to join the Federation.

Some politicians claimed they were ready to campaign for greater autonomy but were held back by the fact that most of the voting public were not ready. However, other commentators have suggested that, in reality, politicians acting in self-interest narrowed the political debate to economic development and away from independence.[709] Once a politician had been elected, it was common for them to get re-elected several times. For example, in the elections of 1960, all the seats were gained by politicians up for re-election.[710] The only exception was Theodore Faulkner, who was hardly a newcomer, having been involved in the reestablishment of the Assembly back in 1949.[711] This phenomenon was common across the territories in the Caribbean, including in the French Antilles.

As in the Cayman Islands, the nascent political elite of the BVI were keen to maintain current power structures and to prevent women from engaging in politics. A 1950 meeting of the 'leading men from every large village in Tortola', including Howard Penn, recommended that only men over 21 years old should be allowed to vote.[712] Nonetheless, as part of the Leeward Islands, suffrage was extended to include women in 1950.[713] However, due to property restrictions which disproportionately affected women, given that they were more likely to occupy lower paid positions, many women were still restricted from voting. Despite women's major role in local society, while many men worked abroad, those who sought to maintain BVI's links to Britain also attempted to prevent female suffrage. Even as politics diversified away from the Road Town elite

[709] Alister Hughes, 'Political Awakening in the BVI', *The Island Sun,* no. 831, 16 December 1978, 11.
[710] 'Election Results', *Tortola Times*, 2, no. 32, 15 October 1960, 1.
[711] Ibid.
[712] O'Neal, *From the Field to the Legislature*, 65–78.
[713] Leeward Islands Act no. 1, 1950, CO 154/16, 10, TNA.

in the 1960s, politicians in the BVI did not advocate major constitutional change during the period in question. In the French Caribbean, the political elite similarly pursued a continued constitutional relationship with the colonial state.

Martinique

Politics in the French Antilles in the decades following the Second World War was dominated by Aimé Césaire, one of the architects of departmentalisation. As a founder of the *Négritude* movement, as a deputy in the French National Assembly and as a mayor of the Martinican capital Fort-de-France, Césaire directed much of the debate about political status and identity in both intellectual and political spheres. As discussed in chapter one, Césaire advocated and successfully secured the departmentalisation of Martinique and Guadeloupe in 1946. Historians and literary critics have long debated the seeming contradiction between Césaire the writer, who railed against colonialism, and Césaire the politician who opposed full independence.[714] However, as Bishop argues, we should not see Césaire as two distinct figures: the writer and the politician. Instead, these two positions can be partly reconciled through the understanding that Césaire viewed French colonialism as continuing to manifest within the cultural sphere, but not in the political arena.[715] It is important to remember that Césaire's position in the 1940s and his support for integration with France was not unusual either for a Caribbean politician or within the French Empire.[716] Many of his counterparts in the Anglophone Caribbean were not yet advocating full independence due to concerns about the viability of small states.[717]

[714] Maryse Condé, 'Order, Disorder, Freedom, and the West Indian Writer', *Yale French Studies*, no. 83 (1993): 121–35; Fred Réno and Richard D. E. Burton, eds., *French and West Indian: Martinique, Guadeloupe and French Guiana Today* (London: Macmillan, 1995); Miles, 'Fifty Years of Assimilation'.; James Ferguson, 'Obituary: Aimé Césaire,' *The Guardian,* 21 April 2008; Bishop, *The Political Economy of Caribbean Development*.
[715] Bishop, *The Political Economy of Caribbean Development*, 57.
[716] See Cooper, *Citizenship between Empire and Nation*; Wilder, *Freedom Time*.
[717] Bishop, *The Political Economy of Caribbean Development*, 33.

After 1946, Césaire became increasingly critical of departmentalisation, as implementation was slow and did not bring the equality which he desired.[718] Cesaire's confusing relationship with French assimilationism and the universalist principles of the French Republic was visible in his famous 1956 letter to Maurice Thorez, the leader of the French Communist Party. Declaring his rejection of the Communist Party, partly because of its assimilationist tendencies, Césaire argued: 'My conception of the universal is that of a universal rich with all particularity, enriched by all the details, a deepening and a coexistence of all individualities'.[719] Césaire viewed the French Antilles as politically part of France, but sought greater recognition of Antillean cultural differences. Thus, he envisaged the future of Martinique within the French Republic but with an acceptance of Caribbean cultural differences, rather than continued French cultural assimilationism. Two years after leaving the Communist Party, Césaire established the Martinican Progressive Party (PPM), through which he advocated greater political autonomy for Martinique, though never independence. Césaire was a vocal proponent of the decentralisation policies of Mitterrand, which he believed would help to transfer some decision making powers from Paris to Martinique.[720] Following Mitterrand's election in 1981, Césaire, in a speech in Fort-de-France, declared a moratorium on the question of Martinique's political status.[721] He argued that continuing to dwell on the issue of political status was a distraction from engaging with decentralisation and campaigning for the economic development of the Antilles. Through the PPM, Césaire continued to uphold departmentalisation and the political and economic benefits this brought, whilst also creating a space to advocate a unique Martinican cultural identity.[722] Césaire should be seen as a product of his time: surrounded by other federalists like Senghor, and perceiving his elevated status

[718] Aimé Césaire, *JORF*, 4 May 1948, 2186.
[719] Aimé Césaire to Maurice Thorez, 24 October 1956, BR 62, 15, ADG.
[720] Justin Daniel, 'The French Départements d'outre Mer. Guadeloupe and Martinique', in *Extended Statehood in the Caribbean: Paradoxes of Quasi Colonialism, Local Autonomy, and Extended Statehood in the USA, French, Dutch, and British Caribbean*, ed. Lammert de Jong and Dirk Kruijt (Amsterdam: Rozenberg, 2005), 61.
[721] Aimé Césaire, 'Discours du Moratoire', 15 June 1981, Fort-de-France, reproduced in Théobald, *La Liberté est ou n'est pas...*, 669–72.
[722] Bishop, *The Political Economy of Caribbean Development*, 59.

and legitimacy as stemming from the French Republic, retaining a connection to France appeared logical.

Guadeloupe

Given the close ties between Guadeloupe and Martinique, Césaire's position as the most well-known and respected Antillean politician greatly shaped debate in Guadeloupe. Nonetheless, several key Guadeloupean politicians had powerful roles in political status negotiations. The most influential of Guadeloupe's political elite in the postwar years came from middle class black families and tended to be members of the communist or socialist parties. A few influential politicians had participated in the *Dissidence* during the Vichy years and had gained legitimacy through their role in liberating the French Antilles.[723] Gerty Archimède represented the Communist Party in the National Assembly from 1946 to 1951 and supported the move to departmentalise Guadeloupe. Archimède was a lawyer from a middle class political family in Morne-à-l'Eau. Her father had been mayor of their town and therefore she was involved in politics from an early age.[724] Archimède followed Eugénie Éboué-Tell, widow of the famous Guianese politician Felix Éboué, to become the second black woman elected to the French National Assembly. Archimède was a pioneer for women's rights, as the first female lawyer in Guadeloupe and the founder of the Union of Guadeloupean Women.[725]

Though firmly anticolonial, Archimède, like many Antillean women activists of her time, viewed France as the defender of women's rights after it extended suffrage to women, including Antillean women, in 1945. Through her role as political director of the Guadeloupean Communist Party's

[723] For more on the *Dissidence,* see chapter one.
[724] *Arcane: Le magazine de la femme guadeloupéenne*, no. 2, August-September 1975, PG 46, 33-39, ADG.
[725] For more on Archimède see Annette K. Joseph-Gabriel, 'Gerty Archiméde and the Struggle for Decolonial Citizenship in the French Antilles, 1946-51', in *Black French Women and the Struggle for Equality, 1848-2016*, ed. Felix Germain and Silyane Larcher (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2018).

Newspaper *L'Etincelle,* Archimède promoted an anticolonial but pro-French ideology.[726] She was part of an international feminist communist network, and even housed and defended US Civil Rights activist Angela Davis when Davis had her passport confiscated on arriving in Guadeloupe on a boat from Cuba in 1969.[727] Archimède was part of a global network of anticolonial black activists but remained, nonetheless, firmly devoted to remaining French. Crucially, like so many Antillean politicians, she adopted a seemingly contradictory anticolonial stance without advocating independence.

Even communist politician Rosan Girard remained ambiguous in his approach to decolonisation. Like Archimède, Girard came from a middle class black family; his father was a teacher and Girard became a doctor. Girard fought actively against the Vichy regime in Guadeloupe during the war and was imprisoned for his activism. After the war, he served in the National Assembly between 1946 and 1958, as well as being elected mayor of Moule several times between 1945 and 1971. Girard's position on Guadeloupe's political status was ambiguous: when departmentalisation failed to deliver, he called for autonomy with continued association to France.[728] In his 1979 book on the state of affairs in Guadeloupe, Girard argued: 'Independence is a decoy, just like departmentalisation was…the people do not want independence, and do not want to be excluded from the French community'.[729]

One of the few in the political elite to argue against departmentalisation in 1946, Paul Valentino emerged as an influential political figure during the *Dissidence.*[730] Valentino was imprisoned under the Vichy regime, and sent to the infamous prison in French Guiana. Valentino got involved in politics at an early age, when he was twenty-six, and was a member of the socialist party, the French

[726] For example, *L'Etincelle*, 21, no. 864, 23 October 1965, PG 1068, 1-3, ADG.
[727] Angela Davis, *Angela Davis: An Autobiography* (New York: Random House, 1974), 215–16.
[728] L'Etincelle, 23, no. 928, 14 January 1967, PG 1068, ADG.
[729] Rosan Girard, *Pour un sursaut guadeloupéen* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1979), 150.
[730] *Fraternité*, 1, no. 5, 9 December 1944, 1.

Section of the Workers' International (SFIO), and director of the official journal of the SFIO, *Fraternité*. After being released from prison, Valentino was elected to the National Assembly in 1945 and argued strongly against integrating with France.[731] Due to his position on departmentalisation, Valentino's influence decreased in the mid 1950s.[732] By 1967, Valentino switched parties, joining the right-wing Union of Democrats for the Fifth Republic (UDR). Having spent so much time away from Guadeloupe, Valentino did not wield significant political clout in the 1960s, but he remained a respected political figure due to his involvement in the wartime resistance. He is an important reminder that not all mainstream politicians in the Antilles were in favour of departmentalisation in 1946.

Later additions to the political scene in Guadeloupe continued this seeming contradictory stance in advocating anticolonialism whilst wishing to maintain the departmental status. Henri Bangou served as the communist mayor of Guadeloupe's largest city, Pointe-à- Pitre, from 1965 until his retirement in 2008, when his son Jacques took over. The Bangou family exemplify the 'political family' trend in Guadeloupean politics, one that is common across the territories in question and in many small island states. Bangou was a well-respected doctor and, like Girard, he maintained an ambiguous stance on departmentalisation, calling for self-determination but within a continued association with France.[733] Bangou has been criticised by independence activists for collaborating with the French authorities and assisting with the criminalisation of nationalists.[734] He typifies the difficult relationship between the Communist Party and nationalist political activists.[735] For

[731] 'Paul, Calixte Valentino', Base de données des deputes français depuis 1789, L'Assemblée Nationale, http://www2.assemblee-nationale.fr/sycomore/fiche/(num_dept)/7205, accessed 13 April 2018.
[732] Emile Rodolphe Enoff, *Les Parlementaires de La Guadeloupe 1889-1958* (Guadeloupe: PLB, 2013), 109.
[733] *L'Etincelle*, 29, no. 1280, 24 November 1973, PG 1068, 3-4, ADG.
[734] *Le Patriote Guadeloupéen*, 9, no. 53, February 1978, PG 1064, 4, ADG.
[735] This will be discussed in further detail in chapter five.

Bangou, like most politicians in the French Antilles, his legitimacy was based on French Republican ideals of equality, and so he remained tied to the idea of being part of France.[736]

In Guadeloupe and Martinique, local politicians continued to promote the benefits of remaining part of France and suggested that independence would be detrimental to the political and economic stability of the Antilles. Similarly, many Caymanian and BVI political leaders expressed a sense of affinity with Britain and opposed any major threats to the status quo. Political elites played a major role in discouraging dissent and disorder which might generate pressure for independence. They had gained their positions and legitimacy in a colonial system which partly benefitted them, and thus they were hesitant to radically challenge that system. Across the case study territories, men with considerable political power opposed women's engagement in politics. Restrictions on women voting and the dominance of men in the local political arena meant that those in a position to articulate island identity in relation to decolonisation were mostly men. Like much of the nationalist rhetoric of this era in the Caribbean, this resulted in a very masculine portrayal of local identity.[737] Most women who did manage to get elected or who wielded a certain amount of influence in the political debates in the territories, displayed a sense of affinity with Britain or France and were opposed to major changes to political status.

3. The Role of Local Intellectuals

Obviously, economic and political control were the two most significant ways elites held power and dominated the conversation about political status. Nonetheless, particularly in the French Antilles, an elite educated group influenced the debate through their respected positions as intellectuals. Most notable among these was Martinican writer Aimé Césaire. Though often

[736] Justin Daniel, 'Political Constraints of Economic Dependency: The Case of Guadeloupe and Martinique', *Caribbean Studies* 26, no. 3/4 (1993): 316–17.
[737] See M. Jacqui Alexander, 'Not Just (Any) Body Can Be a Citizen: The Politics of Law, Sexuality and Postcoloniality in Trinidad and Tobago and the Bahamas', *Feminist Review*, no. 48 (1994): 5–23.

overlooked, many women intellectuals contributed to the discussions about decolonisation. Across the four territories, intellectuals and historians played an active role in shaping political status debates. As with much of the Caribbean, prominent intellectuals tended to be from the black or *métis* educated middle class.

Martinique

French Antillean intellectuals enjoyed an elevated position in society and often engaged directly in politics, most evident with figures like Aimé Césaire. Martinican intellectuals Césaire, Glissant and Bernabé, Chamoiseau and Confiant can be seen to represent three generations of the development of Martinican political thought on Antillean identity. Firstly, through his writings on the notion of *Négritude,* Césaire promoted the 'valorization of the African connection, the rediscovery of the African connection, of African consciousness, of African personality, of African cultural traditions'.[738] The term *Négritude* was coined by Césaire in his journal *L'Étudiant Noir* in 1935.[739] Césaire's writings emphasised taking pride in African heritage and exposed the racial construction of the colonial relationship in the Antilles.[740]

The significant role of women intellectuals in French Antillean thought is often overlooked. Alongside Césaire, Léon-Gontran Damas and Léopold Senghor, the founding figures of *Négritude,* Martinican writer Paulette Nardal made a crucial contribution to the movement.[741] Nardal grew up in a large middle-class family with seven sisters and was the first black person to study at the Sorbonne. Living in 1930s Paris, she co-founded *La Revue Du Monde Noir* and ran a salon with her sisters Jane and Andrée in which writers, students and artists from across the African diaspora met

[738] Stuart Hall, 'Negotiating Caribbean Identities', *New Left Review*, I, no. 209 (1995): 9.
[739] Aimé Césaire, *L'Étudiant Noir,* 3, May-June 1935.
[740] Césaire, *Cahier d'un Retour Au Pays Natal*; Césaire, *Discours Sur Le Colonialisme*.
[741] Imaobong D. Umoren, 'Anti-Fascism and the Development of Global Race Women, 1928–1945', *Callaloo* 39, no. 1 (12 May 2016): 151.

to discuss politics, current affairs and issues affecting men and women of colour in France.[742] Nardal's writings demonstrate how crucial women's perspectives were to the development of *Négritude.*[743] In the postwar years, Nardal was actively engaged in raising women's participation in Martinican politics. She remained a resolute Gaullist and firmly supported the departmentalisation of the French Antilles. Like Archimède, she saw the French Republic as 'raising [women] to the dignified level of citizens'.[744] Though pioneering, in many ways Nardal did not escape the politics of respectability of her social class. Her writings about the roles of men and women were heavily influenced by her social conservatism and her Catholicism.[745] Nardal was an important voice in shaping Martinican debates around departmentalisation and the role of black women in French and specifically French Antillean society.

Edouard Glissant was more radical than Césaire and Nardal, and supported Antillean independence. Glissant is often portrayed as the intellectual son of Césaire, in that he built on and moved past Césaire's notion of *Négritude.* Glissant studied at the same school in Martinique which Césaire had previously attended. In his youth, Glissant was far more radical than Césaire in his engagement with French colonialism. He co-founded the Antillean and Guianese Front for Autonomy (FAGA) in 1961 and openly advocated independence.[746] As a result, he was banned from Martinique in the 1960s by de Gaulle's government.[747] Other founding members of the FAGA included Albert Béville, a Guadeloupean advocate of *Négritude* who adopted the name Paul Niger and was killed in the notorious 1962 aeroplane accident in which several Antillean and

[742] Louis Achille, 'Préface', *La Revue du Monde Noir,* Collection complète, 1 (Paris, 1992), viii.
[743] For example, Paulette Nardal, 'L'Eveil de la conscience de race chez les etudiants noirs', *La Revue du Monde Noir,* 6 (April 1932): 25-30.
[744] T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting, 'Introduction: On Race, Rights, and Women', in *Beyond Negritude: Essays from Woman in the City*, by Paulette Nardal (New York: State University of New York Press, 2009), 8.
[745] Paulette Nardal, *La femme dans la Cité,* no. 1 (January 1945), 1-2.
[746] Léon Danquin, '1967, La fin d'une illusion et l'amorce d'un nouveau départ', *Études Guadeloupéens,* 10, May 2008, 118-9.
[747] Monique Milia-Marie-Luce, 'La Grande Migration Des Antillais En France Ou Les Années BUMIDOM', in *Dynamiques Migratoires de La Caraibe*, ed. André Calmont and Cédric Audebert (Paris, 2007), 95.

Guianese nationalists died.[748] Like Martinican Frantz Fanon, Glissant openly supported the FLN and Algerian independence, which garnered criticism from the Antillean elite because the French Antilles, as part of France, fought on the French side in the Algerian War. In his 1981 *Le Discours Antillais,* Glissant built on Césaire's ideas of Antillean difference and criticised French assimilationism.[749] He coined the term *Antillanité* and highlighted the hybridity of Caribbean culture.[750] The global nature of his later writings in the 1990s, such as *Poétique de la relation,* made some critics claim that he had given up on the pursuit of independence for Martinique.[751] However, Glissant remained engaged in local politics and continued to criticise French policies towards Martinique and Guadeloupe. He was particularly critical of local political elites who he saw as colluding in a reproduction of the colonial relationship.[752]

Frantz Fanon, though not as influential in the French Antilles during his lifetime, also explored the complex, dual identity of being Martinican and French. Fanon is more commonly examined in the context of postcolonial studies, rather than French Antillean politics. As Macey has suggested, the figure of Fanon is frequently dehistoricised in postcolonial studies, ignoring how Fanon's life experiences influenced his writing.[753] Fanon's *Peau Noire, Masques Blancs* explores the difficulties and complexities of life specifically as an Antillean student in postwar France, not simply a black Frenchman.[754] Like many Antillean students, Fanon experienced alienation, racism and condescension when he moved to metropolitan France. This called into question the universal

[748] For more on the 1962 plane crash see Benjamin Stora et al., 'Commission d'information et de recherche historique sur les événements de décembre 1959 en Martinique, de juin 1962 en Guadeloupe et en Guyane, et de mai 1967 en Guadeloupe', 30 October 2016.
[749] Martin Munro and Robbie Shilliam, 'Alternative Sources of Cosmopolitanism: Nationalism, Universalism and Créolité in Francophone Caribbean Thought', in *International Relations and Non-Western Thought: Imperialism, Colonialism and Investigations of Global Modernity*, ed. Robbie Shilliam (Oxford: Routledge, 2011), 173–74.
[750] Glissant, *Le discours antillais*.
[751] Celia Britton, 'Glissant, Edouard (1928-)', in *France and the Americas: Culture, Politics, and History*, ed. Bill Marshall (Santa Barbara: ABC CLIO, 2005), 521–23.
[752] Édouard Glissant, *Poétique de la relation* (Paris: Gallimard, 1990), 140–60.
[753] Macey, *Frantz Fanon*, 25–27.
[754] Fanon, *Peau Noire, Masques Blancs*.

principles of the French Republic, of which Martinique and Guadeloupe were now an integral part.[755] Fanon advocated violence as the solution to end colonialism and was greatly disappointed when riots following an incident in Fort-de-France, Martinique failed to develop into a major resistance to French colonialism.[756] Fanon supported Glissant's FAGA and remained dedicated to independence for both Martinique and Algeria until his untimely death in 1961.

Though somewhat outside the scope of this study, it is worth noting that Martinican intellectuals since Glissant have maintained an ambiguous position towards independence. In their 1989 *Éloge de la Créolité,* Bernabé, Chamoiseau and Confiant moved beyond the African-focused *Négritude* and the unique Caribbean identity promoted by the *Antillanité* movement.[757] Instead, they stressed the heterogeneity of Martinican and Guadeloupean identity and culture, and promoted the Creole language.[758] Bernabé, Chamoiseau and Confiant have sometimes been vague about their views on independence, with Chamoiseau recently arguing 'Concepts like liberty, sovereignty, and responsibility can only be articulated once you've taken the ongoing process of globalisation into consideration'.[759] These Martinican intellectuals have all contributed to notions of Antillean identity and to the debate over Martinique's political status.

Guadeloupe

In Guadeloupe, intellectuals also played a part in the public debate over departmentalisation. The most notable Guadeloupean intellectuals of the postwar era are the women writers Dany Bébel-Gisler, Maryse Condé and Simone Schwarz-Bart. Bébel-Gisler was born to a plantation owner and an agricultural worker in 1935, and studied under ethnographer Michel Leiris. She was among the

[755] Daily, 'Race, Citizenship, and Antillean Student Activism in Postwar France, 1946-1968', 331–3.
[756] Bertène Juminer, 'Hommages à Frantz Fanon', *Présence Africaine,* no. 40 (1962): 127.
[757] Bernabé, Chamoiseau, and Confiant, *Éloge de la créolité*.
[758] Ibid.
[759] Patrick Chamoiseau in Lucien Taylor, 'Créolité Bites', *Transition*, no. 74 (1997): 160.

first to promote the Creole language as a way to protect Antillean culture.[760] Bébel-Gisler advocated independence for Guadeloupe and saw the recovery and promotion of Creole as a way to achieve independence in the future.[761] Similarly, Maryse Condé has advocated independence for the French Antilles.[762] She has distanced herself from the *Négritude* and *Créolité* movements, working in the US and focusing on feminist issues. Condé's writing often explores issues of race, gender and identity in Caribbean society.[763] Schwarz-Bart writes about issues of male domination over women in Caribbean culture and explores the sense of alienation common to Antilleans emigrating to the metropole.[764] These Guadeloupean women have often been understudied in favour of the famous male intellectuals of Martinique. However, their writings and engagement with the debate over political status of the French Antilles are just as important.

The British Territories

The impact of intellectual commentators in the British territories was far less significant, compared to the French Antilles. In the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands, there were few opportunities for the development of an educated middle class in the early twentieth century. This is evident in the lack of local newspapers until the late 1950s and the absence of serious challenges to the status quo until after the Second World War. In the Cayman Islands, the dominant position of the merchant class in society made it very difficult for any academics or commentators to openly criticise the white elite until the end of the twentieth century.[765] In the 1970s, a young Roy Bodden spoke out against the dominance of the Caymanian merchants but was labelled a communist

[760] Dany Bebel-Gisler, *La langue créole, force jugulée* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1976).
[761] A. James Arnold, 'The Essay and / in History', in *A History of Literature in the Caribbean: Hispanic and Francophone Regions*, ed. Julio Rodríguez-Luis, J. Michael Dash, and A. James Arnold (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1994), 564.
[762] Maryse Condé, 'Pan-Africanism, Feminism and Culture', in *Imagining Home: Class, Culture, and Nationalism in the African Diaspora*, ed. Sidney J. Lemelle and Robin D. G. Kelley (London, 1994), 55.
[763] For example, Maryse Condé, *La vie scélérate* (Paris: Editions Seghers, 1987); Maryse Condé, *Traversée de la mangrove* (Paris: Mercure de France, 1989); Maryse Condé, *La Migration Des Coeurs* (Paris: Editions Robert Laffont, 1995); Maryse Condé, *Célanire Cou-Coupé* (Paris: Editions Robert Laffont, 2000).
[764] For example, Simone Schwarz-Bart, *Pluie et Vent Sur Télumée Miracle* (Paris: Seuil, 1972).
[765] Roy Bodden, President of the University College of the Cayman Islands, in interview with the author, Grand Cayman, 14 July 2016.

radical and found it difficult to secure employment as a result.[766] His 1978 article in *The Northwester* encouraged Caymanians to think of alternatives beyond their status as a dependent territory of the UK.[767] Yet, as an editorial in the subsequent issue highlighted, most Caymanians were fearful of speaking out 'often for fear of economic retribution'.[768] As Bodden has argued, the issue of patronage, which restricted the development of an educated middle class to counter the power of the merchants, continues in some form to this day.[769]

It is difficult to ascertain the influence of the local intelligentsia in decolonisation debates in the British Virgin Islands. As the local political scene expanded and public debate widened with the establishment of *The Island Sun* newspaper in the 1960s, local historians began writing about the islands' history and its relationship with Britain. In 1975, Harrigan and Varlack labelled the BVI a 'West Indian Anomaly', and whilst arguing that the territory had not yet found a constitution that suited it, they did not advocate full independence.[770] Pearl Varlack worked at the University of the Virgin Islands in the USVI and, like many commentators and writers from the BVI, she promoted inter-Virgin Islands cooperation. *The Island Sun* offered an opportunity for political commentators to debate major island issues. Whilst some contributors suggested independence could be a future possibility, the overall tone of the paper was conservative, royalist and did not overtly challenge the status quo.[771]

Therefore, whilst intellectuals greatly shaped debate about political status in the French Antilles, their power and influence were much less significant in the British territories. Postwar Antillean intellectuals, like Césaire and Nardal, tended to favour departmentalisation, whilst later generations

[766] Ibid.
[767] Roy Bodden, 'Some unanswered questions about our future', *The Northwester*, 7, October 1978, 35-42.
[768] Editorial, *The Northwester*, November 1978, 5.
[769] Bodden, *Patronage, Personalities and Parties*, 306–15.
[770] Harrigan and Varlack, *The Virgin Islands Story*, 174–9.
[771] For example, J. A. Sargeant, 'A Song of Greeting for Her Majesty', *The Island Sun,* no. 184, 23 February 1966, 6.

were more radical and openly supported independence. Nonetheless, with many of these figures working in mainland France or abroad, they had limited influence on local politics.

Conclusion

Local elites in the Caribbean were crucial negotiators of the non-independent status of their islands. Influential groups and individuals exercised power through their positions as economic elites, through political dominance, and through prominence in intellectual circles. Whilst other local citizens engaged in the debates about decolonisation, these elite groups held disproportionate influence in the small island societies. Following the histories of prominent individuals in these societies reveals the strong connections they fostered with other colonies and anticolonial activists. Many of the politicians discussed in this chapter participated in anticolonial networks in the Caribbean region and in the metropolitan capitals, coming into contact with nationalist leaders who would guide their own countries to independence. Elites in the Caribbean territories were evidently not isolated from the decolonisation debates of the time. However, within the context of their own society's political and economic structures, they did not push for independence.

Only by comparing across the four territories can we properly understand how different power structures and local political leaders influenced decolonisation. This comparative analysis has revealed how historically embedded elite groups colluded with the colonial state in order to maintain their positions of power. Racial and class inequality had a significant impact in Martinique and the Cayman Islands. Although inequality was less pronounced in Guadeloupe and the BVI, individuals and groups who did manage to gain a degree of power in local politics appeared disinclined to rock the boat and they focused on economic improvement, rather than constitutional change. Most significantly, a strong nationalist political elite with a popular support base did not develop in these territories.

The manner in which some local elites collaborated with the colonial power is central to our understanding of why certain states pushed for independence and others negotiated integration or dependence. In the British territories, this manifested in a display of 'affinity' with Britain. Bodden has highlighted the affinity expressed by the Caymanian merchant oligarchy as they sought to retain ties with Britain at all cost.[772] Maurer has suggested that while a strengthened sense of Virgin Islander identity developed after the Second World War, BVI politicians remained fearful of losing their colonial relationship with Britain.[773] Likewise, elites in the French Antilles on both sides of the political spectrum demonstrated a continuing loyalty to the French Republic, despite the failings of departmentalisation. The political elite in the Antilles, perceiving their position and legitimacy to have been gained through the egalitarian principles of the French Republic, continued to uphold and reinforce the dependent status of Martinique and Guadeloupe. Whilst the *Békés* gradually lost a certain amount of political power after abolition, they continued to wield a degree of influence over the political status debates through economic might and lobbying. They carefully guarded against an independence that might see their economic monopoly challenged.

The collaboration between local elites and colonial powers is not unique to these territories. Historians have highlighted the ways in which elites collaborated with colonial officials during the transition of power, ensuring a degree of continuity post-independence.[774] Indeed, elite groups continue to collaborate with former colonial powers in many postcolonial states. This is particularly noticeable in the Caribbean, to the extent that Bonilla argues that no Caribbean state has really achieved full independence from Western powers.[775] However, in these non-independent

[772] Bodden, *Patronage, Personalities and Parties*, 130.
[773] Maurer, *Recharting the Caribbean*, 257.
[774] Cooper, *Africa since 1940*; Gardner Thompson, *Governing Uganda: British Colonial Rule and Its Legacy* (Kampala: Fountain Publishers, 2003); Ali Abdullatif Ahmida, *Forgotten Voices: Power and Agency in Colonial and Postcolonial Libya* (New York: Routledge, 2005); Tanja Bührer et al., eds., *Cooperation and Empire: Local Realities of Global Processes* (New York: Berghahn, 2017).
[775] Bonilla, *Non-Sovereign Futures*, xiii-xiv.

Caribbean states, local elites expressed such a sense of affinity with the colonial power that they could not envisage independence in any form.

Yet questions remain as to how these powerful groups interacted in local politics and to what extent the nature of party politics was instrumental in decolonisation. An exploration of local political dynamics reveals the mechanisms used by elites to exercise leverage in the decolonisation process. Could local political parties channel nationalist sentiment and disrupt the conservative tendencies of the elite, or would they collude in maintaining the status quo?

Chapter Five

Local Politics: The Dynamics and Failures of Political Parties

Building on the local focus of the previous chapter, this chapter will shift the analysis to party politics. Political parties in the overseas territories were closely linked to powerful elite groups. This chapter will highlight the instances where political parties included, acted in the interest of, or opposed local elites. It will demonstrate how the nature of party politics in each of the territories restricted proper debate about the political status and future of the islands.

For many former colonies, political parties were a dynamic vessel for anticolonial nationalism and a crucial way to channel the fight for independence. From Ghana to Guinea to Jamaica, nationalists used political parties to unify the struggle against colonialism.[776] In the Caribbean, the development of political parties and trade union activity 'provided much of the driving force for constitutional change'.[777] However, in the British Virgin Islands and the Cayman Islands, distinct political parties with any clear political ideology failed to develop. Furthermore, nationalists were unable to build a campaign for greater autonomy through a unified political party. These two British territories have a form of the 'Westminster model', common across former British colonies in the Caribbean. As Kate Quinn has highlighted, in the 1980s and 1990s, scholars tended to see this model as a positive influence, ensuring stability in Caribbean democracies.[778] More recent scholarship has highlighted the more complex impact of the Westminster model. Henrice Atlink suggests that the

[776] Melvin Goldberg, 'Decolonisation and Political Socialisation with Reference to West Africa', *The Journal of Modern African Studies* 24, no. 4 (December 1986): 670; Hart, *Towards Decolonisation*; El Hadji Omar Diop, *Partis politiques et processus de transition démocratique en Afrique noire: recherches sur les enjeux juridiques et sociologiques du multipartisme dans quelques pays de l'espace francophone* (Paris: Editions Publibook, 2006); Elizabeth Schmidt, *Cold War and Decolonization in Guinea, 1946-1958* (Athens, Ohio: Ohio University Press, 2007); Frederick Cooper, 'The Politics of Decolonization in French and British West Africa', *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of African History*, 24 January 2018.
[777] Johnson, 'The British Caribbean from Demobilisation to Constitutional Decolonisation', 615.
[778] Kate Quinn, 'Introduction: Revisiting Westminster in the Caribbean', *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 53, no. 1 (2 January 2015): 2.

'concentration of executive power in one party and dominance of the cabinet' can restrict progress by allowing the incumbent government to disregard proposals made by 'the opposition, civil society organisations and international bodies'.[779] Furthermore, the Westminster model has been observed to promote and reinforce the status quo in many post-colonial Caribbean nations.[780] Hannerz' *Caymanian Politics* is a detailed and useful account of changing political trends in the Cayman Islands in the postwar years through to the early 1970s.[781] Building on this literature, this chapter will show how attempts to follow a Westminster model restricted the ability to push for change in the BVI and the Cayman Islands.

Meanwhile, the literature on political developments in the French Antilles, from an institutional perspective, is extensive.[782] The 1981 presidential elections, though outside the scope of this study, proved a particularly fruitful lens for exploring party dynamics in the Antilles, and the relationship between local and metropolitan parties.[783] In the French Caribbean, most political parties were affiliated to metropolitan groups, making them subordinate to metropolitan concerns and policies. This chapter will go further by assessing how metropolitan links actively restricted political debate.

This chapter will argue that the nature and development of party politics are central to understanding the process of decolonisation and its outcomes in the case study territories. Firstly, in the Cayman Islands, the failure of party politics coincided with the breakdown of the first party

[779] Henrice Altink, 'Facilitator or Hindrance to Social Change? The Westminster Model and Racial Discrimination on the Jamaican Labour Market, 1944–1980', *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 53, no. 1 (2 January 2015): 39.
[780] Norman Girvan, 'Assessing Westminster in the Caribbean: Then and Now', *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 53, no. 1 (2 January 2015): 95.
[781] Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*.
[782] For example, Descamps, *Le politique aux Antilles françaises de 1946 à nos jours*; Marc Séfil, *Évolution institutionnelle et politique des Antilles: le cas de la Martinique* (Guyane: Ibis Rouge Editions, 2003).
[783] Miles, *Elections and Ethnicity in French Martinique*; Maurice Satineau, *Contestation politique et revendication nationaliste aux Antilles françaises: Les élections de 1981* (Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 1986).

to push for self-government. Secondly, in the British Virgin Islands, political parties failed to develop clear ideological foundations and were unable to vocalise or channel discontent with British rule. Thirdly, the affiliations of political parties in the French Antilles to their metropolitan counterparts restricted the conversation about political futures and encouraged divisions among those seeking greater autonomy. In different ways, the implementation of a European political party model hampered efforts to accomplish change.

It would be a mistake to see the failure of conventional party politics as the sole explanation for the seeming inability of these islands to develop as viable nation states. The elements of modernisation theory which emphasised the necessity of European-style political systems for the sustainability of nation states have been criticised by contemporary scholarship.[784] Nonetheless, it is important to explore the ways in which party politics, or the lack thereof, restricted other forms of political organisation and influenced decolonisation debates. Party politics also intersected with local constructions of race and the dominance of certain elite groups in society. The study of local politics in this chapter is important for demonstrating that the nature of political parties in each of the territories was closely tied to the development of nationalism and the process of decolonisation.

1. The Cayman Islands: The Failure of Political Parties

Unlike the other case study territories, in the Cayman Islands, a system of political parties did not successfully develop until the twenty-first century. Attempts to establish parties were closely tied to both moves towards more populist, mass politics and debates over internal self-government.

[784] Michael E. Latham and John L. Gaddis, *Modernization as Ideology: American Social Science and 'Nation Building' in the Kennedy Era* (London: The University of North Carolina Press, 2000); David C. Engerman and Corinna R. Unger, 'Introduction: Towards a Global History of Modernization', *Diplomatic History* 33, no. 3 (1 June 2009): 375–85.

The most significant of these endeavours was the National Democratic Party (NDP) established by Ormond Panton in 1961 to push for greater self-determination. The period from the NDP's creation to its demise in 1965 marked a crucial political moment in Caymanian decolonisation. The breakdown of party politics in this era also represented the failure of pushes for constitutional change. Thus, party politics in the Cayman Islands tells us a great deal about the nature of decolonisation in the territory.

Prior to the NDP, the first attempt to establish a political party in the Cayman Islands was undertaken by the Cayman Vanguard Progressive Party (CVPP) in 1958.[785] It was made up mostly of black and 'coloured' Caymanians from George Town and it represented the first significant opposition to the political dominance of the white merchant elite.[786] Warren Conolly, the son of an influential merchant, was the president of the CVPP.[787] Though Conolly was from a prominent merchant family, he came from East End, not the capital George Town, and he was a firm supporter of internal self-government.[788] The members of the CVPP tended to be well educated and well travelled. The party's policies presented a clear challenge to the merchant oligarchy, as they sought to expand labour legislation, introduce universal suffrage and re-examine Cayman's tax system. The Commissioner at the time discerned the merchants' concern, claiming the 'merchants know that if they do not control the Assembly they will be in danger of being affected seriously by new measures of taxation'.[789] The idea of a political party seeking to appeal directly to the masses and dominated by black Caymanians posed a serious threat to the traditional hierarchies

[785] Alan H. Donald, 'President's Address to the Legislative Assembly', 25 February 1959, Legislative Assembly Storeroom, Box 26, 2, CINA.
[786] Bodden, *Patronage, Personalities and Parties*, 65.
[787] 'National Heroes', Cayman Islands Government, http://www.gov.ky/portal/page/portal/cighome/cayman/thepeople/heroes, accessed 28 November 2018.
[788] 'Our Constitutional History', Constitutional Commission Cayman Islands, http://www.constitutionalcommission.ky/upimages/educationdoc/OurConstitutionalHistory_1494958690_1494958690.pdf, accessed 28 November 2018.
[789] Confidential Letter from Commissioner Donald to Governor, 16 September 1958, 'Political Rights of Women' File, Transfer 68, Box 2, CINA.

of society based on patronage. As discussed in the previous chapter, 'patronage' in Caymanian society and politics manifested in the merchant elite maintaining power through their position as patrons and leaders in society.[790] Most Caymanians were dependent on them for supplies, transport and financial assistance.

In order to undermine the CVPP, the merchants focused on the presence of Jamaicans within the party. This came at a time when Cayman's relationship with Jamaica was changing, and conservative Caymanians were suspicious of the possibility of socialist or populist ideas spreading to Cayman from Jamaica.[791] The Commissioner colluded in this narrative, propagating rumours about a Jamaican member of the CVPP, Dr Rose. The Commissioner described him as 'the notorious "Dr." Rose' who was apparently 'supremely competent as a demagogue and speaker, charming and respectful to meet, utterly unscrupulous and disreputable'.[792] In his correspondence to the Governor in Jamaica, the Commissioner echoed the racial prejudice and suspicion of black Jamaicans displayed by the merchant elite, depicting Dr Rose as having 'a shocking reputation', and suggesting he was 'very anti-white'.[793] Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the great opposition to the CVPP from the merchant elite, when it came to election day the CVPP failed to win any seats.[794] Candidates argued that the defeat was due to corruption and electoral fraud, but no action was taken to investigate this by the British administration. Following election failure, the CVPP disbanded.[795] The subduing of the CVPP demonstrates the significant power of the merchant oligarchy in the 1950s and the lengths they would go to to prevent any challenge to their

[790] Bodden, *Patronage, Personalities and Parties*, 3–5.
[791] For more on Cayman's changing relationship to Jamaica see Williams, *Defining the Caymanian Identity*, 107–25.
[792] Confidential Letter from Commissioner Donald to Governor, 16 September 1958.
[793] Ibid.
[794] Commissioner to FCO, 'Elections of Vestrymen, August, 1958', 25 August 1958, CO 1031/2181, 1-4, TNA.
[795] Ibid.

dominance. This 'vindictive and crushing' reaction, according to Bodden, was unsurprising given the merchants' determination to maintain the status quo.[796]

The merchant elite responded in a similarly repressive manner to the next attempt to form a political party and connect with disenfranchised Caymanians. In 1961, Ormond Panton established the Cayman National Democratic Party and, within a few months, membership had grown to over 1100.[797] Panton made use of international connections to develop the NDP by approaching Norman Manley, the Premier of Jamaica, for advice about party politics.[798] On a visit to Jamaica in 1961, Panton even crossed paths with Eric Williams, the Premier of Trinidad and Tobago, who was also in Manley's office to discuss political party mobilisation.[799] The founding members of the NDP were from a range of backgrounds, including middle class black Caymanians from George Town, a few merchants from outside the capital, and some civil servants who kept their membership a secret. Initially, members met covertly due to the fear of repercussions from the merchant elite. Rumours spread of people losing their jobs as a result of their NDP membership.[800] Though some members of the NDP did not support greater autonomy, the party as a whole promoted internal self-government through the maintenance of ties to Jamaica once it became independent.[801] The NDP continued to support internal self-government even after the Jamaica link was off the table.[802] This aspect of NDP policies, in particular, drew concerns from the merchant elite who feared that greater autonomy and stronger links to Jamaica would restrict their power and influence.

[796] Bodden, *Patronage, Personalities and Parties*, 108.
[797] Martins, *A Special Son*, 120.
[798] Ormond Panton in Martins, 119–20.
[799] Ibid.
[800] Martins, *A Special Son*, 122.
[801] Eldon Kirkconnell in interview conducted by Tricia S. Bodden, 10 October 2007, 13-6, CINA.
[802] 'Manifesto of the Cayman National Democratic Party', *Tradewinds*, 14 October 1965, 2-3.

Therefore, in response to the creation of the NDP, prominent merchant politicians founded the Christian Democratic Party (CDP). The party's sole purpose was to oppose the NDP. It emphasised its links with the Church to reinforce its legitimacy and respectability.[803] It was also strongly against internal self-government and supported a closer constitutional relationship with Britain.[804] The party was strongly opposed to any change in taxation laws and claimed any move towards greater autonomy would force Caymanians to pay higher taxes.[805] Furthermore, it expressly opposed the introduction of a ministerial system in the Cayman Islands because it argued that Cayman did not have sufficient trained public servants available to prevent this resulting in an unstable government.[806] Other than opposing self-government, the CDP did not put forward any clear policies, instead pledging the maintenance of Christian traditions and loyalty to the Queen.

Despite this manoeuvre by the merchant oligarchy and their CDP, the NDP gained a majority in the 1962 elections, winning 7 out of 12 seats.[807] Panton saw this as a great victory for more open politics and a shift towards internal self-government.[808] As chapter one outlined, euphoria at the NDP's success was dampened by the 'undemocratic' decision by the Governor of Jamaica for Cayman to become a crown colony and cut ties with Jamaica.[809] The NDP's ability to build on their electoral success was further hampered by the Commissioner, Jack Rose, who took the unprecedented step of nominating three of Panton's rivals to the Legislative Assembly. These nominations were a huge blow for Panton and his hopes to generate change in Caymanian politics. Caymanian historian, Roy Bodden, has expressed his surprise that Panton did not challenge this move, given that he had the momentum from the successful election and the political backing to

803 'Manifesto of the Christian Democratic Party', *Tradewinds,* 21 October 1965, 4-5.
804 'Election Campaigning Begins', *Tradewinds,* 28 October 1965, 1.
805 'Manifesto of the Christian Democratic Party', *Tradewinds*, 4-5.
806 Ibid.
807 Monthly Intelligence Report, Cayman Islands, November 1962, CO 1031/3733, 1-2, TNA.
808 Panton in Martins, *A Special Son*, 129–30.
809 Interview with Sybil I. McLaughlin conducted by Heather McLaughlin, 11 February 1993, 5, CINA.

make a legitimate complaint against the Commissioner. The repercussions of the Commissioner's undemocratic action were felt when the Legislative Assembly met to elect two members to the Executive Council. Traditionally, nominated members would be expected to vote for the majority party, with the leader of this party being chosen for the Executive Council. However, the three nominated members voted for CDP candidates and, as a result, Ormond Panton was not elected to the Executive Council.

Panton responded to this injustice swiftly, but ineffectively. In an emergency meeting of the NDP that evening, Panton encouraged the other members to all resign to prompt a second election.[810] However, he failed to go to sufficient lengths to persuade the other NDP members that it was in their interest to do so. In the end, he was the only one to resign in protest, limiting the impact. Roy McTaggart also resigned, though not out of sympathy with Panton.[811] According to Panton, McTaggart 'was simply no longer interested in politics because he had achieved his aim of blocking me and blocking the party that advocated Jamaica links'.[812] A by-election followed in which Panton was reelected. However, he again failed to get a seat on the Executive Council as the NDP member for Cayman Brac voted for a CDP candidate. The sister islands, Cayman Brac and Little Cayman, were particularly fearful of internal self-government out of concern for too much power being held in Grand Cayman.[813] This final blow knocked Panton's motivation and confidence, marking the end of his political ambitions.

Panton's actions were limited and futile, despite the alternative options available to him to fight his case.[814] Eric Williams encountered a similar scenario in 1956 when he found he was not

[810] Panton in Martins, *A Special Son*, 138.
[811] Ibid., 142.
[812] Ibid.
[813] Eldon Kirkconnell in interview, 13-6.
[814] Bodden, *Patronage, Personalities and Parties*, 144–5.

permitted a say in the nominations of members to the Legislative Council in Trinidad and Tobago. Williams complained to the Secretary of State for the Colonies who overruled the Governor, facilitating a majority for Williams' People's National Movement. It is surprising that Panton did not attempt to do the same, but perhaps this demonstrates his suspicion of and unwillingness to work within the British colonial system.

The 1965 elections signalled the end of this short era of party politics. While five NDP and five CDP candidates ran, many reverted to standing as independents. These independent candidates exploited the weaknesses in the two parties and played members off against each other. During the election campaign, rivals resorted to personal attacks in an effort to discredit each other.[815] This had been part of previous election campaigns, but at a local level, not on the territory-wide stage in which these attacks were now broadcast. For example, Willie Farrington claimed that John Bothwell, a butcher who was running against him, had pulled a dead cow out of a well and sold the meat.[816] Three years later, Farrington was finally forced to apologise for the false claim after a legal battle.[817] To his dismay, Ormond Panton failed to be re-elected and only one NDP member, Warren Conolly, succeeded in gaining a place on the Legislative Assembly.[818] Four CDP members were elected and the rest were independents. The results were covered in the local press as a 'decisive anti-self government vote'.[819] However, it is worth noting that, at its height, the NDP had the highest membership of any political party or movement in Caymanian history.[820] Thus it is not fair to suggest that Panton and the NDP's policies were simply unpopular. These 1965 elections were the last in which political parties participated for the rest of the twentieth century.

[815] 'Campaigning Continues', *Tradewinds,* 4 November 1965, 1.
[816] 'Farrington Apologises', *The Caymanian Weekly*, 16 May 1968, 1.
[817] Ibid.
[818] 'Decisive Anti-Self Government Vote', *Tradewinds,* 18 November 1965, 1.
[819] Ibid.
[820] Bodden, *Patronage, Personalities and Parties*, 143.

After the failure of party politics in the 1960s, Caymanian politicians abandoned attempts to form parties and instead turned to 'teams' as a way to organise. Yet again, the issue of self-government became central to the emergence of this new political phenomenon. Political 'teams' were looser collections of candidates who joined together ahead of an election. In the 1972 elections, relatively informal teams of candidates with 'common aims' ran for election together.[821] Jim Bodden, a property developer who would go on to create the first significant successful political team, ran for the first time in 1972. Bodden was a Caymanian from a modest background who had worked as a salesman in the US and acquired US citizenship.[822] Bodden eventually returned to the Cayman Islands and established a property development company. Early on in the 1972 election campaign, Bodden reportedly called for full internal self-government.[823] He later clarified his position, arguing that 'I probably have more to lose than anyone else in making a rash step' towards independence.[824] He instead suggested that he was 'in favour of further constitutional advancement which will enable the elected members to have a majority in the Legislature'.[825] On this platform of constitutional advancement Bodden was elected that year to the Legislative Assembly.

Dissatisfaction with the incumbent political class provided Bodden with an opportunity to increase his influence in the next elections. After a period of unrest in the late 1960s and early 1970s, discontent continued into the mid-1970s, as the recession in the US affected the Caymanian economy.[826] In 1975 another demonstration was held in protest against the development plans of the Executive Council.[827] When it came to the 1976 election, Jim Bodden saw a chance to unseat

[821] 'Election round-up', *The Northwester,* November 1972, 29-36.
[822] 'Northwester Profile: Jim Bodden', *The Northwester,* September 1974, 6-13.
[823] *The Cayman Star,* 23 May 1972.
[824] 'Election round-up', *The Northwester,* November 1972, 29-36.
[825] Ibid.
[826] This period of unrest is discussed in greater detail in chapter six.
[827] 'Development Plan draws protests, objections, petitions', *The Northwester,* July 1975, 45-6.

the established group in power in the Executive Council. Along with fellow Legislative Assembly member for Bodden Town, Haig Bodden, he created the 'Unity Team', a collection of politicians with a manifesto for constitutional change and an end to the political issues supposedly plaguing the Executive Council. Crucially, Jim Bodden and the Unity Team used the local newspaper to their advantage, while existing Executive Council members continued with the traditional campaigning of town hall meetings.[828] The Unity Team campaign was a huge success and they gained a majority in the Legislative Assembly.[829] However, as soon as the Unity Team were in power, they backtracked on the promise for constitutional change. They declared 'their disavowal of any plans either for constitutional advance or for changes in policies on the offshore financial industry'.[830] Though the introduction of political teams, like political parties before them, appeared to signal a move towards internal self-government, the teams continued with business as usual once in power.

The failure of party politics suggests that Cayman's non-independent status today was not inevitable and highlights the obstruction of progress by the merchant elite. Before the 1950s, the nearby Bahamas had a similar political environment, with a white merchant elite controlling the Council. However, in 1967 the Progressive Liberal Party (PLP) under Lynden Pindling managed to establish a black majority government for the first time. The PLP then moved the Bahamas gradually towards independence in 1973.[831] The striking similarities between the Cayman Islands and the Bahamas in the early twentieth century poses the question of whether Panton would have led Cayman to eventual independence, had his legitimate claim to control the Executive Council

[828] Bodden, *Patronage, Personalities and Parties*, 202.
[829] Annual Report on the Cayman Islands, 1976, CINA, 3.
[830] 'A time of hope and goodwill', *The Northwester,* Christmas 1976, 5.
[831] For more on this period of Bahamian history see Michael Craton and Gail Saunders, *A History of the Bahamian People: From the Ending of Slavery to the Twenty-First Century* (London: University of Georgia Press, 2000), 316–64.

not been blocked. This turning point is crucial to understanding the process of decolonisation in the Cayman Islands.

2. The British Virgin Islands: Political Parties in Name Only

The development of political parties in the British Virgin Islands was greatly influenced by events in the nineteenth century. Most white plantation owners left the islands after abolition and formerly enslaved people were able to acquire land as it became available on abandoned estates. As a result, most BVIslanders worked individually, rather than on large estates, preventing the development of workers' collective action and unions. Furthermore, society as a whole was impoverished and relatively classless, lacking the stark class and racial inequality of other colonies. With a lack of clear political foe, the roots of party politics evident in other Caribbean islands did not develop in the BVI.[832] Nonetheless, following the reinstatement of the Legislative Council in 1950, the BVI's first political party was established. The Progressive League included men already on the Executive Council, as well as those who had been involved in the 1949 protest march.[833] As such, it was made up of members of the Road Town elite and was solely created for the purposes of the elections. It did not have any clear cohesive political ideology linking its members. Unsurprisingly, the Progressive League became redundant immediately after the elections. This would become a pattern in BVI politics, where political parties would exist exclusively for elections.

Subsequent attempts to form political parties failed to generate much enthusiasm from politicians or voters. In the 1950s, various loose groupings of politicians developed around election time but

[832] Elihu Rhymer, 'Political Development of the British Virgin Islands', in *Twenty-Five Years of Ministerial Government* ed. Rita Frett-Georges, Government of the British Virgin Islands (November 1992), 42.
[833] This protest march is discussed in greater detail in chapter six.

no political parties formed.[834] In the following decade, however, efforts were made to establish more meaningful, politically focused parties. Firstly, in 1963, Terrance Lettsome set up the Progressive Party in the east of Tortola.[835] The party declared its intention to 'bring unity and development in the Colony'.[836] Furthermore, it criticised the Legislative Council, suggesting it did not accurately represent the views of BVIslanders.[837] Though it called for BVIslanders to 'be the master of their destiny', it did so in the context of a perceived lack of representation in the government, rather than any promotion of independence.[838] The Progressive Party had close ties to the Methodist Church.[839] The party received a disparaging response from local newspaper, *The Island Sun,* which suggested that progress could only be achieved through financial support from outside of the BVI.[840] The paper's American editor, Carlos Downing, regarded this attempt at establishing political parties as futile.[841] The Progressive Party did not last for more than a few months and when Lettsome was elected to the Legislative Council in the 1963 elections, it was as an independent candidate.[842] The party lacked any clear ideological direction and failed to generate sufficient support.

Similarly, an attempt to create a nationalist party in 1966 also ended in failure. Noel Lloyd, who would go on to lead the Positive Action protest movement two years later, announced the start of the British Virgin Islands Party in the local newspaper.[843] The scope of Lloyd's party was far more ambitious than Lettsome's and Lloyd intended to bring BVI politics in line with other West Indian

[834] Cyril B Romney, 'Evolution of the Ministerial System', *Empowerment Through Representation* (2000), 90-1, VINA.
[835] British Virgin Islands Intelligence Report, March 1963, CO 1031/4778, 1, TNA.
[836] Terrance Lettsome, 'A New Year Message From The Progressive Party', *The Island Sun,* 12 January 1963, 3.
[837] Ibid.
[838] Ibid.
[839] British Virgin Islands Intelligence Report, March 1963.
[840] 'Progressive Party Politics', *The Island Sun,* 19 January 1963, 2-7.
[841] Ibid.
[842] Election Information and Results 1950-2011, Office of the Supervisor of Elections, Government of the Virgin Islands, 2011, 53.
[843] 'Mr Lloyd Speaks on Political Party', *The Island Sun*, 5 February 1966, 1-7.

islands. Having travelled widely, Lloyd brought a pan-Africanist view to his political endeavours.[844] The party was openly nationalist and sought to bring about internal self-government.[845] Lloyd offered an inclusive message of equality, calling for men and women to join a party which would represent their views.[846] However, Lloyd struggled to generate interest in the party and put this down to the 'individualism' of BVIslanders.[847] Indeed, individualism was repeatedly identified by both British representatives and local politicians as a major impediment to political progress in the islands.[848] The historical developments which led to widespread land ownership, had encouraged a more individualistic outlook among islanders who mostly worked in isolation on their own land, rather than in collective endeavours. The failure of Lloyd's party suggests that a nationalist message lacked traction at this time.

In the end, paradoxically, it was British intervention which finally led to a system of political parties in the BVI. Though calls for change came from within the BVI, a 1965 investigation into governance in the islands attracted resentment from BVIslanders because the decision to conduct the review was made in London. The 'Proudfoot Report' which resulted from the investigation argued that the BVI was ready for a degree of political reform and recommended a ministerial system offering a greater level of political representation. In anticipation of the new constitution and the elections that would follow, BVI politicians began taking the first steps to establishing political parties.[849] The United Party was announced in January 1967, with a large crowd gathering to celebrate the move.[850] The party included Terrance Lettsome, as well as fellow members of the

[844] Lloyd, *The Positive Action Movement*, 15–24.
[845] Noel Lloyd, 'Political Party - A Presentation', *The Island Sun*, 5 February 1966, 2.
[846] Ibid. p. 2-8
[847] 'Mr Lloyd Pleads For Interest In Political Parties', *The Island Sun*, 4 June 1966, 1-5.
[848] For example, Administrator Staveley to Secretary of State, 27 April 1967, FCO 44/104, TNA; Valedictory despatch from Administrator Thomson to Secretary of State, 9 January 1971, FCO 44/614, TNA.
[849] 'Worthy Of Support', *The Island Sun*, 8 December 1966, 5.
[850] 'BVI Political Party Launched With Gusto', *The Island Sun*, 14 January 1967, 1.

Legislative Council, Hamilton Lavity Stoutt and Ivan Dawson.[851] The United Party pledged to promote the economic development of the BVI and to 'work for continued good relations with our Mother Country'.[852] As the first major party in the BVI, its political aims were remarkably cautious. Continuing the tradition of politicians from the 1950s onwards, the United Party put economic development above other concerns.

As a challenge to the United Party, Dr Qwominer Osborne established the BVI Democratic Party.[853] Osborne announced the party's creation over the local radio station, ZBVI.[854] Osborne argued that 'I and the party are one', suggesting the party was about personalities and his leadership, not policies.[855] He claimed the party was 'dedicated the development of the Territory's natural resources'.[856] Osborne placed a strong emphasis on the importance of training up the BVI 'youth' to develop the territory.[857] Among other plans, he outlined: attracting development capital; improving the communications system; improving transportation; education; and improving agriculture and fishing. Other electoral candidates who joined the party launched attacks on the incumbent members of the Legislative Council, again indicating that the party was more about personalities and individuals than political ideas.[858]

This transformation of the political scene resulted in three parties running in the 1967 elections. The third was the People's Own Party, led by Glanny Fonseca. Its policies varied very little from the other two parties and its manifesto made no mention of the BVI's political status.[859] During

[851] *The Island Sun,* 8 April 1967, 2.
[852] Ibid.
[853] 'Osborne And Group Form Third Party', *The Island Sun*, 21 January 1967, 1.
[854] *The Island Sun*, 18 February 1967, 1.
[855] Ibid.
[856] Ibid., 7.
[857] Ibid.
[858] Ibid., 8.
[859] Ibid., 7-8.

the elections, the United Party gained four seats, making Stoutt the BVI's first Chief Minister.[860] The Democratic Party secured two seats and the People's Own Party won just one seat.[861] However, political party activity died down considerably after the elections. The United Party was the exception and, led by Conrad Maduro who had failed to get elected, party meetings and activities continued. Yet there was a growing divide between elected members of the party and the rest, as elected politicians began failing to attend party meetings. One of the founding members, Lennie Pickering, took to the local radio to call for the expulsion of any elected members who continued to skip meetings.[862] By the next elections in 1971, the party had split, with Conrad Maduro sticking with the United Party and Stoutt leaving to form the new Virgin Islands Party. Party loyalties appeared weak from the outset.

Political parties throughout the 1960s and into the 1980s failed to align with clear ideological or political beliefs and remained individualistic. These failings were typified by the 1971 elections and ensuing political crisis. In the elections, three Democratic Party candidates were elected, two from the Virgin Islands Party, and one candidate from the United Party. As a result, an independent candidate, Willard Wheatley became the new Chief Minister, having been invited by the Democratic Party to help them achieve a majority.[863] Tensions between Wheatley and the leader of the Democratic Party, Qwominer Osborne, escalated quickly under the new government.[864] This resulted in Wheatley firing Osborne from his ministerial role in government and stealing the loyalty of the rest of the Democratic Party away from Osborne, in order to maintain a majority.[865] This incident highlights the fluidity of party divides and loyalties in the BVI at the time. With little

[860] 'United Party Captures Majority', *The Island Sun*, 15 April 1967, 1.
[861] Ibid.
[862] Lennie Pickering in radio broadcast, 28 March 1968, cited in Elihu Rhymer, 'Political Development of the British Virgin Islands', 43.
[863] 'Mr Wheatley Assumes Office Of Chief Minister On Appointment By His Honour; Gov't Organised', *The Island Sun,* 12 June 1971, 1.
[864] Letter from Administrator to FCO, 4 December 1971, TNA FCO 44/614.
[865] Elihu Rhymer, 'Political Development of the British Virgin Islands', 44.

holding them together, BVI parties became only useful and meaningful in the run up to elections. Politicians used the party groupings for their own ends in order to get elected, but these loose alliances were forgotten once the new government got underway. This continued into the 1980s, when some ministers paid off other Legislative Council members to ensure their support and stop them swapping sides.[866]

The determination to pursue a ministerial system of government which included political parties and an opposition to the government may have hindered other forms of political organising in the BVI. Local commentator Elihu Rhymer suggests that the promotion of the party system harmed other more natural forms of community politics.[867] The disconnect between political parties and the people was demonstrated during the Batehill Affair in 1968.[868] The main parties failed to engage with the discontent of many BVIslanders and, in the end, it was the Positive Action Movement, a community protest group, which channelled that energy and was hugely successful.

The lack of enthusiasm for party politics can be partly attributed to the absence of workers' unions in the BVI. In an effort to change this, Walter 'Lindy' deCastro, another Positive Action leader, set up the People's Own Workers Union.[869] He did so in 1967, as the economic, political and social landscape of the BVI was changing. Following the introduction of the ministerial system and the advent of party politics, deCastro hoped the union would further engage the public in the local political system. The union was linked to the People's Own Party, the short-lived party established by Glanny Fonseca which only lasted a year.[870] Before the 1960s, it would have been difficult to create a union, given that most BVIslanders were either smallholders or worked abroad. However,

[866] Ibid.
[867] Ibid.
[868] See chapter six for more on the Batehill Affair.
[869] 'Unionism Comes To BVI', *The Island Sun*, 5 August 1967, 11.
[870] Elihu Rhymer, 'Political Development of the British Virgin Islands', 43.

with the increase in construction, tourism and public sector jobs, deCastro hoped his union would generate interest among BVI workers. The Island Sun, run by deCastro's brother-in-law, declared its support for the new union but suggested that any move to develop a union closely linked to a political party would be treated with suspicion.[871] DeCastro managed to keep the union going despite an unsuccessful attempt to generate a construction workers strike to achieve better working conditions.[872] He also called for a civil service union to protect and improve this growing sector in the BVI economy.[873] However, deCastro's union failed to gain significant support and the general workers' unions which formed in the early 1970s remained relatively small and ineffectual.[874]

In terms of decolonisation, the transient nature of political parties in the British Virgin Islands prevented their being used to generate meaningful change. Without any clear political ideology, parties opted for vague policies aimed at economic improvement. In the postwar years, they failed to engage with the question of the BVI's political status and became increasingly detached from the concerns of the general public. While the British territories failed to develop clearly defined political parties, in the French Caribbean a thriving political party system was hampered by its metropolitan connections.

3. The French Antilles: Metropolitan Ties

In Guadeloupe and Martinique, following departmentalisation in 1946, the ties between local and metropolitan political parties complicated, and in many ways obstructed, the conversation about the future political status of the Antilles. This was particularly true among the Left, since the socialist and communist parties were linked to the main parties in metropolitan France. Partly for

[871] Ibid.
[872] British Virgin Islands Intelligence Report, November 1968, FCO 44/336, TNA.
[873] Letter from Administrator to Commonwealth Office, 10 April 1968, FCO 44/106, 4, TNA.
[874] Local Intelligence Report, BVI, September 1972, FCO 44/812, 1-4, TNA.

this reason, they advocated either remaining an overseas department or pursuing greater autonomy within the confines of the French Republic. While there are many similarities between the political party dynamics in Guadeloupe and Martinique, it is important to analyse the two separately, as events developed differently, especially in terms of debates about independence.

Firstly, in Martinique, most of the parties were linked to or affiliated with a metropolitan party. Only Césaire's Martinican Progressive Party (PPM) did not have a metropolitan counterpart. This reinforced the centrality of France in political debate and restricted the ability of some parties to deviate from metropolitan party lines. For the right-wing, pro-departmentalisation parties, the Union for French Democracy (UDF) and the Rally for the Republic (RPR), this appeared more logical. The two very much represented the establishment in Martinique and they controlled the General Council from the 1970s onwards, as well as wielding considerable influence in the bureaucracy and the police.[875] The RPR was the more traditional and conservative of the two, with older members and more financial backing from the white elite, the *Békés*.[876] Mirroring metropolitan political developments, the RPR had evolved from the Union for the New Republic (UNR) and the Union of Democrats for the Republic (UDR). Camille Petit, a Martinican politician who was a great admirer of de Gaulle, had helped the party to gain prominence in the 1960s.[877] The UDF was a later addition to the political scene, formed in 1978 to support President Giscard d'Estaing.[878] While there were variances in political approach in the metropolitan UDF and RPR, in Martinique the differences were negligible. These right-wing parties were backed by a variety of newspapers, including *L'Appel, La Flamme, Le Combat, La Concentration* and *France Toujours*.[879]

[875] Roland Suvélor, 'Esquisse de évolution des partis départementalistes martiniquais' in *Historial Antillais,* Volume VI, A2116, 318-32, ADG. See also Miles, *Elections and Ethnicity in French Martinique*.
[876] Roland Suvélor, 'Esquisse de évolution des partis départementalistes martiniquais', 320.
[877] See *Le Combat,* 19 June 1971, 1.
[878] Roland Suvélor, 'Esquisse de evolution des partis departementalistes martiniquais', 319-20.
[879] *L'Appel,* PER 104, ADM; *La Flamme,* PER 131, ADM; *Le Combat,* PER 227, ADM; *France Toujours,* PER 238, ADM; *La Concentration,* PER 303, ADM.

Furthermore, the largest newspaper in both Martinique and Guadeloupe, *France-Antilles*, very much adhered to the right-wing, pro-department status politics of the UDF and RPR.[880]

On the Left, the only pro-department party was the Socialist Federation of Martinique (FSM) which was affiliated with the mainland French socialist party. In order to justify their pro-department status line, the socialists blamed any negative aspects of French rule, such as colonialism and slavery on the French right, contrasting this to an idealised version of France which included the revolution, the abolition of slavery and decolonisation: the France of the Left.[881] They were equally critical of left-wing groups who called for autonomy or independence.[882] The socialists in Martinique used seemingly radical rhetoric in their statements and speeches but failed to accompany this with any radical proposals for Martinique's future.[883]

Even the Martinican Communist Party (PCM) did not advocate outright independence. It was the longest running political party by 1980, having been founded in 1919. The PCM was originally affiliated to the French Communist Party (PCF) and was hugely successful in the postwar years, holding a majority in the general council immediately after the war.[884] However, by the 1970s, the PCM was less powerful and struggled to achieve electoral success.[885] It moved away from the PCF in 1957, which allowed it a certain degree of freedom.[886] In 1960, the PCM announced a new

[880] *France-Antilles* was established in 1964 to celebrate the visit of General de Gaulle to Martinique. For its pro-department stance, see, for example: 'L'immense majorité d'accord avec une politique de départementalisation', *France-Antilles,* Guadeloupe, 3, no. 228, 20 June 1967, 2.
[881] Tertullien Robinel, 'Joseph Lagrosilliere est mort', *La Voix Socialiste*, 12 January 1950, 1.
[882] 'Les ennemis du socialisme', *La Voix Socialiste*, 22 December 1949, 1-2; Report on 'Le déroulement de la deuxième session ordinaire de 1956 du Conseil Général de la Guadeloupe', Service départemental des renseignements généraux, 17 December 1956, 1347 W 62, 3-4, ADG.
[883] 'Notre journal', *Le Populaire de la Martinique,* 17 November 1955, 1-2.
[884] Edouard de Lepine, 'Le Parti Communiste et le mouvement ouvrier à la Martinique de 1945 à nos jours' in *Historial Antillais,* Volume VI, A2116, 195-207, ADG.
[885] Ibid., 271-87.
[886] Ministry of the Interior report on 'Situation politique dans les départements d'Outre-Mer: départementalisation, décentralisation et autonomie', 12 July 1977, 19940180/84, 1-11, AN.

policy, calling for Martinique to become a 'federated territory' within the French Republic.[887] Yet, while it advocated more autonomy for Martinique, it was not in favour of independence. By 1980, Martinican society had drastically changed from the majority of people working rurally on plantations, to the state bureaucracy acting as the major employer and a third of Martinicans living in and around the capital. The PCM failed to adapt its message and its orthodox Marxist approach, continuing its focus on 'the workers', which prevented it from galvanising more support.[888] Through its official newspaper, *Justice,* the PCM adopted an anticolonial message while advocating greater autonomy but not independence.[889]

The refusal of the PCM to entertain any idea of independence resulted in splinter groups and more radical left-wing parties on the fringes of the political system. This included the Socialist Revolutionary Group (GRS), who called for a trans-Caribbean federation and boycotted elections.[890] *Combat Ouvrier* (Worker's Struggle), which was also active in Guadeloupe, promoted a pro-independence, pan-Caribbean view and tended to focus on issues of racial inequality.[891] The most forthright of the legal independence movements was the Martinican Independence Movement (MIM) which rejected the Marxist perspective of the other left-wing groups and attacked both right and left-wing parties.[892] Alfred Marie-Jeanne, the founder of MIM, was the mayor of Rivière-Pilote from 1971 to 2000, but his independence party did not have much electoral success until the 1990s.[893] The role of fringe organisations in major moments of protest will be discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.

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[887] 'Pour un nouveau statut de la Martinique', *Justice* (Martinique), 18 February 1960, 1.
[888] Armand Nicolas, 'Tournant de notre histoire', *Action*, Revue du Parti Communiste Martiniquais, July 1980, 3.
[889] 'Autonomie et Indépendance', *Justice* (Martinique), 14 April 1960, 1.
[890] Philippe Pierre Charles, member of the GRS political office, 'Oui l'Indépendance, oui le Socialisme' in *Historial Antillais,* Volume VI, A2116, 545-54, ADG.
[891] Monthly report from 'Renseignements Généraux' in Guadeloupe, August 1977, 1347 W 103, 3, ADG.
[892] See Jeanne Yang-Ting, *Le Mouvement indépendantiste martiniquais: Essai de présentation du Marie-Jeannisme* (Guadeloupe: Ibis rouge éditions, 2000).
[893] Ibid.

The other significant political force in Martinican politics was Aimé Césaire's PPM, which was not linked to any metropolitan party. Prior to 1956, Césaire was a member of the Martinican wing of the Communist Party. However, Césaire famously left the Communist Party following the suppression of the Hungarian Revolution by the Soviet Union.[894] He founded the PPM two years later and focused on finding solutions to specifically Martinican issues, which Césaire felt the Communist Party had failed to do. [895] However, as discussed in the previous chapter, Césaire did not use the PPM to push for independence, instead opting for a pro-autonomy line.[896] In 1981, Césaire declared a moratorium on the question of Martinique's departmental status.[897]

Two crucial elements of party politics in Martinique helped to reinforce the departmental status of the island after the 1946 law. Firstly, the affiliation of most parties with metropolitan organisations encouraged local politicians to approach Martinican politics within a centralised French framework and restricted what they could say within the boundaries of their party. This caused particular problems for the Communist Party, leading to divisions and the creation of new Marxist groups outside the party. This contributed to the second aspect of party politics which weakened debates about independence: the divisions among the Left. Left-wing parties were greatly divided over the issue of political status, with the socialists supporting French department status, the PPM and the communists calling for greater autonomy, and the far-left groups advocating independence. These different parties spent as much time, if not more, trying to undermine the other left-wing groups than they did challenging the power of the establishment,

[894] See 'Demission de Cesaire du Parti Communiste', 1956, Fonds Louis Addrassé, 36J19, ADM.
[895] Aimé Césaire, 'Lettre à Maurice Thorez', *Présence Africaine,* 24 October 1956, BR 62, ADG.
[896] Aimé Césaire, 'Pour la transformation de la Martinique en region dans le cadre d'une Union Française fédérée', *Le Progressiste,* 5 July 1958, 1-3.
[897] Aimé Césaire, 'Discours du Moratoire', 15 June 1981, Fort-de-France, reproduced in Théobald, *La Liberté est ou n'est pas...*, 669–72.

right-wing parties. Unlike the UDF and RPR, who often united to jointly support a particular issue or a candidate in the presidential elections, the Left failed to provide a united front. This confused and undermined the issue of greater autonomy.

Likewise, in Guadeloupe, similar issues were apparent in the dynamics of party politics, due to the centralised nature of the French state and political system. Like in Martinique, the UDF, the RPR and the Socialist Party were local branches of the main metropolitan parties and all supported the departmental status quo. The right-wing parties had greater electoral success from 1974 onwards after the President of the General Council Lucien Bernier broke away from the Socialist Party to join the presidential campaign of Valéry Giscard d'Estaing.[898] The Guadeloupean Communist Party (PCG) took a pro-autonomy stance and was criticised by other left-wing groups and activists for being 'assimilationist' in its approach.[899] The communists initially supported departmentalisation, but soon became disillusioned with the results and, under Rosan Girard, pursued greater autonomy for Guadeloupe.[900] The party ran into difficulties in the 1960s over the question of Guadeloupean independence. At first, they participated in the Guadeloupean Front for Autonomy, which united left-wing pro-autonomy and pro-independence groups.[901] However, by 1966 the party was splintering as pro-independence members resigned. The divisions reached a peak in 1967, around the 'May 67' massacre in which communist mayor of Pointe-à-Pitre, Henri Bangou, sided with the police against protestors and members of the independence movement GONG.[902]

[898] Ministry of the Interior report on 'Situation politique dans les départements d'Outre-Mer: départementalisation, décentralisation et autonomie', 12 July 1977, 19940180/84, 6, AN.
[899] Collectif Tÿok, *La grande imposture: le parti communiste guadeloupéen* (Paris: NBE, 1980), 159–61. See also Jacky Dahomay, 'La grande imposture', *Le Journal Guadeloupéen*, 23 October 1980, 18-20.
[900] *L'Etincelle*, 14 January 1967, PG 1068, ADG.
[901] 'Le Front Guadeloupéen pour l'Autonomie a tenu sa première Conférence de Presse', *L'Etincelle*, 26 June 1965, 1-3.
[902] 'Mai 67' is covered in greater detail in chapter six.

Unlike Martinique, pro-independence activists in Guadeloupe were more marginalised from the mainstream political system and were more radical. Instead of the legal independence parties like MIM, Guadeloupean nationalists became increasingly violent in the 1970s and 1980s, with several bombings both in Guadeloupe and in mainland France.[903] The failure of party politics to adequately cater to currents in left-wing Guadeloupean circles led to a *syndicalisme nouveau* in the 1970s which combined cultural nationalism, including promoting the creole language and traditional cultural practices, with labour activism.[904] New trade unions, not affiliated to a metropolitan counterpart, sprang up, the most significant being the General Union of Guadeloupean Workers (UGTG). The UGTG has maintained a pro-independence stance since its creation in 1973, and remains the largest union in Guadeloupe, with over 7000 members from a population of 440 000.[905] In many ways, the UGTG has filled the gap left by the mainstream parties to channel Guadeloupean cultural identity and nationalist sentiment.[906]

In Martinique and Guadeloupe, the strong connections between local and metropolitan parties hindered the development of a mainstream local nationalist movement. Parties were encouraged to adhere to metropolitan party policies, shifting political attention away from local concerns. Those which split from their metropolitan counterparts, such as the Communist Party in Martinique, pursued greater autonomy rather than outright independence. As a result, the question of independence was pushed to the edges of the local political scene, and nationalists became increasingly radical. In both Martinique and Guadeloupe, the Left was divided between those who

[903] Report on 'Projet d'offensive terroriste menée par la faction extremiste des independentistes Guadeloupéens', 3 December 1981, 19950279/12, AN.
[904] Bonilla, *Non-Sovereign Futures*, 34–5.
[905] Pierre Odin, 'Les logiques syndicales de la « marche vers l'indépendance »: l'Union Générale des Travailleurs de la Guadeloupe', *Mouvements* n° 91, no. 3 (28 August 2017): 150.
[906] Rosan Mounien, 'Mon éveil de conscience', in *Autopsie Politique Du Massacre de Mai 1967: La Guadeloupe Entre Violence, Terreur et Résistance,* Julien Mérion (Pointe-à-Pitre: Éditions Jasor, 2017), 227-31.

supported departmentalisation, those who favoured some form of greater autonomy, and those who advocated independence. As a result, no united voice for independence emerged.

Conclusion

A comparative approach enables us to see how the dynamics of local politics were central to the pattern of decolonisation in the French Antilles, the Cayman Islands and the British Virgin Islands. Party politics developed differently in the French compared to the British territories, and was closely tied to the maintenance of the political status quo. In the Cayman Islands, the merchant elite and the British Commissioner managed to supress Ormond Panton's NDP and consequently prevent the campaign for self-government. Political parties were abandoned in the aftermath of the NDP's demise and not revived until the twenty-first century. Panton's electoral success occurred at a time when other Caribbean colonies were moving towards independence. Had his party not been blocked from power, this could have marked the turning point to a black majority government and even independence in the Cayman Islands.

In the British Virgin Islands, political parties developed in 1967 but remained weak and inconsistent throughout the period in question. They failed to garner significant loyalty and support, remained detached from the general public, and swapping sides was common. Nonetheless, the British administration continued to encourage a party system which may have obstructed other forms of governance from developing. Unlike in many other colonies, BVI political parties were never able to unify and channel popular sentiment to effect change. In the French islands, political parties developed much earlier, in conjunction with a gradual alignment of local politics to the centralised French system. After 1946, most parties were affiliated to mainland French organisations, forcing them to adhere to metropolitan interests and to be

subordinate to their metropolitan counterparts. This restricted the debate about the political status of Martinique and Guadeloupe and caused further divisions among left-wing pro-autonomy groups.

The failure of party politics in these territories is significant because it prevented the development of a political movement which could have challenged the power of the local elite and overcome the restrictions imposed by the colonial state. After departmentalisation in the French Antilles and the adoption of crown colony status in the British territories, political momentum favoured the status quo and retaining ties to the metropole. An effective, unified political party could have challenged this state of affairs, but no such party developed. Political parties were too weak in Cayman to challenge the merchant elite and too ineffective in the BVI to channel local political energy and sentiment. In the French Antilles, the Left were too divided between pro-autonomy and pro-independence groups and thus unable to form a united voice for change.

As this chapter has argued, party politics in the French Antilles forced independence activists to operate outside the structure of electoral politics. The role of these nationalist groups will be explored the next chapter. Likewise, in the British territories, there were incidents of protest which deserve further analysis. It remains to be seen whether these moments of protest could have been capable of sparking further agitation for independence and, if so, why this turning point did not occur.

Chapter Six

'We Got to Take Back Our Country': Popular Protest and Independence Activists

Thus far, this thesis has assessed both international and local pressures on the process of decolonisation in the overseas territories which help to explain their non-independent status today. The crucial question which remains is whether there were any potential turning points that could have pushed these territories towards independence. With this in mind, this chapter will analyse significant moments of popular protest and the dynamics of nationalist groups in these territories. It will analyse the motivations of those protesting and explore their significance for, as well as their lack of impact on, decolonisation developments.

Historians have increasingly explored the global nature of social protest in the second half of the twentieth century, often focusing on the 1960s as a 'revolutionary' decade.[907] In line with this trend, the period between 1959 and 1972 marks a peak in unrest in the non-sovereign states of the Caribbean. Iliffe highlights population growth and urbanisation as key factors behind anticolonial protest in Africa.[908] Similarly, both an increase in population and the mass movement of Antilleans to the urban capitals had a considerable impact on protest in the French Caribbean. Historians of the Caribbean have begun to acknowledge the ways activists in non-sovereign territories like the US Virgin Islands, Bermuda and Curaçao, engaged with global movements and ideologies.[909] Mérion situates Guadeloupean protest within the context of the Cuban Revolution and the Caribbean region in the 1960s.[910] This chapter will go further by assessing the local, regional and

[907] See: Samantha Christiansen and Zachary A. Scarlett, eds., *The Third World in the Global 1960s* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2013); Donatella Della Porta and Sidney G. Tarrow, eds., *Transnational Protest and Global Activism* (Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield, 2005); Stefan Berger and Holger Nehring, eds., *The History of Social Movements in Global Perspective: A Survey* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017); Chen Jian et al., eds., *The Routledge Handbook of the Global Sixties: Between Protest and Nation-Building* (Oxford: Routledge, 2018).
[908] Iliffe, *Africans*.
[909] Kate Quinn ed., *Black Power in the Caribbean* (Tallahassee: University Press of Florida, 2014).
[910] Mérion, *Autopsie Politique Du Massacre de Mai 1967*.

international dimensions of protest movements in these territories, including the transnational exchanges and connections. Clegg argues that militancy and radicalism on the part of French Antillean independence activists was due to the moderate party politics in the Antilles.[911] While party politics was certainly a factor, this suggestion obscures the significant influence French state repression had on radicalising nationalists and pushing independence movements underground. Maurer has suggested that nascent BVI nationalism, rather than being channelled towards independence, was expressed through an assertion of local legal autonomy.[912] This chapter will demonstrate that, whilst significant nationalism was not evident in the Cayman Islands or British Virgin Islands before 1980, there were notable expressions of self-determination and national identity linked to the legislative assemblies and land rights.

This chapter will argue that it is inaccurate to suggest that the non-sovereign status of these territories is a result of a lack of popular protest or a total absence of nationalism. Rather, through the relationship between popular protest movements, local politics, clandestine independence activists and the colonial response to protest, no widespread call for independence emerged. Firstly, this chapter looks at Martinique and the unrest which occurred in December 1959. Secondly, in Guadeloupe, the development of a nationalist organisation coincided with the brutal repression of Guadeloupeans in the massacre of May 1967. Thirdly, in the British Virgin Islands, protest marches in 1949 and 1968 engaged with notions of self-determination. The fourth section explores protest in the Cayman Islands. The islands were incredibly conservative in outlook, though protests did erupt over land disputes and, like the BVI, perceived foreign interference. Finally, this chapter considers the role of race and internationalism in these protests. A comparative analysis of protest movements is important for establishing both the trends and the

[911] Clegg, 'Independence Movements in the Caribbean', 433.
[912] Bill Maurer, 'Law Writing, Immigration, and Globalization in the British Virgin Islands', *Indiana Journal of Global Legal Studies* 2, no. 2 (1 April 1995): 413–28.

local particularities in the territories, as well as highlighting the diversity of the Caribbean experience.

Much of the detail in this chapter is not readily available in government archives. For certain files on the police response to protest in Martinique and Guadeloupe, I had to obtain special permission to view the restricted documents. Likewise, permission was obtained to access the private archive of Pierre Bolotte, the prefect of Guadeloupe during the 1967 massacre. This chapter also contains interviews with French Caribbean nationalists. Ken Kelly, the former editor of the GONG journal, was kind enough to allow access to his private collection of GONG pamphlets and journals.[913] This material was banned in the 1960s and is difficult to come across. It offered an invaluable insight into the political approach and ideology of GONG. Interviews with eye witnesses of the 1967 massacre included Jacques Jarvis, who had not told his story before, even to his parents. Finally, in the British Virgin Islands, the unpublished memoir of activist Noel Lloyd and the interview footage with members of the Positive Action Movement provided a vital perspective on events that have thus far been ignored by historians. This collection of sources has allowed me to cover, in greater detail, events which are mostly absent from the official history of these islands. Ultimately, this chapter will show that protest movements asserting local autonomy and self-determination greatly influenced local politics and the nature of decolonisation in these islands.

1. Martinique: *Décembre 59* and OJAM

In the French Antilles, nationalist movements were closely linked to major incidents of unrest, rioting and state violence.[914] The most significant period of agitation after departmentalisation occurred in Martinique in December 1959. The uprising began after a traffic incident between a black Martinican and a white metropolitan on 20 December in the capital, Fort-de-France. This

[913] GONG stands for the *Groupe d'organisation nationale de la Guadeloupe*.
[914] Louis-Georges Placide, *Les émeutes de décembre 1959 en Martinique: Un repère historique* (Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 2009), 201.

relatively minor episode escalated into three nights of violent clashes between protestors and the police, resulting in the death of three young men.

This 'popular rebellion' was spontaneous and not organised or orchestrated by any political group.[915] Instead, several factors contributed to the level of discontent among young, urban Martinicans: rapid population increase since the Second World War; a very young population, with forty-eight percent of Martinicans under twenty; chronic underemployment; increasing racial tensions in Martinican society due to the arrival of many white *pied-noirs* from Algeria, often bringing racist colonial attitudes, and an increased number of white metropolitans gaining government jobs; and the approach of the CRS, French riot police, towards Martinicans.[916] The incident escalated due to the overreaction of French law enforcement. Frantz Moffat, the Martinican involved in the traffic incident, described how he had argued with a man who drove into his scooter, but they had then agreed to go for a drink to sort things out. Suddenly, the CRS arrived with tear gas and fired live bullets into the air to disperse the crowd in La Savane, the main park in the city centre.[917] This enraged the young Martinicans in the park and sparked the first night's riots.

The excessive use of force by police in Martinique was not unique to the events of December 1959. Police shootings during sugar workers' strikes in 1948 and 1951 had resulted in many casualties.[918] Furthermore, the first night's unrest was unplanned and disorganised in nature. Placide suggests that the next two nights of rioting were slightly more coordinated, otherwise the police would have been able to enforce control earlier.[919] In the absence of the Prefect, the

[915] 'Commission d'information et de recherche historique sur les événements de décembre 1959 en Martinique, de juin 1962 en Guadeloupe et en Guyane, et de mai 1967 en Guadeloupe', 30 October 2016, 24.
[916] Placide, *Les émeutes de décembre 1959 en Martinique*, 48.
[917] Frantz Moffat, eyewitness account reproduced in Placide, 60.
[918] 'Commission d'information et de recherche historique', 30 October 2016, 13.
[919] Placide, *Les émeutes de décembre 1959 en Martinique*, 160.

Secretary General, Guy Beck, was concerned about rioting spreading to the countryside and imposed a curfew on 23 December in an attempt to regain order.[920] The authorities feared the influence of the Cuban Revolution and some right-wing commentators blamed the Martinican Communist Party for stirring up trouble.[921] However, the spontaneous nature of the rioting took the communists by surprise, as much as the rest of the political establishment, and there is no evidence of the unrest being orchestrated by any particular political group. Occurring less than a year after Castro had taken control in Cuba, *Décembre 59* in Martinique exacerbated Cold War political divisions in the island.

Local politicians were quick to condemn the police response.[922] The *Conseil Général* held an emergency meeting after order was restored. While they called for calm, they protested against the brutal repression of the riots by the CRS and police forces. They identified the key causes of the protests as: the 'arrogance and racism of certain metropolitans'; CRS brutality; and the general impoverishment and unemployment which disproportionately affected the youth.[923] The Secretary General, on the other hand, blamed the violence on 'disruptive elements' of Martinican society.[924] Yet, to avoid further disruption, the state opted for appeasement rather than a heavy handed approach and, despite many arrests during the riots, only three men were given prison sentences.[925] It is difficult to ascertain how many people were involved in the unrest, but the Minister for the Interior at the time reported 500 to 1500 people in the streets.[926]

[920] Report by Guy Beck, 28 December 1959, 19940180/206, AN; Guy Beck, 'Arrêté no 59-1179', Arrêtés Prefectoraux, 36J9, ADM.
[921] *La Petite Patrie,* no. 799, 6 February 1960, 1.
[922] Aimé Césaire, letter to the Minister of overseas France, 22 December 1959, 19940180/206, AN.
[923] 'Conseil General, extrait des délibérations', 24 December 1959, 36J9, ADM.
[924] Guy Beck, radio speech reproduced in *La Petite Patrie*, no. 796, 31 December 1959, 1.
[925] RG Report on the Court of Appeal in Martinique, 22 June 1961, 19940180/206, 1-3, AN.
[926] Minister of the Interior, 'Statistique annuelle des manifestations ayant troublé l'ordre public', chemise A, sous-chemise IV, ADM, cited in 'Commission d'information et de recherche historique', 30 October 2016, 30.

In the immediate aftermath, *Décembre 59* became highly politicised, with many arguing it was indicative of the failures of departmentalisation. When the matter was debated in the French Senate, Martinican socialist senator, Paul Symphor, was keen to reassure the Senate that 'there is no separatism' in Martinique.[927] The Martinican Communist Party, on the other hand, called for Martinique's political status to be changed to a federated territory within the French Republic.[928] While the French government introduced certain measures to try to alleviate some of the social and economic issues facing young Martinicans, they also increasingly criminalised nationalist activity in the DOMs. In 1960, as part of changes to the French Constitution, new measures permitted the police to arrest anyone who was perceived to be threatening the 'territorial integrity' of France.[929] A decree in October of that year gave the Prefects of the *départements d'outre-mer* further powers to monitor and deport civil servants.[930]

Décembre 59 was not a nationalist protest but a spontaneous reaction to the poverty and social issues of 1950s Martinique. Nevertheless, it can be seen as a turning point in Martinican national consciousness.[931] The three young men who lost their lives during the unrest have become heroes in the nationalist rhetoric which sees *Décembre 59* as a popular uprising against French colonialism. This is despite the fact that, as the 2016 commission of enquiry noted, it is impossible to ascertain if they were involved in protesting, were curious onlookers, or were just passers-by.[932] The events have become known as *Les Trois Glorieuses* by the Martinican Left, a term which was coined by the Vice-Rector at the time, Alain Plenel.[933] Plenel was one of the first people to fall foul of the new laws aimed at restricting the spread of nationalism. In 1960, Plenel paid homage to the three

[927] *La Petite Patrie*, no. 798, 16-23 January 1960, 2.
[928] 'Pour un nouveau statut de la Martinique', *Justice*, Martinique, 18 February 1960, 1.
[929] 'Ordonnance 60-529 du 4 juin 1960', *JORF,* 8 June 1960, Article 86, 5109.
[930] 'Ordonnance 60-1101 du 15 octobre 1960', *JORF*, 18 October 1960, 9483.
[931] Placide, *Les émeutes de décembre 1959 en Martinique*, 167.
[932] 'Commission d'information et de recherche historique', 30 October 2016, 30.
[933] Louis Adrassé, 'Les Trois Glorieuses de Décembre 1959', *Revolution Socialiste,* no. 661, supplement, 23 December 1989, 36J9, 1, ADM.

victims of *Décembre 59* during the inauguration of a new primary school.[934] As a result, he was exiled from Martinique, later demoted through a presidential decree from de Gaulle, and not fully exonerated by the French state until 1982.[935] In mainland France in the 1960s, Antillean student organisations, influenced by the spirit of *Décembre 59,* increasingly advocated for greater local autonomy. Frantz Fanon was greatly disappointed that a widespread revolution did not take place after the 1959 uprising.[936] Those who took more radical action, such as Édouard Glissant who co-founded the Antillean-Guianese Front for Autonomy (FAGA), often found themselves exiled from their place of birth.[937]

Décembre 59 led directly to the founding of the Anticolonial Martinican Youth Organisation (OJAM) in 1962. This nationalist organisation bridged the gap between students in Paris and workers in Martinique.[938] OJAM spread their manifesto declaring 'Martinique for Martinicans' across the island in 1962 on the anniversary of *Décembre 59*.[939] Within two months, eighteen members of OJAM were arrested for a supposed secret plot against the French government. OJAM members had close ties to Algerian independence activists and emphasised the importance of the Algerian War and other anticolonial movements in shaping their ideas.[940] A huge solidarity campaign sprang up in Martinique, Guadeloupe, Paris and Algeria calling for the imprisoned young men to be released.[941] Letters written by the eight OJAM activists who were held in Fresnes demonstrated their internationalist outlook and emphasised their belief that 'decolonisation is an absolute necessity in the modern world'.[942] They were tried in the Court of State Security and,

[934] Alain Plenel, interview in *France-Antilles,* Martinique, 22 November 2013.
[935] Ibid.
[936] Bertène Juminer, 'Hommages à Frantz Fanon', *Présence Africaine,* no. 40 (1962): 127.
[937] J. Michael Dash, *Edouard Glissant* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995), 13.
[938] Bonilla, *Non-Sovereign Futures*, 27.
[939] *Justice*, Martinique, 43, no. 34, 16 August 1962, 1-3.
[940] 'La Martinique aux Martiniquais: l'affaire de l'OJAM', documentary film by Camille Mauduech, 2012.
[941] 'Tracts du Parti Communiste et Manifeste de l'Union des Femmes Martiniquaises', Fonds Louis Adrassé, 36J33, ADM.
[942] Letters from 'Les 8 Patriotes emprisionnés à Fresnes', 28 October and 2 November 1963, Fonds Louis Adrassé, 36J33, ADM.

though thirteen were acquitted, three of these thirteen had already spent ten months in prison.[943] The other five men were given prison sentences of between one to three years, despite the fact that the court acknowledged there was no evidence of an attempt or plan to carry out an attack.[944] The 'OJAM affair' demonstrates how quickly French authorities were prepared to repress any nationalist movement in the wake of the 1959 riots, especially one which threatened to unite students in Paris and workers in Martinique.

The Martinican nationalist movement failed to gain significant support among the electorate following the OJAM affair. Groups like the Socialist Revolutionary Group (GRS), the National Movement of Martinican Liberation (MNLM), and the Martinican Independentist Movement (MIM) remained marginal and concentrated among intellectual circles. The leader of MIM, Alfred Marie-Jeanne, was elected as a councillor in the local elections of 1973, but nationalist organisations did not achieve significant electoral success and many rejected the French electoral system altogether.[945] Through the 1970s, the increased levels of welfare support from the French state, combined with the continued repression of nationalist and communist activists, made it difficult for pro-independence groups to gain ground. It was not until the 1990s that MIM made more significant gains in the regional council elections.[946] Guadeloupean nationalists encountered similar hurdles in the 1960s and 1970s in their quest for independence.

2. Guadeloupe: GONG and *Mai 67*

As OJAM demonstrates, student organisations in Paris were central to the development of Antillean nationalist movements. Guadeloupean nationalism was closely linked to groups in Martinique, as well as being influenced by exchanges with activists and intellectual movements

[943] Laurent Farrugia, 'Luttes ouvrières et politiques en Guadeloupe de 1946 à 1978', *Historial Antillais,* Tome VI, A 2116, 138-42, ADG.
[944] Ibid.; 'Jugement du Tribunal de Grand Instance', *France Toujours,* 1, no. 2, 15 February 1964, 3-4.
[945] *Le Progressiste,* no. 475, 29 November 1973, 1.
[946] See: Yang-Ting, *Le Mouvement indépendantiste martiniquais*.

from around the world. In Guadeloupe, the development of the first organisation to explicitly call for independence, the National Organisation Group of Guadeloupe (GONG), coincided with the most turbulent and violent period of unrest in the twentieth century, known as *Mai 67*. GONG and *Mai 67* are indicative of the nature of protest and nationalism in Guadeloupe.

Guadeloupean nationalism grew out of the postwar context of Parisian student activism. In 1963, GONG was established in Paris, and, like OJAM, was subject to considerable state repression. GONG's leader, Pierre Sainton, was a doctor whose nationalist beliefs had developed while he was a student in Paris. He was involved in several anticolonial international student organisations in the 1950s.[947] He had been president of the Paris branch of AGEG (General Association of Guadeloupean Students) and was involved in Édouard Glissant's FAGA.[948] Sainton and other Guadeloupean members of the FAGA split from the organisation to form a more radical, solely Guadeloupean nationalist movement. The leaders of GONG were wary of working openly after the imprisonment of the Martinican OJAM activists.[949] There was also a strong global dynamic at work, most notably through GONG's connections to Algeria, Cuba and Vietnam.[950]

Building on these global links, GONG became more active in the Caribbean region in 1966, with members attending the Tricontinental Conference in Havana and successfully pushing through their resolution for the 'right of Guadeloupe to independence'.[951] This resolution was controversial among the Left in Guadeloupe and the Guadeloupean Communist Party declared that the Tricontinental resolution did not correspond to 'the reality of our struggle'.[952] Furthermore, the

[947] Sainton, *Vie et survie d'un fils de la Guadeloupe*, 146–56.
[948] Ibid., 170-84.
[949] Ibid., 194.
[950] Discussed further in chapter two
[951] 'La Resolution sur la Guadeloupe', *GONG Information: Journal du Patriote Guadeloupéen*, no. 14, February 1966, 18.
[952] Le Bureau Politique du PCG, 'A propos de la Conférence Tricontinentale', *L'Etincelle*, 22, no. 886, 26 March 1966, 1.

Prefect of Guadeloupe perceived the enthusiasm generated by the Tricontinental conference, combined with the geographical proximity to Cuba and the growing agitation in Guadeloupe to be a 'direct threat' against Guadeloupe's 'national status'.[953]

Discontent in Guadeloupe intensified in 1967, when the social and economic climate was particularly volatile. Hurricane Ines had devastated the islands the year before, killing thirty-three, causing millions of francs in damage and exacerbating issues of poverty and unemployment.[954] Furthermore, growing numbers of sugar workers had moved to the new urban areas developing around Pointe-à-Pitre, looking for work in the expanding construction sector. With insufficient housing to cope with this demographic change, slum areas developed on the outskirts of the city. In March 1967, two days of major unrest followed a racist incident in Basse-Terre. A white shop owner, Vladimir Srnsky, reportedly set his dog on Raphael Balzinc, a black shoemaker who was disabled, and who had been sitting outside Srnsky's shoe shop.[955] Srnsky was rumoured to have encouraged his dog with the racial slur '*Dis bonjour au nègre'*, sparking demonstrations and clashes between protestors and the police.[956]

This increasing discontent in Guadeloupe was further demonstrated when, on 1 May, at a march in Capesterre, protestors held banners with slogans like 'Guadeloupe for Guadeloupeans', 'Down with colonialism', and '*Vive la révolution guadeloupéenne*'.[957] Several members of GONG participated including Pierre Sainton, who gave a speech at the march. Sainton noted that while nationalist and internationalist slogans proliferated, the most pressing issue of those marching was the dire situation facing young Guadeloupeans.[958] French intelligence services became increasingly

[953] Pierre Bolotte, 'Souvenirs et témoignages d'un préfet de la République (1944-2001)', 513-54, Sciences Po Archives.
[954] Gaston Feuillard, *JORF,* 21 October 1966, 3649.
[955] 'Explosion de colère', *L'Etincelle,* 23, no. 938, 25 March 1967, 1.
[956] Sainton and Gama, *Mé 67*, 79.
[957] Sainton, *Vie et survie d'un fils de la Guadeloupe*, 224–25.
[958] Ibid.

concerned about GONG's activities in Guadeloupe and placed all known members under higher surveillance.[959]

With the authorities already on high alert and racial tensions at breaking point, a peaceful strike in Pointe-à-Pitre triggered several nights of violence. On 26 May 1967, a group of striking construction workers gathered in the city centre outside the Chamber of Commerce awaiting the resolution of a pay dispute. Rumour spread among the crowd that Georges Brizard, one of the construction bosses, had directed a racist comment at the workers. The crowd, of around one to two thousand people, began to get angry, throwing stones and conch shells at the police.[960] The CRS, were given the order to shoot to clear the crowd.[961] Jacques Nestor was the first Guadeloupean to be killed and he appears to have been deliberately targeted.[962] He was a charismatic, pro-independence activist and member of GONG who had been monitored for a while by the French intelligence services. A state of violence and civil unrest ensued, and eyewitnesses described Pointe-à-Pitre as a warzone with looting, shootings and torture.[963]

The repressive response from the state meant that passers-by, not involved in protesting, were also targeted by the police. Solange Yvon Coudrieu, a sports teacher, was out trying to buy a gift for Mother's Day. He was shot without warning by the police with a 'dum-dum' bullet which blew apart his right leg.[964] Jacques Jarvis was on his way home from work when he was shot at by police. He escaped with a bullet wound to his arm by hiding in an unfilled grave.[965] He never spoke of

[959] Report by *commissaire divisionnaire* Honoré Gévaudan, 21 June 1967, Fonds Pierre Bolotte, PB 14, Sciences Po Archives.
[960] 'Commission d'information et de recherche historique', 30 October 2016, 59.
[961] Report by *Commandant* Chéron of the CRS in Guadeloupe, 7 June 1967, 19870157/4, 1-4, AN.
[962] 'Le film des évènements', *L'Etincelle*, 23, no. 948, 3 June 1967, 2; 'Le film des évènements', *L'Etincelle,* 23, 3 June 1967, 2; Jacques Jarvis, in interview with author, 19 April 2017.
[963] Josselyne Coudrieu, in interview with author, 24 April 2017; Guy Jean-Baptiste, eyewitness testimony in Sainton and Gama, *Mé 67*, 118–19.
[964] Solange Yvon Coudrieu, in interview with author, 24 April 2017.
[965] Jacques Jarvis, in interview with author, 19 April 2017.

what had happened to his parents. These accounts suggest that agents of law enforcement were indiscriminate and brutal in their attempts to regain control of the city streets.

Some Guadeloupeans resisted police violence by assisting those wounded or by engaging in clashes with the police. Witnesses described a sense of revolution in Pointe-à-Pitre over the three days. Young people from the run-down outskirts of the city joined the confrontations with the police with naïve enthusiasm and shouts of 'Let's join the revolution', not expecting the extreme response.[966] In an interview, Jarvis recalled, 'we had leaders like Che Guevara, like Castro, Ho Chi Minh, Mao, we read a lot of Mao… and for us… we were in a kind of revolution, but badly prepared'.[967] Indeed, protestors were ill-equipped to mount any significant form of organised rebellion due to the spontaneous nature of the unrest, a scarcity of equipment and weapons, and the lack of leadership. Furthermore, national sentiment was relatively weak in Guadeloupe and when news spread to the countryside, people regarded it as a city affair. This was, perhaps, partly due to rural Guadeloupeans not experiencing the same daily reminder of stark and visible inequality. In the city, an avenue abruptly divided the middle-class neighbourhood from the slums.[968] According to Jean-Pierre Sainton and Raymond Gama, class consciousness was weak among most workers at this time.[969] They characterise *Mai 67* as a spontaneous, urban popular uprising, highlighting the 'sociological rupture' between the city and countryside.[970] This city-country divide prevented unrest developing into an island-wide insurrection, just like *Décembre 59* in Martinique. It seems likely that, despite high levels of discontent in Guadeloupe in 1967, the lack of leadership and the undeveloped nature of the nationalist movement meant that this potential turning point could not be exploited.

[966] Hector Déglas and Paul Tomiche, in interview in 'Mai 67: Au nom de la verité et de la justice', *Études Guadeloupéennes,* 2008, 23.
[967] Jacques Jarvis, in interview with author, 19 April 2017.
[968] Ibid.
[969] Sainton and Gama, *Mé 67*, 237–39.
[970] Ibid.

At the same time, in Pointe-à-Pitre, many citizens were discouraged from participating in the uprising due to fear of police tactics, which included torture. Marcelle Delphine, a nurse at the city hospital, observed police entering the hospital and arresting anyone who looked like they had been injured in the protests.[971] Nurses and doctors managed to hide some protestors to protect them from the police. Ambulance drivers reported that the police were even shooting at medical vehicles.[972] Eyewitnesses also described acts of violence by demonstrators towards the white inhabitants of the city, which was picked up and focused on in many news reports at the time.[973] Evidently, the violent response of law enforcement was a significant deterrent in preventing more Guadeloupeans from taking part in the protests.

The French government manipulated the situation by blaming the escalation of violence on GONG militants.[974] Even before order was restored on 28 May, the authorities rounded up anyone suspected of being a member of GONG in both Guadeloupe and Paris. Ken Kelly, the editor of GONG's journal, was arrested in July 1967, despite living in Paris at the time of the unrest.[975] He and other imprisoned Guadeloupeans went on hunger strike in protest.[976] These arrests, combined with the brutality of May 67, solidified an atmosphere of fear in Guadeloupe, where most Guadeloupeans were afraid even to tell their families that they had been involved in or affected by the clashes with the police.[977] Sainton and Gama have highlighted the traumatic impact of May 67 and its aftermath on the collective consciousness of Guadeloupeans.[978] They argue that this trauma

[971] Marcelle Delphine, eyewitness testimony in Sainton and Gama, *Mé 67*, 101.
[972] Josselyne Coudrieu, in interview with author, 24 April 2017.
[973] 'Les violentes manifestations de PAP témoignent du malaise social à la Guadeloupe', *Le Monde*, 30 May 1967; 'Un appel a la vigilance et au sang-froid de la population', *France-Antilles*, Guadeloupe, 3, no. 223, 1 June 1967, 7.
[974] Report by *commissaire divisionnaire* Honoré Gévaudan, 21 June 1967, Fonds Pierre Bolotte, PB 14, Sciences Po Archives.
[975] Ken Kelly, in interview with author, 25 April 2017.
[976] Ibid.
[977] Jacques Jarvis, in interview with author, 19 April 2017.
[978] Sainton and Gama, *Mé 67*, 21–2.

brought back collective memories, passed down the generations, of the brutal re-enslavement of many Afro-Guadeloupeans in 1802 during the reoccupation of Guadeloupe by Napoleonic France.

The covering-up of the *Mai 67* massacre began immediately, with inconsistencies in official reports, particularly as to when the first shots were fired.[979] French officials announced that eight people had died during the clashes with police.[980] Witnesses and historians have cast doubt on this figure given the level of violence across the three days, the rumours of disappearances, and the fear which stopped families of the dead and missing from reporting it to the authorities. In 1985, the Secretary of State for the overseas departments and territories, Georges Lemoine, suggested that the death toll was eighty-seven, though it is unclear what he based this figure on.[981] Since then, certain commentators, particularly Guadeloupean activists, have suggested the number could be as high as one hundred, or even two hundred. However, the 2016 Stora Report contended that they could not identify any more than the eight deaths listed in official accounts, and that it was impossible to establish for certain how many people died. Furthermore, the report argued that, although it was difficult to establish who was individually responsible, *Mai 67* was 'a massacre during a protest, knowingly ordered on the ground and approved by the government under the presidency of General de Gaulle'.[982]

The state's response to protests and the lack of further unrest was greatly influenced by the close links between events in Guadeloupe and the recent Algerian War. The CRS riot police and the military police were the same as those deployed during the Algerian War. The Prefect of

[979] Note from Prefect to Secretary General of overseas departments, 14 June 1967, Fonds Pierre Bolotte, PB 14, 1-2, Sciences Po Archives.
[980] Report by *commissaire divisionnaire* Honoré Gévaudan, 21 June 1967, Fonds Pierre Bolotte, PB 14, Sciences Po Archives.
[981] 'Commission d'information et de recherche historique', 30 October 2016, 70.
[982] Ibid., 72.

Guadeloupe at the time, Pierre Bolotte, had previously served in the colonial administration in Algeria.[983] Furthermore, the construction boss who sparked the anger among the protestors was an Algerian *pied-noir*.[984] The state response to May 67 reveals French authorities feared GONG could grow in the way the FLN had, and so they responded in a similarly repressive manner.

The protests during May 67 were not organised by GONG nationalists, nor did most Guadeloupeans involved openly advocate independence. The unrest was the product of years of inequality, poverty and frustration over the failures of departmentalisation, combined with recent issues of a severe hurricane and increasing racial tensions following the events in March in Basse-Terre. The rumoured racist comment was enough to turn a peaceful strike into an enraged crowd of protestors.

As with the OJAM affair, following the arrests, the matter became an issue of national security. Nineteen Guadeloupeans were put on trial in 1968 for threatening the territorial integrity of the French Republic.[985] The pro-independence activist Louis Théodore was tried in absentia, as he was in hiding and had evaded arrest. The trial of the nineteen Guadeloupean 'patriots' in 1968 gained much media coverage in France.[986] Student protestors gathered in Paris demanding the fair treatment of the imprisoned activists.[987] This came just a few months before the turbulent civil unrest of May 68 in France. The trial lasted from 19 February to 1 March 1968 and the defendants were all men aged between twenty-eight and forty-six, from a range of professions: teachers, students, lawyers, doctors, journalists, mechanics.[988]

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[983] See Pierre Bolotte, 'La guerre d'Algérie: exposé des faits, notes et correspondance', PB 11, Sciences Po Archives.
[984] Jacques Jarvis, in interview with author, 19 April 2017.
[985] Collectif des patriotes guadeloupéens, *Pour servir l'histoire et la mémoire guadeloupéenne: Mai 1967*, 2nd ed. (Saint Anne, Guadeloupe: COPAGUA, 2008), 5.
[986] E.g.: J. I. Méteye, 'Cour de Sureté de l'État', *Le Figaro,* 20 February 1968; 'Le Procès des Guadeloupéens devant la cour de sureté', *Le Monde,* 25-26 February 1968, 17.
[987] 'Manifestation Anticolonialiste au Quartier Latin', *Le Monde,* 20 February 1968.
[988] Extracts from the trial reproduced in: COGASOD, *Le Procès des Guadeloupéens: 18 patriotes devant la cour de sûreté de l'État français* (Paris: Éditions l'Harmattan, 1969), 15.

The importance of the trial for France's relationship with the Antilles was highlighted by the presence of Martinican intellectual and politician Aimé Césaire. Césaire spoke in favour of the defendants, arguing that 'there is no doubt that the French Antilles are de facto colonies'.[989] Jean-Paul Sartre also testified at the trial in support of the eighteen Guadeloupeans. He argued 'this trial… proves, precisely, that our Guadeloupean friends… do not have the same rights as French people from France and that, consequently, they are not French'.[990] Several witnesses referred to a 'plot' against GONG, maintaining that the French government was trying to undermine GONG's legitimacy and find an excuse to suppress the organisation.[991] While the prosecution offered evidence that members of GONG had distributed pro-independence propaganda material, they were unable to provide any proof linking GONG to the violence in Pointe-à-Pitre the previous year. Ultimately, six men, including GONG's leader Pierre Sainton, were given suspended sentences of three to four years in prison for the 'dangerous threat' they posed to the French Republic, and the other thirteen were acquitted.[992]

The systematic repression by the French government was one of the most significant factors in restricting nationalist activity in Guadeloupe. After the trial, GONG disintegrated as an organisation, with so many key members in prison.[993] May 67 had provided a good excuse for French authorities to clamp down on the nascent nationalist movement in Guadeloupe. The movement was snuffed out before it could gain any traction in the islands, though other nationalist groups did emerge in the 1970s and 1980s.

[989] COGASOD, 293.
[990] Ibid., 351.
[991] Pierre Sainton, statement in COGASOD, *Le Procès des Guadeloupéens*, 121–23.
[992] COGASOD, 449.
[993] Report on 'Les separatistes Antillais du G.O.N.G. et de l'A.G.T.A.G', 1970, Folder 'UEG 1970', 19940180/146, 1-4, AN.

Nevertheless, *Mai 67* has become symbolic in Guadeloupean nationalist rhetoric. Many of the nationalist groups in the 1970s and 1980s had either been directly affected by May 67 or saw it as a key moment in their political awakening. Luc Reinette, who in 1981 founded the Popular Movement for Guadeloupean Independence (MPGI), was a student in Paris at the time of the massacre.[994] He argued that May 67 was the catalyst for the development of his nationalist beliefs, symbolising the Guadeloupean nationalist struggle against repressive French colonialism.[995] During the 1980s, Reinette was accused of involvement in several bombings and was imprisoned in Basse-Terre, Guadeloupe. He famously managed to escape and avoid capture by hiding out in the forest for three years. He was extradited to France after attempting to seek political asylum in St Vincent and was sentenced to thirty years in prison, but was pardoned by François Mitterrand after two years.[996] Guadeloupean independence movements in the 1980s were more violent than their Martinican counterparts, with over sixty bombings in the first half of the decade.[997] Furthermore, they did not achieve the electoral success of Martinican groups like MIM in the 1990s.

Evidently, *Mai 67* cast a long shadow over Guadeloupean nationalism for many decades. It appears likely that the trial and imprisonment of GONG members and other anticolonial activists was a significant deterrent, acting as a warning to others of what would happen if they campaigned for Guadeloupean independence. Given that such instances of extreme colonial violence have, in other colonial settings, generated greater political unity and provided momentum for independence, it is worth considering why that did not occur in Guadeloupe. The 1919 Jallianwala Bagh massacre, for example, is often seen as a turning point in Indian nationalism, uniting

[994] Luc Reinette, in interview with author, 18 April 2017.
[995] Ibid.
[996] Xavier-Marie Bonnot and Francois-Xavier Guillerm, *Le sang des nègres* (Paris: Galaade Editions, 2016), 139.
[997] Bonilla, *Non-Sovereign Futures*, 34.

opponents of British rule and hastening independence.[998] Also, Kim Wagner argues that violence alienated the colonised population and created martyrs for nationalists, ultimately weakening colonial rule.[999] Following *Mai 67*, Jacques Nestor did become a martyr figure for Guadeloupean nationalists and memorials to his death were held for several years after.[1000]

However, while it is true that colonial violence terrorised and alienated Guadeloupeans, it was counterbalanced by the momentum of assimilation, which accelerated in the 1970s. When analysing contemporary conflicts, scholars have several indicators to predict whether levels of violence and state instability will result in a regime change, including the level of grievances, the vulnerability of the state, and the resources available to facilitate mobilisation.[1001] If we apply this logic to Guadeloupe, whilst grievances were clearly significant, the French state ensured it had the military power to protect itself. Furthermore, protestors and nationalists lacked the resources to mount any serious threat to the government. Therefore, in the French Antilles, radical nationalist organisations developed in the 1960s but were subject to considerable state repression and failed to gain political traction. Major popular uprisings did occur, but they were concentrated in the urban centres, motives were mixed, and the state response prevented them from evolving into island-wide rebellions.

3. The British Virgin Islands: The 1949 Freedom March and the Positive Action Movement

The forms of clandestine, left-wing independence organisations which developed in the French Antilles in the 1960s did not emerge in the British Virgin Islands. Instead, as Maurer has

[998] Nigel Collett, *The Butcher of Amritsar: General Reginald Dyer* (London: Hambledon Continuum, 2005), ix-xi.
[999] Kim A. Wagner, '"Calculated to Strike Terror": The Amritsar Massacre and the Spectacle of Colonial Violence', *Past & Present* 233, no. 1 (1 November 2016): 224.
[1000] 'Le 6me Anniversaire de la mort de J. Nestor', *Chaltouné*, May 1973, 1-2.
[1001] Kevin Neil Buterbaugh, Costel Calin, and Theresa Marchant-Shapiro, 'Predicting Revolt: Fragility Indexes and the Level of Violence and Instability in the Arab Spring', *Terrorism and Political Violence* 29, no. 3 (4 May 2017): 483–89.

highlighted, calls for self-determination and national identity were closely linked to changes in the law and legislature.[1002] Furthermore, land issues were central to notions of BVI autonomy. Thus, the two major instances of protest between 1945 and 1980 demonstrate BVIslanders' wish to assert self-determination over their land and their legal system.

The first major protest in the twentieth century occurred in 1949, following increased pressure on the Commissioner about the lack of political representation for BVIslanders. The Road Town elite were the first to voice their dissatisfaction, assembling petitions to mobilise the labourers and farmers in Tortola and the fisherman from the other main islands.[1003] As no newspaper yet existed in the BVI, and since so many BVIslanders worked in St Thomas, Tortolian community leaders used the Virgin Islands Daily News in the USVI to circulate details of the political situation in the BVI. One 1949 article described the 'rumbling sound…coming out of the British Virgin Islands which may soon attract the attention of No.10 Downing Street'.[1004] It attributed the unrest in the BVI to the US influence, claiming 'having tasted freedom and the pursuit of happiness served the American way, the younger inhabitants of Tortola are clamoring for a liberal form of government which gives them voice in their own affairs'.[1005] Yet the political awakening in the BVI also came more generally as a result of the military factory experience during the war. Harrigan and Varlack argue that many went from subsistence farming in Tortola to work in the munitions factory in St Thomas, leading to a newfound sense of political consciousness and BVIslander identity.[1006]

Britain did not capitulate to calls for a legislative assembly until Theodolph Faulkner, a fisherman from Anegada, inspired and led a large political protest march through Road Town, Tortola. Faulkner had come to Road Town with his pregnant wife and was angry at the lack of medical

[1002] Maurer, *Recharting the Caribbean*, 228.
[1003] Penn, *Memoirs of H. R. Penn*, 21–5.
[1004] *The Virgin Islands Daily News*, St Thomas, USVI, October 1949.
[1005] Ibid.
[1006] Harrigan and Varlack, *The Virgin Islands Story*, 153–8.

help and general state of neglect in Anegada.[1007] He began giving nightly talks in the old market square about the lack of a legislative assembly. Faulkner had previously worked at a refinery in Curaçao and had witnessed workers organising and protesting for better working conditions.[1008] Local elites capitalised on this 'psychological moment' by spreading the word to people in other islands to come to Road Town to protest.[1009]

On 24 November 1949, 1500 people marched through Road Town with a manifesto for the Commissioner. Significantly, the protest manifesto that the BVIslanders put together emphasised their rights to an elected assembly as 'British subjects and Citizens of the British Empire'.[1010] It was an emotive and patriotic manifesto which constructed an image of BVI identity as rooted in Christian values. Furthermore, they likened their suffering under the current colonial government to the era of slavery, describing themselves as 'we, the politically enslaved people of these British Virgin Islands'.[1011] The British responded swiftly to the protest. Although the Colonial Office ignored calls for Commissioner Cruikshank to step down, they agreed to the proposal for a legislative assembly.[1012] The manifesto was remarkably conservative in its language and demands and this approach would become characteristic of future negotiations over the political status of the BVI. Maurer has described this as a 'nationalist popular uprising', though it is important to note that BVIslanders were not calling for independence.[1013] The march has become recognised as the turning point in BVIslander political and national consciousness, and is known as the 'Freedom

[1007] Vernon Pickering, 'The Old and the Unexplored – a fresh look at B.V.I. History', *Twenty-Five Years of Ministerial Government* ed. Rita Frett-Georges, Government of the British Virgin Islands (November 1992), 33.
[1008] Ralph T O'Neal, 'Seeds of Discontent', *Empowerment Through Representation* (2000), 242, VINA.
[1009] Isaac Fonseca in interview with Bill Maurer, reproduced in Maurer, *Recharting the Caribbean*, 63.
[1010] Petition reproduced in Harrigan and Varlack, *The Virgin Islands Story*, 158–9.
[1011] Ibid.
[1012] Telegram from Secretary of State to Governor of Leeward Islands, 24 December 1949, CO 152/536/8, TNA.
[1013] Maurer, *Recharting the Caribbean*, 62.

March'.[1014] Contemporary politicians have even suggested making it a national holiday called 'Liberation Day'.[1015]

As discussed in the previous two chapters, BVI society generally discouraged protest and this was reflected in the rhetoric of politicians and newspaper articles. It was not until the late 1960s that BVIslanders once again took to the streets. The 1960s were a decade of significant economic and social change, with Laurance Rockefeller beginning work on the BVI's first major tourist resort in Virgin Gorda in 1961.[1016] This brought new visitors and workers from other Caribbean islands, North America and Europe. As other economic opportunities encouraged more new arrivals, the structure of BVI society began to change rapidly from the relatively classless group of black farmers and fishermen to a roughly three-tiered society: white migrants tended to have more economic opportunities and power; BVIslanders occupied the middle ground; and black Caribbean workers from other islands carried out most of the manual labour.[1017] Like the nearby US Virgin Islands, these changes brought increased xenophobia toward both groups of new arrivals.[1018] Furthermore, BVIslanders began returning home, either temporarily or permanently, from working abroad in the US and Europe, bringing with them ideas and experiences about migration, racial inequality and anticolonial conflicts.

This atmosphere of increased racial tension and fear over the pace of change provided the backdrop for the British Administrator's contentious decision to sign the Batehill agreement. The Administrator, Martin Staveley, agreed a 199-year lease of Wickham's Cay, a central part of the

[1014] Cyril B Romney, 'Evolution of the Ministerial System: The Quest for Greater Autonomy', *Twenty-Five Years of Ministerial Government,* 37.
[1015] Kendrick D. Pickering, 'Message in Commemoration', *Empowerment Through Representation,* 28.
[1016] British Virgin Islands Intelligence Report, April 1969, FCO 44/336, TNA.
[1017] Bowen, 'Development, Immigration and Politics in a Pre-Industrial Society: A Study of Social Change in the British Virgin Islands in the 1960s', 79.
[1018] See Derick Hendricks, 'Youth Responses to Discriminatory Practices: The Free Beach Movement, 1970–1975', in *Black Power in the Caribbean*, ed. Kate Quinn (Florida: University Press of Florida, 2015), 222.

capital, and more than four-fifths of the island of Anegada.[1019] The lease was sold to the chairman of Oldham Athletic football club, Ken Bates, and his company Batehill Ltd.[1020] The terms of the agreement would have prevented most BVIslanders from having access to these important areas, most noticeably in Anegada where land had traditionally been shared for farming and fishing.[1021] Ken Bates was a particularly divisive choice of developer. During his time as chairman for Oldham Athletic, he had defied international sanctions, taking his team on a tour of Rhodesia and meeting Ian Smith.[1022] The tour was highly controversial and even sparked a parliamentary debate in which the Minster of State for the Commonwealth, George Thomas, deplored the decision.[1023] Commonwealth Office correspondence reveals that the Cultural Relations Department went to great lengths in an attempt to persuade Bates not to go through with the tour, even considering confiscating the entire team's passports.[1024] The Rhodesian connection led some BVIslanders to describe Bates as 'a modern-day Cecil Rhodes'.[1025]

BVIslander Noel Lloyd was the pivotal figure who would mobilise opposition to the Batehill agreement. Lloyd was one of the most vocal of the recent returnees to the islands and commanded a great deal of respect among Tortolian society. Born in 1936, he grew up in Tortola in a house built of 'guinea grass and coconut branches', like most houses at the time.[1026] Lloyd had spent the 1960s working as an engineer in the US and in the RAF in Britain.[1027] Frustrated by racism in both the UK and US, Lloyd returned to the BVI in 1964 full of enthusiasm about how to develop the islands. However, his attempts to set up a free technical school and to establish a 'nationalist'

[1019] 'Summary of the Report of Commission of Enquiry into the Anegada and Wickham's Cay Agreements', FCO 44/454, TNA.
[1020] More recently, Ken Bates owned Chelsea and Leeds United football clubs.
[1021] Noel Lloyd, *The Positive Action Movement 1968*, (Tortola: Government of the Virgin Islands, 2000), 23.
[1022] 'Despite sanctions, Oldham playing in Rhodesia', *South African Footballer,* 16 June 1967, FCO 13/329, TNA.
[1023] George Thomas, *House of Commons Hansard,* 23 June 1967, vol 748, c360w.
[1024] JRA Bottomley to M James, 23 May 1967, FCO 13/329, TNA.
[1025] Noel Lloyd in *Noel Lloyd: A Patriotic Man,* directed by Andrea Wilson and Amanda Wilson, Tortola: JTV, 2010.
[1026] Lloyd, *The Positive Action Movement*, 1.
[1027] Lloyd, *The Positive Action Movement,* 15.

political party both struggled to get off the ground.[1028] Noel Lloyd was the obvious person to approach when surveyor Walter 'Lindy' deCastro became concerned about the Batehill agreement. When deCastro informed Lloyd about the agreement, Lloyd took to the local radio and newspaper to spread the word to other Virgin Islanders.[1029]

The turning point in generating opposition to the Batehill agreement came when Martin Luther King was assassinated on 4 April 1968. This greatly affected Noel Lloyd and prompted him to take more direct action against injustices in the BVI. He began a one-man march around Road Town, drumming up support for a renegotiation of the Batehill agreement and likening the issue to racial inequality in the US.[1030] He formed the Positive Action Movement with Walter deCastro, Patsy Pickering and other politically active BVIslanders. On 8 April, Lloyd led a second march around Road Town, gathering a crowd at the Recreation Ground.[1031] While the Administrator claimed only 150 took part in this non-violent protest, the local newspaper reported a crowd of 3000.[1032] In his speech, Lloyd compared their situation to the oppression of African-Americans, as well as referring to Rhodesia and the hanging of six black men who had 'rebelled against white domination'.[1033] The next day, the Positive Action Movement and its supporters marched to Government Hill, carrying placards reading 'down with foreign controlled government', and 'King shall not die in vain'.[1034] At least ten marches took place over the following weeks, calling for the Batehill agreement to be reconsidered.

[1028] Noel Lloyd, 'Political Party', *The Island Sun,* no. 182, 5 February 1966, 2-8.
[1029] *Noel Lloyd: A Patriotic Man*.
[1030] Lloyd, *The Positive Action Movement,* 25-6.
[1031] Rita Frett-Georges, 'Editorial', *Twenty-Five Years of Ministerial Government,* 7.
[1032] Administrator to Commonwealth Office, 10 April 1968, FCO 44/106, 2, TNA; 'Mass Meeting Protests "Foreign Exploitation"', *The Island Sun*, 13 April 1968, 1.
[1033] Lloyd, *The Positive Action Movement,* 26.
[1034] Ibid., 27.

However, Lloyd did not feel their grievances were being taken seriously. To get the attention of the British government, he decided to take over the local police station 'in the name of the Queen'.[1035] This echoed the combination of conservatism and radicalism apparent in the 1949 march, as well as appeals to the monarchy made in Caymanian protests. On 13 April, in the early hours of the morning, along with four other Positive Action members, Lloyd broke into the police station and arrested the six sleeping officers inside. He set off the station hurricane siren and locked the officers in the barracks. The siren woke the residents of Road Town and caused considerable embarrassment to the police force.[1036] Lloyd was subsequently arrested, which sparked a wave of arson and other protests in solidarity.[1037] Both the Administrator and the Foreign Office were extremely concerned about the incident and its implications for British maintenance of law and order in the territory.[1038]

It was at this time that rumours began to spread about Lloyd's mental health. It is unclear whether this was generated by the police and colonial officials to discredit him or by his supporters to get him out of prison and to a hospital. In his memoirs, Lloyd argued that he had been poisoned while in prison.[1039] He complained of a copper taste in his mouth and a pain around his liver. Later that year he was diagnosed with liver disease, which could explain the copper taste and his strange behaviour.[1040] Patsy Pickering argued that he received several beatings, some to the head.[1041] Whether or not Lloyd did suffer from mental health issues, rumours about his mental state plagued him for the rest of his life and were used to discredit his political views. Lloyd managed to escape from prison by jumping over the wall and his supporters successfully lobbied for him to be taken

[1035] Noel Lloyd in *Noel Lloyd: A Patriotic Man*.
[1036] Bowen, 'Development, Immigration and Politics in a Pre-Industrial Society', 82.
[1037] 'Attempt To Take Over Police Station in R.T.', *The Island Sun*, no. 292, 20 April 1968, 1.
[1038] Telegram from Administrator to Commonwealth Office, 13 April 1968, FCO 44/106, TNA.
[1039] Lloyd, *The Positive Action Movement,* 40-1.
[1040] Ibid., 50.
[1041] Patsy Pickering (now Patsy Lake) in 'Noel Lloyd: A Patriotic Man', documentary film.

to a hospital in Jamaica.[1042] While Lloyd was out of the territory, the Positive Action Movement continued its campaign in his absence.

The British government became increasingly concerned about the situation and agreed to calls for an enquiry into the Batehill agreement.[1043] Though the commission of enquiry did not conclusively endorse one side or the other, the British government eventually agreed to loan the BVI $5.8 million dollars to buy back the land leased to the Batehill company.[1044] Despite the success of the Positive Action campaign, the incident had a severe impact on Noel Lloyd's life. He continued to be monitored by the police and was seen as a troublemaker, making it difficult for him to obtain bank loans and other financial assistance for his businesses. His attempts to run in local elections were hampered by old rumours of mental instability. The role of Noel Lloyd was underestimated and unacknowledged for many decades until in 2008, shortly before his death, he received the BVI Badge of Honour from the Chief Minister, and the following year a park in the capital was renamed 'The Noel Lloyd Positive Action Movement Park'.[1045]

The Positive Action Movement managed to provoke drastic action from the British government. The Virgin Islands had been viewed as a quiet, trouble free territory, and were mostly neglected for the first half of the twentieth century. As a result, the police force in the islands was of a 'token nature', with only twenty-one police officers permanently in the territory for a population of around 10 000.[1046] Two key incidents prompted the British government to intervene in the Batehill agreement: the situation in nearby Anguilla; and Lloyd's invasion of the police station. During the Anguilla crisis from 1967 to 1969, Anguillans ejected the St Kitts police force and later kicked out the British representative sent to negotiate their political status. This sparked a significant

[1042] BVI Internal Security Report, May 1968, FCO 44/109, TNA.
[1043] Statement by Chief Minister of BVI, 7 August 1969, FCO 44/339, TNA.
[1044] 'Summary of the Report of Commission of Enquiry', FCO 44/454, TNA.
[1045] Noel Lloyd in *Noel Lloyd: A Patriotic Man*.
[1046] Report on Police Force, 25 June 1968, FCO 44/109, TNA.

overreaction by the British, who invaded Anguilla and were the object of much international condemnation and ridicule for the unnecessary offensive, dubbed the 'Bay of Piglets'.[1047] Britain was particularly concerned about the increase in anti-British rhetoric in the BVI following their invasion of Anguilla.[1048] The Administrator described Walter deCastro's response to the Anguilla situation as amounting to a 'hate campaign against Britain'.[1049]

The Tortola police station invasion highlighted the vulnerability of British control in the BVI. Like their interpretation of Anguilla, British officials misunderstood local sentiment, assuming protests could quickly escalate into a violent anti-British rebellion. Reinforcements of troops and weapons were requested, along with anti-riot gear and training for the existing police force.[1050] The exaggeration of the threat is apparent in the intelligence report assessment of the 'Tamarind Tree Boys'. Noel Lloyd's memoir suggests they were a group of young men, mostly construction workers, who used to spend time under a tree outside a church.[1051] Lloyd knew them well, as they would often help out in the community in times of crisis, and he encouraged them to join the Positive Action marches. However, intelligence reports described them as the 'strong-arm group' of the Positive Action Movement and suggested they could generate violent unrest.[1052] The British government monitored Walter deCastro and reported on all his radio and newspaper contributions, as well as any public speeches he made.[1053] DeCastro was also harassed by police and arrested in 1971 over a minor dispute about building permits.[1054] DeCastro claimed the arrest was due to his outspoken opinions of the government.[1055]

[1047] 'World: Britain's Bay of Piglets', *Time*, 28 March 1969.
[1048] Intelligence Report, March 1969, FCO 44/336, 1-2, TNA.
[1049] Administrator to FCO, 19 March 1969, FCO 44/330, TNA.
[1050] Administrator to Secretary of State, 12 February 1969, FCO 44/335, TNA.
[1051] Lloyd, *The Positive Action Movement,* 25.
[1052] Intelligence Report, June 1969, FCO 44/336, 1, TNA.
[1053] Ibid.
[1054] 'Warrant Issued by Magistrate', *The Island Sun,* 30 January 1971.
[1055] Ibid.

Furthermore, British intelligence reports obscured and underestimated the role of women in the Batehill affair, omitting women from lists of the Positive Action leadership. These omissions, alongside the Administrator failing to invite the female leaders to meetings, contributed to the normalisation of a lack of female voices at the negotiating table. In a territory where women were, on average, better educated than men, women were active in community groups and church organisations but rarely gained leadership positions. BVI historian Eugenia O'Neal sees 1968 as a turning point in women's involvement in political change.[1056] Patsy Pickering was Lloyd's deputy and held many of the Positive Action meetings at her salon in Road Town. She was described by Torquil Norman, one of the British investors in the Batehill company, as 'glamourous', 'communist' and a 'troublemaker'.[1057] Luelda Harrigan was part of the Positive Action executive committee and her enthusiasm during the marches and shouts of 'we got to take back our country from Kenneth Bates' inspired many women to join the protest.[1058] The British government contributed to a phenomenon during this era of decolonisation in the Caribbean in which women's voices were often silent or absent from political decisions.[1059]

In terms of nationalism, while key members of the Positive Action Movement did advocate independence, the organisation was not explicitly nationalist. Noel Lloyd believed in fighting for BVI independence and created a 'rebel flag' for the Positive Action Movement which he hoped would one day be used if independence was achieved.[1060] He carried this independence flag out at the front of the 9 April march through Road Town.[1061] Lloyd saw opposing the Batehill agreement as a first step towards full internal self-government and eventual independence. Nonetheless, he

[1056] O'Neal, *From the Field to the Legislature*, 76–77.
[1057] Norman, *Kick the Tyres,* 50.
[1058] George Malone in *Noel Lloyd: A Patriotic Man*; Lloyd, *The Positive Action Movement.*
[1059] See Alexander, 'Not Just (Any) Body Can Be a Citizen'; Macpherson, *From Colony to Nation*, 241–76; Denise Noble, *Decolonizing and Feminizing Freedom: A Caribbean Genealogy* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017), 1–13.
[1060] Lloyd, *The Positive Action Movement,* 28.
[1061] Administrator to Commonwealth Office, 10 April 1968, FCO 44/106, 3, TNA.

declared his support for the Queen and seems to have believed that the British government in London would act fairly and impartially if they could be persuaded to intervene.[1062] Independence was not a popular option in the BVI at the time, and the Positive Action Movement drew people from all sectors of society, including more conservative islanders.

The 1949 Freedom March and the Positive Action Movement of the 1960s demonstrate that there was not a lack of nationalism and protest in the BVI. However, it did not manifest in pro-independence political organisations. Instead, BVI national identity and assertions of self-determination were closely tied to the Legislature. Control over law making was seen as an expression of BVI autonomy which is why the 1949 March to reinstate the Legislative Assembly was so significant. Since abolition, land ownership was a crucial part of BVIslander identity and thus the issues of foreign ownership of land in the 1960s sparked significant unrest. BVIslanders promoted the importance of self-determination but it was directed towards maintaining control of land, rather than campaigning for independence. Similar conflicts over land development were prominent in the Cayman Islands in the 1960s and 1970s.

4. The Cayman Islands: Land Disputes and Political Turmoil

The Cayman Islands were noticeably more conservative politically and socially, compared to the other territories, and this is reflected in the absence of any independence organisations and the muted nature of protest in the postwar years. Yet Caymanians did take to the streets to protest when they were dissatisfied with local government. Rather than directing their discontent at British rule or in an attempt to push for independence, protests were aimed at local representatives: the Administrator or members of the Legislative Assembly (MLAs). Like the British Virgin Islands, in the 1960s Caymanians were concerned about the increasing number of foreign workers and about

[1062] Lloyd, *The Positive Action Movement,* 31.

land development. These issues sparked a period of unrest at the end of the 1960s which persisted into the 1970s.

Like in the BVI, the 1960s prompted considerable social and political change. The previous chapter explored the heated debates about autonomy and the failure of party politics in the early to mid 1960s. The Caymanian political scene diversified somewhat in the aftermath of these events. As Hannerz has highlighted, in the late 1960s many of the prominent merchant political figures were retiring and this offered an opportunity to businessmen from the lower ranks of the merchant elite who were less free to ignore popular concerns.[1063] Through their business interests, these men were often dependent on foreign capital, but would still exercise pressure to curtail foreign control of the Caymanian economy. A further factor contributing to the changes in the 1960s was the increased level of immigration. Because of the particularities of Cayman society and constructions of race, the response to this immigration was different compared to the BVI. Caymanians responded negatively to both groups of new arrivals: wealthy white migrants and less wealthy black workers from other Caribbean islands. However, the majority of the anti-immigration rhetoric was directed towards black migrants, particularly Jamaicans, partly due to the power of the white merchant elite over societal debates.[1064]

The 1968 election in George Town was the catalyst for the period of unrest and protest. The election had to be rescheduled due to protests about incomplete electoral rolls.[1065] The electoral roll issue prevented many George Town residents from voting and appeared to predominantly affect black Caymanians from inland neighbourhoods of the capital.[1066] This led to suspicions that

[1063] Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, 112.
[1064] For Cayman's changing relationship with Jamaica in this period see: Williams, *Defining the Caymanian Identity*, 107–28.
[1065] *The Caymanian Weekly*, 4, no. 46, 14 November 1968, 1.
[1066] Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, 119.

it was a deliberate attempt to reduce the votes for Ira Walton.[1067] Walton was a black taxi driver from Cayman Brac who was one of the few MLAs not in the merchant elite, and he had campaigned against foreign influence in the Cayman Islands.[1068] A demonstration was organised and protesters marched to the town hall where voting was taking place. As a result, the vote was postponed in order to quell the unrest. The matter had to be passed to the FCO and an order in council from the Queen facilitated a second election.[1069] The incident highlighted that George Town MLAs and residents were prepared to voice their grievances with the Administration through public protest, a method usually frowned upon in Caymanian society. Furthermore, discrimination towards black Caymanians, previously ignored in the political arena due to the domination of the white merchant oligarchy, was now being raised as an issue in the wake of the slight diversification of MLAs.

The Administrator responded to the growing unrest by resorting to the traditional rhetoric of loyalty to the Queen and Britain, reiterated by officials and merchants throughout the twentieth century whenever there was any suggestion of a challenge to the status quo. He reminded the Legislative Assembly that they had 'a collective responsibility to Her Majesty the Queen and to all Caymanians'.[1070] He also claimed that 'local interests must be subordinate to national interests'.[1071] This language of respectability was echoed in *The Caymanian* which encouraged voters to maintain a 'peaceful and orderly manner'.[1072] The number and attitude of people from Britain gaining government jobs complicated and challenged this notion of Britishness. Previously, Caymanians, especially influential islanders, had identified as a kind of 'settler extension' of Britishness.[1073] Yet

[1067] Ira Walton in interview conducted by Mary Ebanks, 17 July 1991, 4, CINA.
[1068] 'Election Roundup', *The Northwester*, 2, November 1972, 29-36.
[1069] *The Caymanian Weekly*, 4, no. 52, 24 December 1968, 1.
[1070] A.C.E. Long, President's Address to the Legislative Assembly, 12th February 1969, Legislative Assembly Storeroom, Box 26, 1, CINA.
[1071] Ibid. 2.
[1072] *The Caymanian Weekly*, 5, no. 2, 9 January 1969.
[1073] Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, 115.

British civil servants tended to distinguish between Brits and 'native' Caymanians, increasing tensions between Caymanians and the administration.[1074] The number of non-Caymanians employed in government positions became a key point of contention. At the end of 1969, three members of the Legislative Assembly held a boycott to demonstrate against this issue. Annie Bodden, one of the demonstrators, argued that they had the worst administration she could remember, illustrating how dissatisfaction was always directed at local officials, rarely at the British government in London or British rule in principle.[1075]

This increasing discontent about immigration and the introduction of foreign goods manifested in a 1969 protest over the importation of prefabricated buildings. Demonstrators gathered on the waterfront to prevent a boat carrying the buildings in question from landing.[1076] The police were called to try to resolve the dispute but, in the end, the landing had to be aborted. In his speech on the matter to the Legislative Assembly, the Administrator argued that it was unusual for peace to be disturbed and he threatened that it could damage Cayman's reputation and tourism. He warned 'I do not think anyone here would like to see this become a habit in these Islands'.[1077] This mirrored an earlier speech in which he had emphasised Cayman's 'reputation as a stable and attractive tax haven for overseas investors' and argued that 'it is in our interests to provide the right atmosphere for their continued growth and increase'.[1078] Pressure about maintaining Cayman's recent economic prosperity through respectable behaviour and stability successfully discouraged any protests in this era from becoming violent or more disruptive. The prefabricated buildings became symbolic of foreign encroachment in Cayman and, while the Legislative Assembly eventually agreed that some would be allowed to land, others were sent back.

[1074] Ibid.
[1075] *The Caymanian Weekly*, 18 December 1969.
[1076] Minutes of Legislative Assembly Meeting, 3rd November 1969, Legislative Assembly Storeroom, Box 38, 5-11, CINA.
[1077] Ibid., 5-8.
[1078] Minutes of Legislative Assembly Meeting, 20-21 February 1969, Legislative Assembly Storeroom, Box 38, 6-8, CINA.

The most significant protest in recent Caymanian history occurred in April 1970 and, like the British Virgin Islands, it was over the issue of land development. On 20 April, over 500 people marched through the capital demanding the repealing of the recent Land Development Law.[1079] More people entered the protest as spectators joined the crowds. Several MLAs were involved, including Ira Walton and Annie Bodden.[1080] Protestors became known as the 'Land Boys', which obscures the role of women like Annie Bodden who were prominent orchestrators of the march. The demonstrators presented a petition to the Administrator which called for a new election, as well as the reconsidering of several recent laws. The petition was by no means radical, assuring the Administrator that protestors were 'not trying in any manner to usurp power or to govern ourselves'.[1081] The marchers also presented a letter addressed to the Queen in which they demanded a new Administrator. They declared their pride in their 'English heritage' and spoke as 'loyal citizens of your empire'.[1082]

Though demonstrators were generally united in their opposition to the new Land Development Law, their motives for protesting were varied. Placards highlighted a wide range of grievances, including: 'Caymanians united - repeal all unjust laws now'; 'stop communism'; 'We want to live in the future as we have done in the past'; 'Say no to the regulation'; 'We have lost faith in our representatives'; and 'No more foreign police - this is not the Congo'.[1083] The administration and local government were particularly concerned by what appeared to be black power symbols employed by certain marchers. A group of young men carried armbands with a black 'P', leading some to call them 'black power troublemakers'.[1084] Bodden argues that these young men were

[1079] *The Caymanian Weekly,* 23 April 1970.
[1080] Ira Walton in interview, 17 July 1991, 2-4, CINA.
[1081] *The Caymanian Weekly,* 23 April 1970.
[1082] Ibid.
[1083] Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, 131.
[1084] Vassel Johnson, *As I See It: How Cayman Became a Leading Financial Centre* (Lewes, Sussex: Book Guild, 2001), 159.

influenced by the Black Power movement elsewhere in the Caribbean and US but, within the Cayman context, Black Power meant a sense of black consciousness and a focus on issues of police harassment.[1085] It was a non-violent protest which sought greater equality, not the overthrow of government, as some suggested or feared. Bodden sees this as a key moment in the development of a black consciousness movement in Cayman, which failed to take off and develop into a larger political movement. This was partly down to the suspicion and fear in Caymanian society of anything radical or connected with Jamaican politics, as well as measures taken by the government to monitor and deport suspected Black Power advocates.[1086]

An emergency meeting of the Legislative Assembly was called in response to the land protest march. It was unusual in many ways, as the windows of the meeting room were boarded up, armed police flanked the Administrator, and a British warship lay on standby in Cayman waters.[1087] Like the response to the Positive Action protest in the BVI, the British misinterpreted a peaceful protest against local officials and land development for a possible campaign to overthrow the government, and resorted to reinforcements and additional weaponry. This British display of force was ridiculed by several MLAs and the Administrator was forced to reduce the security measures. He instructed the police to remove their arms and members of the public helped to take the boards off the windows.[1088] Through Legislative Assembly resolutions, certain regulations were repealed but the interim Land Development Law remained.[1089] It was seen as a success by those who fought against it but in reality, the laws were introduced with very little adjustment.

[1085] Bodden, *Patronage, Personalities and Parties*, 165–66.
[1086] Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, 148–49.
[1087] Minutes of Legislative Assembly Meeting, 1 May 1970, Legislative Assembly Storeroom, Box 39, 1-5, CINA.
[1088] Ibid., 5.
[1089] Colonial Office Report on the Cayman Islands, 1966-1970, 4, CINA.

It is difficult to characterise the protest as a whole as 'anticolonial', particularly given the wide range of motives of the demonstrators. Certainly, some objected to the number of people from Britain gaining employment in the government over Caymanian candidates. Bodden has suggested that this was the first instance of 'anti-English' sentiment expressed publicly by ordinary Caymanians.[1090] However, most of this 'anti-English' anger was directed at the Administrator, and the protestors' petition was decidedly pro-British in celebrating 'the heritage of English justice handed down to us by our forefathers'. Therefore, the protest was fragmentary and divided in nature, reducing its potential for wider impact. The period of unrest in the Cayman Islands, culminating in the 1970 demonstration march, shows that Caymanians engaged in issues of self-determination and autonomy, and protested when they perceived these rights to be threatened. Nonetheless, Caymanian society and politics was noticeably more conservative in nature and no political organisation or protest group advocated independence in this period.

5. Race and Internationalism in Protest Movements

The comparative analysis above, in addition to unearthing these islands' experiences of protest in the age of decolonisation, also allows us to identify two shared themes: race and internationalism. Racial tensions were a significant factor in most of the protests of the postwar era in these Caribbean territories. Rumours of a racist incident sparked the unrest of both *Décembre 59* in Martinique and *Mai 67* in Guadeloupe. Moreover, racial discrimination and the changing dynamics of BVI society were central to the Positive Action protest. Due to the monopoly of the merchant elite in the Cayman Islands, Caymanian society was presented as a racial utopia and rampant discrimination and racial inequality were not openly discussed. However, Cayman was not immune to the Black Power ideas sweeping through the Caribbean in the late 1960s and, though it was strictly monitored and repressed, a nascent black consciousness movement did develop.

[1090] Bodden, *Patronage, Personalities and Parties*, 168.

Rather than being isolated from global trends of self-determination and social protest, these territories were heavily influenced by and connected to international movements and ideas. The Positive Action Movement demonstrates the impact and influence of the US civil rights movement in the Caribbean. The assassination of Martin Luther King directly prompted Noel Lloyd's one-man march and inspired other BVIslanders to join him. The Positive Action Movement adopted tactics of non-violent civil disobedience, similar to those used by civil rights activists. The church influence and respectability which King represented would have appealed to the traditional BVI society of the 1960s. Though Lloyd did not specify the inspiration for the term 'Positive Action', he could have been influenced by King's *Strive Towards Freedom* in which King called for 'vigorous and positive action'.[1091] Without doubt, perceptions of race and the changing dynamics of BVI society were central to the Positive Action protest. Concerns that black BVIslanders were being excluded from the economic developments prompted many in a generally conservative society to take to the street. Patsy Pickering argued 'what alarmed us most was when [Bates] said that the only black people...that will be allowed on Wickham's Cay will be those who are maids'.[1092] Verne Maduro, another Positive Action member asserted that 'it was almost getting close to apartheid system'.[1093] This division, as more wealthy, white migrants and tourists arrived, often bringing with them colonial attitudes about race, heightened the sense of black consciousness among BVIslanders.

1968 saw the emergence of a Caribbean Black Power movement in Jamaica but it would be wrong to characterise BVI Positive Action as 'Black Power' in nature. As Joseph has highlighted, the traditional separation in scholarship between the civil rights era in the US (1954-1965) and the decade of Black Power (1966-1975), obscures the considerable overlap between the two

[1091] Martin Luther King, *Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story* (New York: Harper, 1958), 182–221.
[1092] Patsy Pickering in *Noel Lloyd: A Patriotic Man*.
[1093] Verne Maduro in *Noel Lloyd: A Patriotic Man*.

movements, and the same is true of the Caribbean.[1094] At no point did the Positive Action leaders refer to 'Black Power', and the movement as a whole sought to use peaceful methods to resolve the land development dispute. Furthermore, British intelligence reports confirm that no BVIslanders attended the 1969 Black Power conference in Bermuda.[1095] Nonetheless, both Lloyd and deCastro advocated more radical, violent action rooted in black consciousness and pride, which more closely resembles other Caribbean Black Power organisations. In one of his first speeches as leader of the Positive Action Movement, Lloyd argued that if the Batehill agreement was not overturned, they would take 'violent Positive Action'.[1096] DeCastro later changed his name to Ras Uhuru, emulating many Black Power activists who adopted Rastafarian or African-inspired names. The BVI was evidently not isolated from the development and spread of civil rights and Black Power movements across the Caribbean region. Likewise, in the Cayman Islands, international movements like Black Power did have an impact, but the conservative nature of Caymanian society prevented global protest ideologies from gaining ground.

Nationalists in the French Antilles, particularly those who had worked or studied in Paris, were greatly affected by black internationalist ideas. The 1959 riots in Martinique sparked an international solidarity campaign which spread to Guadeloupe, Paris and even Venezuela.[1097] Protestors and striking workers in the French Antilles throughout this period demonstrated an internationalist outlook, referencing Vietnam, Algeria and other decolonisation struggles in their slogans and speeches.[1098] Reporting on protests in 1968, the Antillean student journal *Alizés* did not focus solely on France's 'May 68'. *Alizés* engaged with global issues like the assassination of

[1094] Peniel E. Joseph, 'Rethinking the Black Power Era', *The Journal of Southern History* 75, no. 3 (2009): 707–11.
[1095] Intelligence Report, July 1969, FCO 44/336, 1, TNA.
[1096] Lloyd, *The Positive Action Movement,* 26.
[1097] Armand Nicolas, *Histoire de la Martinique, Volume 3* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1996), 192.
[1098] Sainton, *Vie et survie d'un fils de la Guadeloupe*, 224–25.

Martin Luther King and the ongoing war in Vietnam.[1099] The journal positioned Antillean students as part of a global struggle against colonialism and inequality, pledging solidarity with those suffering in 'other countries where fundamental human rights are ignored: Rhodesia, Angola, South Africa…'[1100]

Furthermore, some nationalist groups in Martinique and Guadeloupe adopted a pan-Caribbean approach to their activism rooted in the struggle against racial inequality. *Combat Ouvrier* (Worker's Struggle), for example, campaigned on issues of racial discrimination and antiimperialism across the Caribbean, such as their 1980 campaign against repression in Haiti.[1101] Though the slogan *pouvoir noir*, or Black Power, does not seem not have been used frequently by these groups, racial inequality was a central issue. They were evidently influenced by Black Power movements in the rest of the Caribbean. The radical nationalist groups of the 1970s engaged in regional solidarity, focusing on the racial inequality prevalent across the Caribbean.

Activists in all four territories were aware of anticolonial protests for independence and post-colonial campaigns for equality. Debates in newspapers and interviews demonstrate that they saw themselves as part of this global decolonisation struggle. The fight against racism was a central part of many anticolonial campaigns, drawing in support and solidarity from around the world, including the overseas territories, as a unifying and emotive issue.

Conclusion: Nationalism in Comparative Perspective

The nature of protest and nationalism in these territories situates them within a global narrative of decolonisation. Nationalist organisations began to develop in the French Antilles in the 1960s, as

[1099] For example, M. Ebion, 'La semaine Che Guevara', *Alizés*, January 1968, 21-22; L. Lori, 'Meditation sur l'assassinat de Martin Luther King', *Alizés*, May 1968, 2-4.
[1100] 'La semaine Che Guevara', *Alizés*, January 1968, 22.
[1101] Jacky Dahomey, 'Que veut l'UPLG?', *Le Journal Guadeloupéen*, no. 16, 1980, 16.

discontent grew over the failures of departmentalisation. However, due to considerable state repression, these organisations had to operate clandestinely and struggled to gain momentum in the face of imprisonment and intimidation. It is difficult to predict whether, had an open debate been allowed, these pro-independence groups would have had more electoral success. Suspected nationalists, communists and 'subversives' in the British Overseas Territories were also monitored by intelligence services. This contradicted British policy after 1962 which implied that the British would adopt a more open approach to self-government when Caribbean colonies demanded it.[1102]

Although major protests sprang up in these territories, they were not enough to counter the impact of departmentalisation in the French Antilles and the adoption of crown colony status in the British territories, which had shifted the political conversation away from independence. The impact of the Cold War on British and French officials, combined with colonial polices which restricted open dialogue and promoted assimilation, reduced the impact of these protests. Local elites often colluded with colonial officials to maintain the status quo and political parties failed to channel popular discontent into an effective vessel for change. These factors, discussed in previous chapters, help to explain why protests in these territories did not translate into steps towards independence.

In the BVI, certain community leaders advocated future independence, but there were no pro-independence organisations before the 1980s. Nationalism in the BVI was expressed as a sense of national identity, distinct from Britain and the rest of the Caribbean, and identified with BVI autonomy of law making and land rights. Protest remained conservative and infrequent. In the Cayman Islands, there were no nationalist organisations in this period and protests over issues of land rights and self-determination were comparatively moderate.

[1102] See: Payne and Sutton, *Modern Caribbean Politics*; Mawby, *Ordering Independence*; Larry Butler and S. E. Stockwell, eds., *The Wind of Change: Harold Macmillan and British Decolonization* (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

Comparing the nature of social protest in these territories highlights several common factors. Protests were fuelled by issues of self-determination, perceived threats to land rights, social and economic inequality, and racial tensions. Most protest were urban and concentrated around the capitals. Many protestors expressed an internationalist outlook, likening their situation to other struggles for self-determination, decolonisation or civil rights in Algeria, Vietnam, the US, South Africa, and elsewhere. A comparative analysis also reveals the clear differences and the local context which shaped protest. For example, communist ideas were popular among many protestors in the French Antilles, whereas demonstrators in the 1970 march in Cayman declared 'stop communism'.[1103] This reflects the differing political arenas where left wing politicians achieved great electoral success in the French Antilles while the British territories were far more conservative.

Crucially, in the French Antilles, nationalist organisations developed in the 1960s whereas they were noticeably absent from the British territories. Though outside the scope of this thesis, from the 1980s onwards, the prospect of eventual independence became a topic of mainstream political debate in the BVI.[1104] In the twenty-first century there has been a growing consensus that the BVI could become independent in the future.[1105] In the 2018 Decision March, thousands of BVIslanders marched against the UK's plans to impose public registers on the BVI to enforce greater transparency, bearing slogans like 'End Colonial Rule', 'No Imperial Legislation', and 'We Want Freedom'.[1106] The debate over independence, colonialism and self-determination continues to this day. In the Cayman Islands, on the other hand, 'voluntary colonialism' across both politics

[1103] Hannerz, *Caymanian Politics*, 131.
[1104] Cohen, *Take Me to My Paradise*, 35.
[1105] Ibid.
[1106] Davion Smith, 'Hundreds in BVI march against UK', *BVI News,* 24 May 2018, http://bvinews.com/new/hundreds-in-bvi-march-against-uk/.

and society has prevented calls for political independence.[1107] The 1982 French decentralisation laws finally allowed Martinique and Guadeloupe the 'cultural right to difference' which has removed the question of political status from mainstream political debate.[1108] Nonetheless, the forty-four day general strike in 2009 which brought the French Antilles to a standstill, though 'non-nationalist' in nature, demonstrates that a desire for change is potent.[1109]

The opening chapter of this thesis illustrated the major political decisions which pulled the territories closer to the metropole in the aftermath of the Second World War. This chapter has highlighted that departmentalisation in the French Antilles and crown colony status in the British territories did not end debates about political status. Islanders continued to challenge the status quo and to protest issues of self-determination and autonomy. Decolonisation was not a distinct change from colony to independent state, and citizens of newly independent states continued to grapple with notions of neo-colonialism and self-determination, just like citizens in the non-independent territories. It is evident that non-independent territories add to this more nuanced understanding of decolonisation and the 'postcolonial' world.

[1107] Bodden, *Patronage, Personalities and Parties*, 306–16.
[1108] Miles, 'Fifty Years of Assimilation', 50.
[1109] Bonilla, *Non-Sovereign Futures*, 150.

Conclusion

Decolonisation without Independence

This thesis has argued that Martinique, Guadeloupe, the British Virgin Islands and the Cayman Islands were very much part of the history of twentieth century global decolonisation. It has shown that these territories' experiences were shaped by the interaction of six interrelated factors: the impact of the Second World War and postwar changes to political status; the influence of the global Cold War; the policies of the colonial state; the power of local elite groups; the role of political parties; and the effect of protests and independence activists. The basic premise of this research is that it is only by examining decolonisation as a process, made up of these overlapping influences that we can fully understand this history of decolonisation without independence. This history has been revealed through a distinctive methodology that combined a comparative analytical framework and a wide range of different sources, including witness testimony and interviews with political activists. Crucially, the processes of decolonisation in these territories reveal more connections to decolonisation in independent states than has previously been suggested. Though the outcomes of decolonisation appear different, they must nonetheless be considered part of the global history of decolonisation.

The Second World War had a considerable impact on the overseas territories, as chapter one demonstrated. In Martinique and Guadeloupe, experiences under the hardship of the Vichy regime prompted Antilleans to pursue a closer relationship with France. In 1946, they departmentalised and became an integral part of the French Republic. This had significant consequences for decolonisation in the French Caribbean since all future political negotiations would take place from a much closer position to the metropolitan power. In the Cayman Islands, the war encouraged a greater sense of Caymanian identity, separate from the rest of the Caribbean. Though they joined the West Indies Federation, the Cayman Islands chose to split away from Jamaica and

become a crown colony in 1962, rather than remain tied to an independent Jamaica. Partly due to the sense of affinity with Britain among the Caymanian elite, and partly because of a growing sense of separation from Jamaica, the Cayman Islands chose to strengthen their relationship with Britain. In the British Virgin Islands, the close ties to the USVI which increased during the war, prompted BVIslanders to opt out of the Federation and become a crown colony. This relationship with the USVI would continue to influence the process of decolonisation throughout the twentieth century.

As chapter two showed, the Cold War had a dual impact on the Caribbean territories. Acts of defiance like the Cuban Revolution served to inspire local activists to rebel against colonial authorities. However, the Cold War also encouraged greater repression from Britain and France in an effort to curb the spread of communism. The impact of the global Cold War on the overseas territories helps to highlight the connections between the islands and global protest movements. This was particularly true in the French Antilles where students and activists were prominent in anticolonial networks.

Chapter three exposed how both Britain and France employed irregular, inconsistent approaches and policies towards the overseas territories. Most significantly, the colonial states did not allow an open discussion about independence. Though islanders certainly exercised varying degrees of agency in political decisions and the way decolonisation developed, they were never permitted a free and open choice during the period in question. As chapter four argued, this was partly due to the close relationship between the colonial state and local elites who colluded to bring about a form of decolonisation that was in their own interests. For example, in the Cayman Islands, in 1962, the British Commissioner and the merchant elite successfully blocked the newly elected NDP from gaining power in the Executive Council. Had the NDP not been thwarted, it could have prompted greater constitutional change in Cayman and may have weakened the merchant

monopoly over local politics. However, the NDP were prevented gaining any real political power. This was closely tied to the failure of party politics in the Cayman Islands.

In all four territories, political parties failed to become vehicles for genuine political change. Chapter five revealed how, in Martinique and Guadeloupe, parties were associated with metropolitan political groups, restricting their ability to advocate local issues. The Left were greatly divided between pro-autonomy and pro-independence factions, preventing them from presenting a united front to tackle the power of local economic elites and the French state. In the Cayman Islands, party politics failed to develop and attempts to create parties were unable to overcome the merchant elite. In the BVI, political parties were active from 1967 onwards but always revolved around personalities rather than policies. Finally, as shown in the last chapter, protest groups emerged in all of the territories under consideration. However, in the French Antilles protest movements were subject to considerable repression which they were unable to overcome. In the British Virgin Islands, protest marches in 1949 and 1968 were hugely successful in forcing the British government to change course. Although these movements included independence advocates, the protests themselves did not push for independence. Protests in the Cayman Islands were more conservative than the other territories and failed to generate significant change.

This thesis has shown that the six factors identified above are crucial to understanding the process of decolonisation in the overseas territories. These factors demonstrate that the territories were well connected to wider global movements towards decolonisation and independence. There were, however, particular local circumstances which meant that, notwithstanding that wider global context, the individual territories did not become independent. While the global connections of these territories have been overlooked, it was ultimately the particular local circumstances which were most influential in shaping their non-independent status today.

For the Cayman Islands, the most significant factor was the monopoly that the white merchant oligarchy held over politics and the economy. The colonial state colluded with the merchants, who prevented the emergence of any alternative political leadership. Protest was relatively muted and conservative in nature. The one opportunity to disrupt the power of the merchants came from Ormond Panton in the 1960s. Though arguably a merchant himself, he was seen as an outsider and sought to improve representation for ordinary Caymanians with a view to eventually achieving independence. However, the merchants and the British Administrator colluded to block Panton from the Executive Council. In the aftermath of Panton's defeat, party politics disintegrated and there were no significant challenges to the status quo for the rest of the period in question.

In the British Virgin Islands, the relationship with the US Virgin Islands is the most important factor in their decision not to seek independence. This relationship encouraged BVIslanders not join the West Indies Federation, as they were keen to protect their access to the USVI economy and jobs market. The possibility of amalgamation dominated political debates, public opinion and British colonial correspondence, drawing attention and energy away from the question of constitutional development. Furthermore, with the American Virgin Islands, a US territory, as the BVI's closest neighbour, a non-independent status was normalised for both the public and politicians.

For Martinique and Guadeloupe, the most important factor in opting for continued dependence was the timing of departmentalisation, immediately after the Second World War. The timing was crucial as it allowed Antillean politicians to persuade the French National Assembly of the Frenchness of Martinique and Guadeloupe, as well as Réunion and French Guiana, in a time of national reconstruction after the Occupation. Once the departmentalisation law was passed in 1946, most political energy for the next ten to fifteen years revolved around how best to implement it. Nationalist groups did not develop until the 1960s, partly influenced by the Algerian War and

the Cuban Revolution. The psychological impact of the Algerian War on the French state was considerable and, as a result, France was desperate to keep hold of the French Antilles. Openly declaring nationalist beliefs became illegal and nationalist groups were subject to considerable repression. This was combined with a more concerted effort to improve social security in the Caribbean and policies that encouraged a greater degree of Francisation. Debates about autonomy continued in mainstream politics but were curtailed by the 1982 decentralisation laws.

Due to the centralised nature of the French state, there are considerable similarities in the decolonisation of Martinique and Guadeloupe. Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge the differences too. The most significant point of divergence in the histories of Martinique and Guadeloupe occurred after the French Revolution. While the plantation owners and the institution of slavery in Martinique were protected by British control, in Guadeloupe slavery was abolished and many plantation owners were executed. The forcible reintroduction of slavery, when French forces took back control in Guadeloupe, left a legacy of trauma in Guadeloupe that continued to influence Guadeloupean relations with France. This time of rebellion against French rule has become symbolic in Guadeloupean nationalist histories and rhetoric. This divergence between the two islands altered their societies so that the *Békés* remained powerful in Martinique but became less significant in Guadeloupe. In the postwar years, Guadeloupe experienced more significant unrest than Martinique and the nationalist movement became more radicalised and violent by the 1980s. In Martinique, independence advocates had greater electoral success, particularly by the 1990s, though this is outside the scope of this study.

Up to now, the widely accepted view has been that the dependent territories of the Caribbean are an anomaly, isolated from global trends. This thesis has clearly demonstrated that this was not the case. It has identified the many ways in which those territories were connected with wider global movements towards independence. Islanders from the overseas territories were greatly influenced

by international debates about anticolonialism and decolonisation. Migrating for work or study was commonplace, and many of those involved in local political debates and protest movements had been influenced by their experiences abroad. However, their debates about their islands' political status took place within the circumstances of island society. Positioning these local politicians, activists and intellectuals as both interconnected to wider anticolonial debates and yet acting in a particular island society, helps us to understand how these islands negotiated a decolonisation without independence. It is this complex inter-relation of global trends with a specific local context that underscores the nature of decolonisation history in non-sovereign states.

Furthermore, the histories of these islands are important for challenging our preconceptions about decolonisation and the so-called postcolonial world. The recent Windrush scandal in the UK and the debates in France about the unacknowledged struggles of the 'BUMIDOM generation' highlight the ongoing impact of colonial ideologies, policies and history today.[1110] These issues demonstrate the continued tensions between France and Britain's colonial history and their relationship with the Caribbean. As this thesis has shown, comparative studies help us to move past notions of national exceptionalism, particularly when it comes to the history of empires and decolonisation. There is great potential for future comparative research on the experiences of these two generations of Caribbean peoples in Britain and France.

In the twenty-first century, independence debates and referenda have been reignited in places like Cataluña and Scotland. In the recent independence referendum in the French Pacific collectivity

[1110] See *Le Rêve français,* mini-series film directed by Christian Faure, France 2, 21 and 28 March 2018; Claude-Valentin Marie, 'Des « Nés » aux « Originaires » Dom en métropole: les effets de cinquante ans d'une politique publique ininterrompue d'émigration', *Informations sociales* 186, no. 6 (2014): 40–48; Pattieu, 'Un traitement spécifique des migrations d'outre-mer'; Sylvain Pattieu, 'The BUMIDOM in Paris and Its Suburbs: Contradictions in a State Migration Policy, 1960s–1970s', *African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal* 10, no. 1 (2 January 2017): 12–24; Ruth Craggs, 'The 2018 Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting, the Windrush Scandal and the Legacies of Empire', *The Round Table* 107, no. 3 (4 May 2018): 361–62.

New Caledonia, the pro-French faction had a much narrower victory than expected. This suggests that arguments about independence and decolonisation in France's *outre-mer* will not dissipate.[1111] Protests in the British Virgin Islands and in the French Antilles in the past decade demonstrate that citizens in the overseas territories continue to contest their current political status and relationship with the metropole.

Finally, in light of Brexit, new interest has been shown in the legacies of empire and decolonisation in twenty-first century Britain.[1112] Brexit has renewed the debate about 'imperial nostalgia' and its impact on British politics and society. Likewise, in France, the ongoing battle for the memory of French colonialism was apparent in the 2017 French presidential elections.[1113] The French republican model makes it difficult for France to deal with legacies of empire and notions of race, identity and citizenship. The works of Césaire and Fanon on the contradictions inherent in the idea of the indivisibility and universality of the French Republic remain pertinent.[1114] The British Overseas Territories and the French *départements d'outre-mer* form a very physical reminder of the continuing legacies of empire today, making it clear we cannot call our current state of affairs 'postcolonial'.

[1111] David A. Chappell, *The Kanak Awakening: The Rise of Nationalism in New Caledonia* (Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2013); Olivier Roueff et al., 'Éditorial, Kanaky Nouvelle-Calédonie: situations décoloniales', *Mouvements* 91, no. 3 (28 August 2017): 7–14; Natacha Gagné and Marie Salaün, 'L'Océanie peut-elle être décolonisée ?', *Mouvements* 91, no. 3 (28 August 2017): 15–23; Patrick Castex, *Kanaky Nouvelle-Calédonie indépendante?* (Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 2018).
[1112] Philip Murphy, *The Empire's New Clothes: The Myth of the Commonwealth* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2018); Stuart Ward and Astrid Rasch, eds., *Embers of Empire in Brexit Britain* (London: Bloomsbury Academic, 2019).
[1113] Yahia H. Zoubir, 'Macron et l'Algérie: l'amorce d'une véritable réconciliation?', *Les Cahiers de l'Orient* 128, no. 4 (3 October 2017): 37–46; Sudhir Hazareesingh, 'L'histoire dans le débat politique français', *Histoire@Politique* 31, no. 1 (1 June 2017): 8–16.
[1114] Pap Ndiaye, *La Condition noire: Essai sur une minorité française* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 2008); Achille Mbembe, 'Faut-il provincialiser la France ?', *Politique africaine* N° 119, no. 3 (2010): 159–88.

Appendix

Timeline of Key Events

The Cayman Islands

1503	Islands sighted by Christopher Columbus
1670	Spain recognises British possession of the islands in the 1670 Treaty of Madrid
1670-1730	Permanent settlement begins
1831	Establishment of the Legislative Assembly
1834	Abolition of slavery
1863	Cayman becomes a dependency of Jamaica
1953	Barclays DCO establish the first bank
1958	Cayman joins the West Indies Federation as a dependency of Jamaica
1959	First constitution, including women's suffrage
1962	Cayman becomes a crown colony of Britain once Jamaica declares its independence
1966	The Banks and Trust Companies Regulation Law – crucial to the development of the offshore financial centre
1971	Title of Administrator changed to Governor

The British Virgin Islands

100BC	First recorded settlements of Taíno from South America
1400s	Kalinago displace the Taíno
1493	Islands sighted by Christopher Columbus – Spanish claim the islands but never settle there
1615	First permanent colonial settlements established by Dutch privateer Joost van Dyk
1665	First documentation of enslaved people being held on Tortola

1672	Britain takes control of the islands
1790	First major uprising against slavery (followed by continued revolts throughout the early 19th century)
1834	Abolition of slavery
1901	Legislative Council dissolved
1917	Neighbouring Danish West Indies become the Virgin Islands of the United States
1950	Legislative Council reinstated
1956	BVI becomes a crown colony
1967	Ministerial government introduced, including a Chief Minister

The French Antilles

130AD	Taíno settle in Martinique
300AD	Taíno settle in Guadeloupe
1200s	Kalinago arrive in Martinique and Guadeloupe
1635	Guadeloupe settled by the French
1638	Martinique settled by the French
1793	Slave revolt in Guadeloupe and Martinique
1794	Britain attempts to seize Guadeloupe but is prevented by French Governor Victor Hugues and an army of free people of colour and enslaved people
	Britain captures Martinique and reinstates slavery
1802	Slavery reinstated in Guadeloupe by Napoleonic France
	Martinique returns to French control
1848	Abolition of slavery
1853	The first indentured labourers from India arrive to work on the plantations
1946	Departmentalisation
1982	Decentralisation

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