Douglas Armstrong and Mark W. Hauser

An East Indian Laborers' Household in Nineteenth-Century Jamaica: A Case for Understanding Cultural Diversity through Space, Chronology, and Material Analysis

ABSTRACT

Cultural diversity is a hallmark of the Caribbean region. This diversity is the result of many diasporas, including European, African, East Asian, and East Indian. Historical archaeology has focused on cultural permutations of the demographically dominant European and African groups. The archaeological record of other groups is present and can add to our understanding of the true depth of diversity in the emergence of social landscapes. This paper explores chronological, spatial, and material evidence related to an East Indian laborers' household excavated in St. Ann's Bay, Jamaica. The ways in which space was structured and materials used were distinct from patterns observed in the households of African Jamaicans who resided in a separate locus at the same site. This data suggests potential of examining cultural identities through archaeology.

Introduction

The serendipitous recovery of an East Indian house site at Seville plantation in Jamaica points to the general need to expand our concepts of diaspora and to seek archaeological evidence for a broader cross section of Caribbean peoples (Figure 1). Cultural diversity is a hallmark of the Caribbean region. One need look no further than the motto "Out of Many One People" on the Jamaican dollar to find recognition of the fact that the region has served as a crossroad for people coming from many backgrounds. While the early history of the region is dominated by the decimation of indigenous peoples and the arrival of European and enslaved Africans, the economic structures were in flux during the 19th century as societies once centered on agricultural production making use of slave labor sought new sources of labor to sustain themselves in the post-emancipation era. In Jamaica these efforts took the form of recruiting "voluntary" labor from Africa, 1840–1865 (Thomas 1974), indentured servants from South Asia, 1844–1917 (Shepherd 1988), and China, 1852–1859 (Black 1972) (Figure 2).

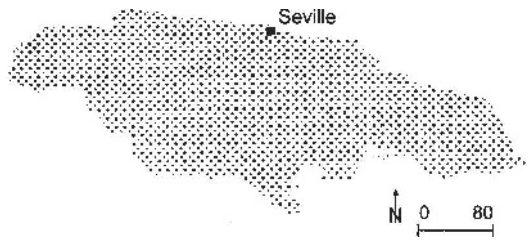


FIGURE 1. Location of Seville in Jamaica.

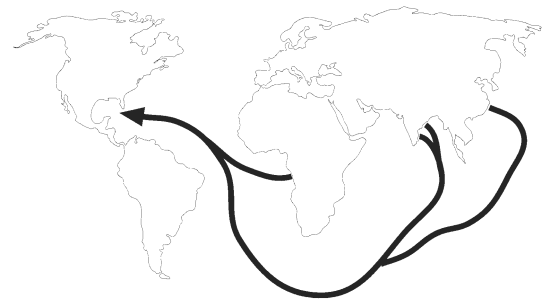


FIGURE 2. Nineteenth-century post-emancipation labor migrations to the West Indies.

This study presents a reinterpretation of a mid-19th-century house site located at Seville Plantation in Jamaica. In the early 1980s this house was correctly attributed as a post-emancipation free laborers' living quarters (Kelly 1989; Kelly and Armstrong 1991). In searching for answers as to the otherwise unexpected features of this distinctive house site, we initially attributed its differential location, size, orientation, materials, and structural attributes to emerging differentiation within the post-emancipation African Jamaican community at Seville. A second look, however, points decisively to differences that relate to ethnic and social distinctions that relate to the

Historical Archaeology, 2004, 38(2):9–21.

Accepted for publication 22 January 2003.

presence of East Indians. At the time of initial analysis, this house was noted to exhibit material, structural, and spatial patterns that were distinct from the 10 other post-emancipation houses explored at Seville. A reanalysis precipitated by the need to further explain the widely divergent data from this house site, combined with an attribution of the site as the location of a "coolie house" by a local informant, set in motion a rethinking of the ethnicity of the occupants.

Archaeological studies dealing with Jamaican plantation settings have focused on economic dominance of Europeans and subjugation of Africans. Archaeology has been used as a valuable tool to highlight the emergence of the internal dynamics of enslaved African laborer communities and the processes of cultural transformation (Armstrong 1990, 1998), for the examination of maroonage and resistance (Agorsah 1994, 1999), spatial analysis to define social relations (Delle 1998; Armstrong and Kelly 2000), reconstruction of family and kin-based social structure (Higman 1998), and refined analysis of market relations and material distribution systems (Hauser 2001). As elsewhere in the Caribbean, considerably less attention has been paid to the lives and material record of other groups in Jamaica and in the Caribbean.

The archaeological record of groups such as those from South Asia can add to our understanding of the true depth of diversity in the emergence of social landscapes. While the South Asian Diaspora has been underrepresented through archaeological inquiry, there is growing scholarship among anthropologists (Williams 1991), historians (Shepherd 1988), and geographers (Provok and Hemmasi 1993). For the most part, this research has focused on the positioning of South Asians vis-à-vis the larger African communities and highlighted the rise and occurrence of interracial conflict (Shepherd 1988; Williams 1991). This article focuses on these issues of identity and calls into question traditional constructions of ethnicity in the archaeology of plantation life.

The use of historical archaeology to address ethnicity is extensive and varied. One needs look no further than recent volumes edited by Miriam Stark (1998) and Charles Orser (2001). Some scholars have approached ethnicity through an analysis of stylistic representations of identity (Conkey 1990:7; Wiessner 1990; Burke 1999) or functional variants of cultural modes (Sackett 1990). Others (Atherton 1983; DeCorse 1989, 1999; Trigger 1995:277; Jones 1997, 1999) have criticized these approaches, arguing that ethnicity, as resident in ideological or cognitive structures dependent on social context, is far too fluid to cull from archaeological materials. Ethnicity has often been operationalized around racial constructs defining Europeans versus Africans without reference to issues of class that inform divisions internal to communities highlighting statuses and nationalisms (i.e., Irish, Scotch-Irish, English). The issue that stands out as most problematic is that these racially based constructions reify a false dichotomy of black versus white and overlook an incredibly cosmopolitan population with roots in many parts of the world. For example in 1692, Port Royal was home to Africans of many nations, English, Scottish, Welsh, Irish, and Spanish Jews (all of whom included Creoles from Jamaica, Barbados, and Nevis) (Burton 1997:15). While not unexpected in port city contexts of the 17th and 18th centuries, this heterogeneity extended to rural contexts in Jamaica. In Clarendon, Jamaica, communities of Miskito Indians, themselves a group with mixed ancestry from Central America, came to Jamaica to fight alongside the British in the numerous wars against African Maroons and eventually settled near present-day Black River (Knibb 1978; Helms 1986).

East Indian Laborers in Jamaica

Between 1844 and 1917, South Asians (36,400) immigrated to Jamaica from East India Company holdings in Bengal and Madras (Roberts 1957: 128). The population that immigrated to Jamaica represented 8.4% of the nearly 500,000 East Indian immigrants to the Caribbean. While the East Indian population represents a small minority within the total population of Jamaica, in the parishes of St. Elizabeth and Clarendon they are a significant minority. Culturally, ubiquitous foods like curry goat and roti highlight the subtle but lasting influence of the East Indian community on Jamaica.

The importation of East Indian labor in Jamaica took place on a restricted, yet important, basis as a response to labor shortages brought about by the cessation of the slave trade and then emancipation. The labor force required for

the production of cash crops had been seriously diminished; consequently, production dropped, which brought on a short resurgence of sugar prices. Managers of plantations, like Seville, that continued to operate following emancipation actively sought ways of holding and attracting laborers. The managers of Seville were singled out as an example of how an estate with a perceived labor shortage should take action to improve living conditions for tenants of the estate (Green 1976:207–208). In contrast to the general tendency, they set rents for tenants at a very low rate in order to encourage the ex-slaves to stay. Still, as we can demonstrate through the archaeological and historical records, the ex-slaves left the estate in large numbers immediately following emancipation. As residents left the estate and moved into free lands offered to them at Priory, a settlement established by a missionary group on land adjacent to Seville plantation (National Library of Jamaica 1847)

Planters in Jamaica attempted to regain necessary labor by hiring ex-slaves and importing labor from Africa and South Asia (Thomas 1974: 101). Given an inability to attract the necessary volume of volunteer wage laborers from traditional sources in Africa, planters looked to South Asia (Thomas 1974:101–102). In 1845 the government reopened immigration from South Asia to the West Indies, and the Jamaican Assembly provided funds for the transport of 5,000 during the 1846–1847 seasons, with an initial experimental shipment of 2,000. Thus, East Indian laborers, referred to historically as "Indian Coolies" (in reference to a derogatory term for South Asian laborer from the British colonial period in Jamaica), were brought to Jamaica in relatively small numbers beginning almost immediately after emancipation. In anticipation of continued labor needs, orders were placed for an additional 8,000 East Indian laborer in 1845 (Darling 1845:86; Thomas 1974:101). But applications for importation declined rapidly. Planters, apparently reluctant to invest capital to pay importation taxes as well as apprehensive about new sugar duties, submitted only a little more than 1,200 applications for East Indian laborers in 1846; in November 1846, the Assembly acted quickly to halt embarkation from South Asia (Darling 1846). The Immigration Act of 1858 reopened the importation of contract labor from South Asia. Large numbers of East Indians were brought to Jamaica in the years between 1860 and 1863 (Thomas 1974:189). At this time, small numbers of laborers were also brought from Africa and China (Thomas 1974:190).

Verene Shepherd (1988) argues that much of the modern conflict between peoples of South Asian and African descent in Jamaica, while predicated on constructs of ethnicity and race, is based on class differences that arose in the post-emancipation period. In this period, planters employed indentured labor as a means to supplement their dwindling labor supply and to keep wages low for former slaves. The planters took advantage of the ensuing antagonism between laborers from South Asia and Africa to retain control over labor (Shepherd 1988:96). Within this context, East Indian manners of speech were mocked by Africans, while East Indians espoused racial superiority over Africans. It was not, however, until the post-war depression that this antagonism broke out in violent conflict. This eventually fed into nationalist concerns in the 1940s and 50s when the task of defining a Jamaican was undertaken (Shepherd 1988:109). South Asians in the end were considered aliens in the period of nation building in the late 1950s and 1960s.

The Setting: Chronology and Layout at Seville

Seville Plantation is located on Jamaica's north coast, just west of St. Ann's Bay (Figure 1). The property is owned and operated by the Jamaica National Heritage Trust and is a national landmark. The lands that make up Seville Plantation have been in constant occupation since the prehistoric period and include the indigenous village of Maima, the yet-to-be-identified site of Columbus's maroonage during his second voyage in 1494; the 16th-century Spanish settlement of Sevilla La Nueva and a later Spanish-period sugar plantation; and a post-1655 English cum British period sugar plantation established by the Hemings family (Armstrong 1998; Armstrong and Kelly 2000).

The archaeological study of the laborer communities associated with the English cum British colonial plantation in Jamaica was carried out by Armstrong as a cooperative project of Syracuse University and the Jamaica National Heritage Trust. Surveys and excavations were

initiated in 1987 and completed in 1993. The authors' goal was to illustrate cultural transformations within the African Jamaican community at Seville. Six loci were excavated at Seville plantation (Figure 3). These include the early African Jamaican laborer village (Locus 1), the later African Jamaica laborer village (Locus 2), the East Indian household (Locus 4), the planter's residence (Locus 5), the overseer's residence (Locus 6), and the mid-level manager's residence (Locus 7) (Figures 3 and 4).

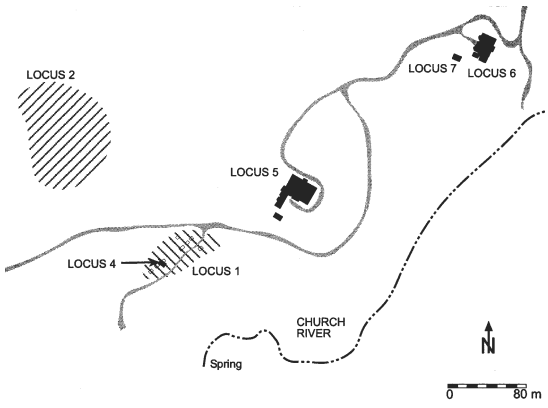


FIGURE 3. Site map indicating excavation loci. Note the discrete nature of the 19th-century labor occupations (Locus 2 and 4).

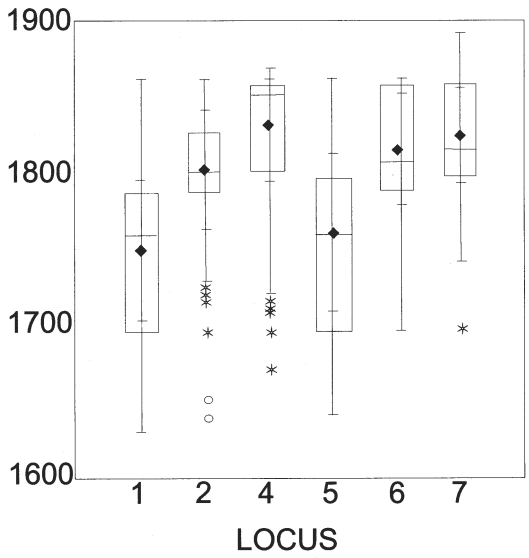


FIGURE 4. Mean ceramic dating using quartile box and whisker plot of the different excavation loci.

Documents, maps, oral history, and associated material culture establish a clear chronology for the Seville plantation from the establishment of land patents by Richard Hemming in 1670 and the abandonment of the African village site in the late 1880s. Maps and plans of the estate dating to 1721 and 1791 establish the development of the property in the 18th century, including the construction sequence for the planter's residence (Great House) and two slave villages (Armstrong and Kelly 2000). The former map identifies an early planter's house that is distinctly different in layout and design from the current Great House at Seville. This map indicates that the early structure was located in the approximate location of the current Great House. A dated keystone over the south door of the current planter's residence indicates that the new structure was constructed in 1743.

The 1721 map also illustrates the location of the African Jamaican village to the south and east of the planter's residence in the area that we have defined as Locus 1, the early village. Historical documentation for Seville sets the range of occupation of Locus 1, the early village, from 1670 to sometime between 1721 and 1791, with a probable abandonment date of 1780. The mean ceramic date for this locus is 1753.6. Ceramics present include an array of types that span the historically defined founding of Seville in 1670 through its known abandonment in the last quarter of the 18th century. The years between 1780 and 1784 were marked by destructive hurricanes in Jamaica. Three hurricanes in 1780 were particularly devastating. On 3 October 1780, "the tempest increased to such an amazing degree as at dark to threaten general ruin and destruction" (Jamaica Almanac 1915:4). Significant damage at Seville probably precipitated both the movement of the slave settlement to new housing as well as a significant remodeling of the planter's residence.

The 1791 map defines a new location for the "negroe houses" of the African Jamaican slave settlement as well as a new planter's residence. The historical records do not define a date for the shift in village location, but it must have occurred prior to 1791 and corresponded with major changes in the structure of the planter's residence. The combined historical and archaeological records suggest that a major storm damaged both the planter's residence (which lost

its second floor) and the village (which was destroyed), and that both were reconstructed at the same time. The planter's house was modified to its current one-story form, and the village was moved to the area that we have defined as Locus 2 (the later African Jamaican settlement).

The later village (Locus 2) continued to be occupied by tenants after emancipation, but the population rapidly declined. Immediately following emancipation, many former slaves moved to free-holding parcels in a new community called New Seville. These lands were part of what had once been the western edge of Seville Plantation. The land was distributed to ex-slaves by William Smith and his missionary society. According to Carpi Rose who was born in one of the last houses in the later village between 1885 and 1890, the last houses in this settlement were abandoned, ca. 1890 (Carpi Rose 1981, pers. comm.). Using an analysis of ceramics, houses of the later village can be subdivided into three temporal contexts (Figure 4). The first two houses were abandoned prior to emancipation; the second includes six houses that span the period from the move (1780) to emancipation (1838); and the third group includes two houses that continued to be occupied as tenant and laborer households following emancipation.

Turning now to Locus 4, the definition of the site as an East Indian household was based upon the multiple sources of evidence that indicated a "bad fit" with other laborer households. Simply it was at the wrong time in the wrong place. It exhibited material and structural variation from house areas associated with the other African Jamaican contexts. In our initial analysis, the data from House Area 14 were grouped together with all of the material from Locus 1 (the earlier of two African Jamaican slave settlements, ca. 1670–1780). However, an internal comparison of materials from each house site within this locus indicated that this structure, and its associated artifacts, was of a distinctly different time period, was structurally distinct, and expressed a distinct array of artifacts. The archaeological data conforms to the broad historical trend of an 1845–1860s arrival (Figure 4). The analysis of ceramics yields a mean of 1833 and a standard deviation of +/- 35 years. The median date for the house is 1853 with a high-end quartile into the 1860s. Therefore, we pulled the material from House Area 14 and analyzed it as material from a distinct context (Locus 4).

Because the Seville study was organized around research questions pertaining to transformations within emerging African Jamaican cultural contexts, these differences were interpreted initially as reflecting economic differences within the African free-labor community. The possibility of the presence of East Indian laborer households at Seville was actually presented to Armstrong in 1981 by Rose. Upon reexamining the taped interview, we found that Rose initially had no recollection of anyone living in the area of the old village. Then, later in the interview, he corrected himself and said that while no one from the village had lived there, people had told him that before he was born a "Coolie house" had been present in the area (Carpi Rose 1981, pers. comm.).

Together these data suggest that the site was occupied by East Indian laborers in the period immediately following emancipation and that the site continued to be occupied until just prior to the abandonment of laborer residences on the estate. It was only after the conversation with Rose that we began to assess the archaeological evidence in light of a social context where two potentially contentious communities of laborers existed on this plantation. An examination of materials, house construction, and house layout provide a means to illuminate the distinctive nature of the East Indian household in comparison to the archaeological evidence from other laborer and managerial contexts at Seville.

Materials, Construction, and Layout: The East Indian House

The combined archaeological and historical contexts of the East Indian household indicate that it is contemporaneous with the later African Jamaican laborer settlement (Locus 2). The presence of two spatially discrete labor communities at Seville in the post-emancipation period, along with the managerial contexts, allows us to compare two groups with distinct ethnic heritages from the same period and of similar socio/economic condition and contrast the materials from these sites to that recovered from the managerial households. Given the plantation context, significant distinctions between laborers and management were expected—and found.

However, even though both Africans and East Indians worked as post-emancipation laborers at the estate, the material remains indicate distinctly different patterns of material use and access.

The East Indian laborer's house was one of the first houses excavated in the Seville African Jamaica Archaeology Project and for a time remained a rather perplexing anomaly. Not only was it a 19th-century structure in an area where we expected and ultimately found 17th- and 18th-century African Jamaican housing, but it was spatially separated from its 19th-century African Jamaican counterparts. The analysis of material culture associated with the structure showed elements of similarity with other laboring households but also distinctive differences in the proportion and types of materials used.

The Seville study employs an assemblage-based analysis to examine use and reuse of objects and not necessarily by form or universal conventions ascribed by the manufacturer (Armstrong 1998). The "activity analysis" system groups objects with similar use, including objects from different material groupings (glass, ceramic, etc.) and allows a multilevel examination of the complete assemblage of artifacts recovered from each locus and house area. Unlike earlier attempts that looked for whole cultures represented in the artifact assemblage, like South's artifact pattern analysis (South 1977), this study analyzes the complete assemblage of artifacts in order to examine similarities and differences among contexts with known cultural affiliations.

When broad groupings of household-related artifacts were examined, all of the laborer contexts at Seville (African and East Indian, before and after emancipation) can be seen to share a similar pattern of material use, indicated by the relative proportion of artifacts from an array of material groups (food related, personal items, activities, tobacco, tools, and trades). The relative percentages of artifacts indicate that material use at all laborer contexts was dominated by basic subsistence. This is indicated by a very high percentage of food-related items, particularly when compared with all of the loci associated with managerial contexts (planter, overseer, mid-level manager) (Figure 5). Moreover, the food-related items found in both labor contexts included a relatively high proportion of objects associated with food preparation and consumption versus storage and beverage containers.

To expand on this trend, a ubiquitous element of both loci was local coarse earthenware. This earthenware was found in numerous forms, including cooking and serving bowls and water pots. They are varied in manufacturing technique and include glazed and burnished varieties. Analysis of their composition has shown that they were produced primarily on the south coast of Jamaica in the area of Spanish town by African Jamaican women and were distributed across the island through the internal market system (Hauser 2001). Their presence has traditionally been associated with African Jamaican use and manufacture (Ebanks 1984). The archaeological data show this assumption concerning use to be premature. The Seville data indicate that wares were used by South Asians as well as African Jamaicans. To be sure, a late-19th-century photograph depicts a South Asian woman in Jamaica cooking rice with a burnished Yabba (Parboosingh 1984:6). Their presence in both loci suggests that both South Asians and African Jamaicans were relying on locally produced goods and gaining access to those and imported goods through Sunday markets.

More refined analyses of subsets of household artifacts reveal distinct differences between material use at House Area 14 and all of the other contexts at Seville (African laborers and European managers). The overall proportion of personal items is similar for all three loci occupied by laborers at Seville (Figure 5). However, the composition of personal artifacts within the East Indian household was distinct from households associated with either of the African settlements. The subset of artifacts making up the personal artifact group includes items associated with

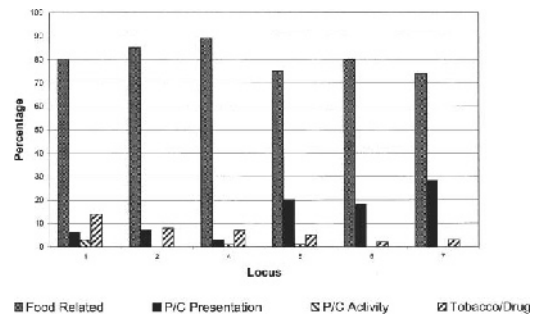


FIGURE 5. Functional analysis of items related to community activities from each of the loci.

clothing, adornment, and health and hygiene. Within the personal item grouping, the African and European households appear to have a material use pattern that is similar, while the East Indian household is decidedly different. These differences reflect possible consumption preferences based on heritage rather than being tied strictly to economic differences (Figure 6).

The East Indians at Seville had a distinct array of items used to fasten and enhance their clothing, including buttons, brass tassels, and adornments like beads. The higher proportion of clothing items recovered from House Area 14 was due to a relatively large number of buttons. Similarly, the relatively higher proportion of adornment items is attributed to the presence of several brass tassels (often affixed as ornamentation to cloth or to clothing ties) and the presence of glass beads (Figure 6). Beads,

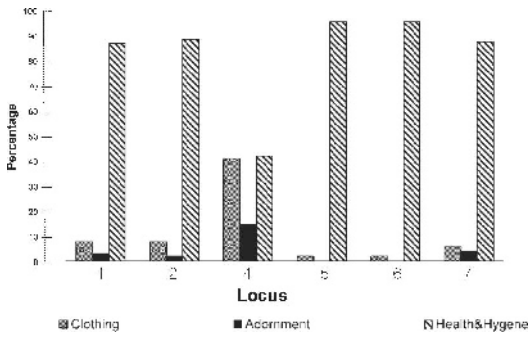


FIGURE 6. Functional analysis of items related to personal activities from each of the loci.

by no means unique to the East Indian context were also found in the African contexts. Items of personal adornment were nearly absent in the European managerial contexts.

A major contributor to the distinctive pattern of personal items at the East Indian house site was the relatively small proportion of health and hygiene items (Figure 6). While the Europeans and Africans had similar proportions of health and hygiene items (pharmaceutical bottles, combs, tooth brushes), very few recognizable items from this category were found for the East Indian context. In fact, there were so few health and hygiene items recovered that the net proportion of personal items was less than half that of the other laborer contexts and less than one fifth the proportion identified at managerial households. This suggests distinct strategies of health and hygiene that did not employ the array of manufactured items that were relatively common in both the African and European households. This pattern is consistent with medical systems indigenous to South Asia such as *Ayurveda*.

By the mid-19th-century, medical practices of Anglo and African Jamaicans had been organized loosely around bourgeoning allopathic practices. This is not to say that there were not local medicines such as "bush" teas that were employed by both populations. Indeed there were, but patent medicine was also used extensively. *Ayurveda* is not a mystical practice so often romanticized by New Age alternative health seekers but is a pragmatic and rational health system (Wujastyk 1989:308). The practice requires its own specialists today and most likely in the past. What is important about this system is that it operates under an epistemology different than allopathic medicine (Alter 1999). A medical system relying on diet and herbal remedies would not leave traces of material culture associated with our health and hygiene category. This would lead to a different archaeological signature than what we expected.

The second set of distinguishing characteristics relates to the construction and layout of the house. One cannot ignore the fact that the East Indian house was built in isolation from the African laborers (Figures 3 and 7). This

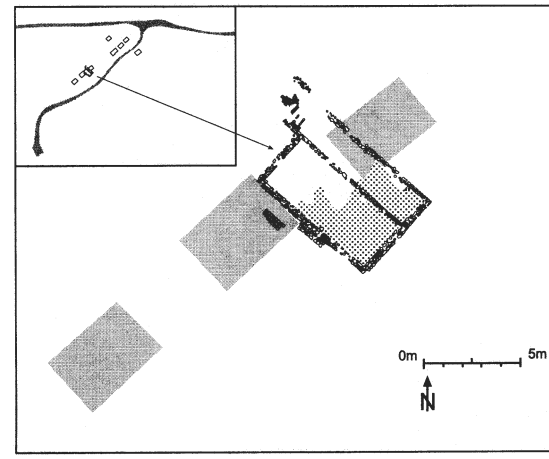
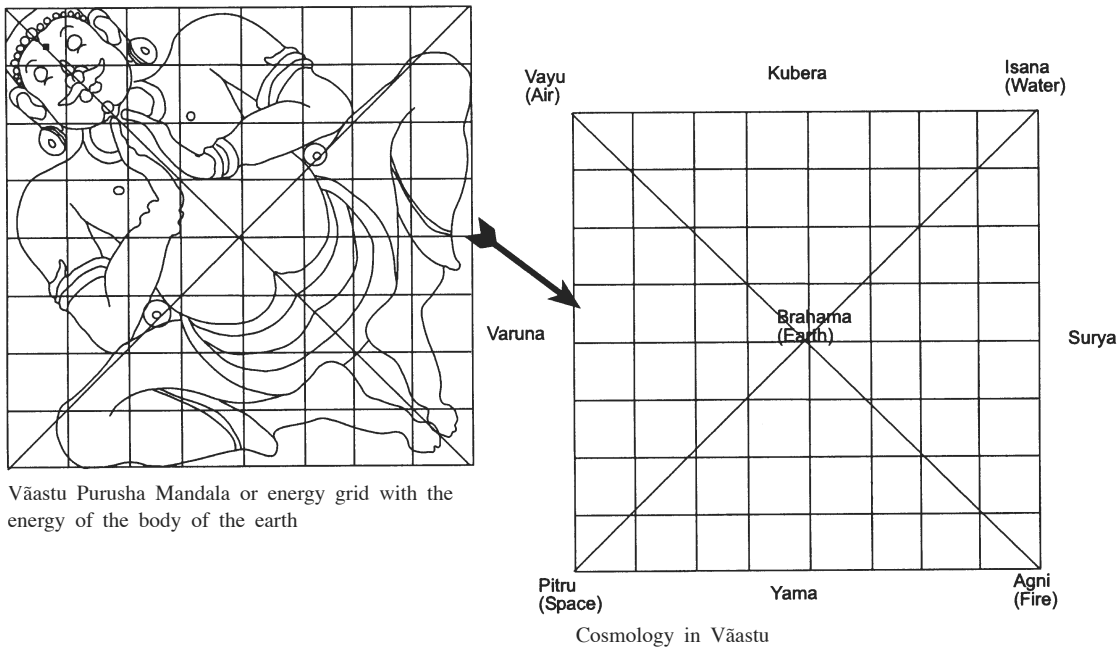


FIGURE 7. Location and layout of Locus 4. Note the near perpendicular orientation of Locus 4 to houses associated with Locus 2 (indicated by shaded boxes).

is indicative of a recognized difference between laboring groups and suggests potential conflict between those of South Asian descent and those of African descent. Unfortunately because of the dearth of documentary evidence about the estate during this point in time and no known descendents of this household from which to draw on oral histories, little is known about the motivation for the structure's placement and less about the actual relations of the inhabitants with the broader laborer community.

In terms of house construction, the East Indian house was quite distinctive in layout and design. The basic orientation of the house was 90 degrees different than the houses that had previously been constructed as part of the African village (Figure 7). The East Indian house was nearly twice the size of the average African house and had defined internal divisions. While the African houses had flooring of marl or wood, the East Indians used pink-colored mortar in the main living areas and used brick in their cooking area. The cooking area was a formal room attached to the house, while those of the Africans were detached yard hearths. Unlike the African kitchen yards where faunal remains are replete in the archaeological record, the East Indian house had a brick floor with no refuse. This is consistent with Indian kitchens in many parts of rural northern India where the kitchen is floored with cow-dung (considered a holy and antiseptic substance) and kept scrupulously clean (Wadley 2000).

The layout of the East Indian house loosely conforms to practices of architecture found in areas of South Asia. While the East Indians that came to Jamaica originated from widely divergent areas of South Asia, there are some potential cosmological themes that cross-cut these populations. One of these is the way in which space is organized and employed in the construction of residences. This system, known as *Vãstuu*, arises from cosmology derived from the *Puranas,* specifically the *Matsyapurana* written in the 7th century A.D. (Bafna 2000:27). Today, *Vãstuu* has gained popularity among those subscribing to New Age religions and tends to be poorly understood and taken out of context. In general it employs a mandala (*Vãstuumandala*) (Annanth 1998:82) or a geometric representation of the cosmos (Figure 8) in which a god is superimposed over a geometric surface. Through this mandala certain orientations and proportions of the house are preferred (e.g., 1:1-1/4; 1:1-1/2;



Vãastu Purusha Mandala or energy grid with the energy of the body of the earth

Cosmology in Vãastu

FIGURE 8. Mandala and cosmogram according to *Vãstuu* (reproduced from Annanth 1998).

1:1-3/4; 1:2) (Annanth 1998:130–131). In addition, each direction is governed by one of eight deities with their own characteristics. Characteristics with auspicious and deleterious effects must be balanced in light of the function of each structure's space (Moore 1983:355). Most evident in sacred architecture, *Vãstuu* analysis, like those of Melinda Moore's (1983) analysis of South Indian *Taravads* (Houses of Nayar Nobility), have shown these considerations to be incorporated into vernacular architecture.

The question is whether this practice was present in vernacular architecture in 19th-century Jamaica. There is relatively little archaeological work concerning vernacular architecture from the early Modern period in South Asia and most ethnohistorical research has focused on areas other than the states from which most South Asians in the Caribbean derive (Bihar, Bengal, and Uttar Pradesh). Architectural histories have pointed to a ubiquity of practice similar to or an antecedent of *Vãstuu* in the early Modern period of South Asia. The use of the *Vãstuu-mandala* in Indian architectural histories and guides is relatively recent, most likely the 1930s (Bafna 2000:32), but the application of grids in designing village and social space can be traced to at least A.D. 1834. There is even a series of Palm-Leaf Manuscripts dating to the 17th century recovered in Orrisa that contains measured architectural drawings of Konark Temple with stylized diagrams in each element of the structure (Bafna 2000:43). While it is uncertain whether the Indians occupying House Area 14 in the 19th century were Hindu (as opposed to Muslim or Jain) and while there is a dynamic nature to such cosmologies, the orientation and layout of the house could be understood within this system. The cultural framework in which *Vãstuu* emerged as an architectural system also could have served to inform the inhabitants of House Area 14 on the appropriate use of space.

Turning now to House Area 14's location and layout, the ground plan of the East Indian house contains many elements that mirror decisions made in vernacular architecture in India. To begin with, a house must be placed so that the high ground is to the west of the structure. This has the effect of letting the slope incline towards the auspicious direction (Moore 1983: 352). The location of the spring, which supplied the water to the house, was southwest of the structure (Figure 3). The presence of the stream is important. It highlights the location for drinking water and bathing. Directionality is crucial. Bathing was not only a daily practice related to health and hygiene but also a cleansing ritual. Therefore, the area for bathing must be outside of the house and utilize running water traveling west to east (Moore 1983:334). Ideally, a well should be inside the compound and occupy the northeast corner and be adjacent to the kitchen (Moore 1983:335). This house had no well, but it is possible that water was taken from the stream southeast of the structure; this would also introduce impurity from bathing.

The house itself is in the proportion 1:1-1/2, a proportion that would be considered highly auspicious (Annanth 1998:129) (Figure 9). The actual internal organization of the house seems to also mirror *Vãstuu*. The kitchen is located in the north-northeast corner of the building. According to *Vãstuu*, the kitchen fire in this location is the location of the deities *Kubera* (wealth), *Isa* (water). These gods of wealth and water "should respectively pervade the northern and northeastern areas, which are associated with cooking, eating, and drinking" (Moore 1983:351). On the south and eastern side of the structure is a long narrow room or internal division. This division, too thin to be an actual living room, was most likely a porch or congregation area. This is also consistent with *Vãstuu*. In many houses in southern India, the southeast "is the location for a porch or sitting room in which persons from outside the house are greeted and entertained" (Moore 1983:354).

The above analysis is not meant to establish the identity of the laborers. We know that from oral historical sources. Rather it demonstrates two aspects of the East Indian House (House Area 14). First, the patterns of material culture, the construction of the house, and the layout of the house were anomalous. Some of these anomalies could be explained through economic positioning vis-à-vis the larger laboring community. Second, the anomalies could be the result of practices established in South Asia and brought to Jamaica as part of a cultural framework that underscores the use of materials and the construction of space.

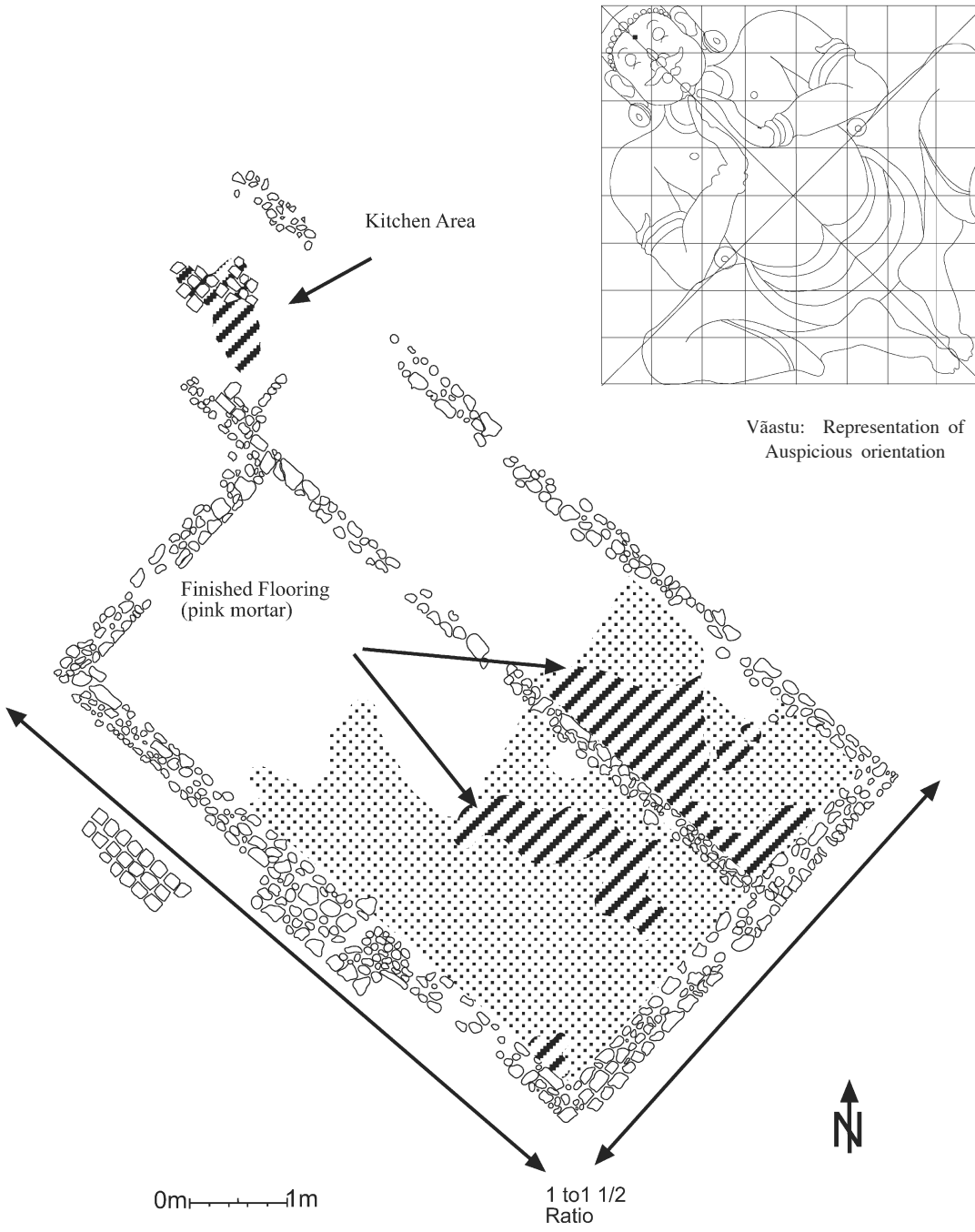


FIGURE 9. Locus 4 structure and its correspondence to *Vãstuu* mandala.

Conclusions

In reassessing this distinctive laborer house site at Seville, this study brings to light the presence of East Indians within the Jamaican plantation context. The data show that as laborers, the East Indians shared certain commonalities of economic condition and class structure with their African counterparts and were distinct from plantation management. Clearly, there were divisions among laborers in the post-emancipation era in Jamaica. The

East Indians' household was constructed separate and different from their African counterparts' and reflects very distinct patterns of material use and construction, and layout. These differences between the varying laborer contexts can be tied to preferences related to South Asian and African cultural practices. Given these differences and the reasons for the arrivals of the South Asians within the post-emancipation setting, it is not surprising that their African laborer counterparts viewed these new arrivals with suspicion and even contempt.

The importance of the study is three-fold. First, it presents a definitive case study focusing on a site occupied by indentured East Indian laborers. Second, the combination of chronological control, spatial segregation, and material analysis provides a clear example of diversity among Jamaican laborers. Finally, the study establishes a basis to begin comparative studies of the ethnic identities and cultural preferences among laboring populations and within the Jamaican population as a whole (South Asian, East Asian, African, and European).

REFERENCES

Agrosah, Kofi
1994 *Maroons Heritage: Archaeological, Ethnographic, and Historical Perspectives*. Canoe Press, Kingston, Jamaica.
1999 Ethnoarchaeological Consideration of Social Relations and Settlement Patterning among Africans in the Caribbean Diaspora. In *African Sites Archaeology in the Caribbean,* Jay B. Haviser, editor, pp. 38–64. Markus Wiener Publishers, Princeton, Jamaica.

Alter, Joseph
1999 Heaps of Health, Metaphysical Fitness: Ayurveda and the Ontology of Good Health in Medical Anthropology. *Current Anthropology,* 40(Supplement):S43–S66.

Annanth, Shashikala
1998 *The Penguin Guide to Vāstuu: The Classic Indian Science of Architecture and Design*. Viking Press, London.

Armstrong, Douglas V.
1990 *The Old Village and the Great House: An Archaeological and Historical Examination of Drax Hall Plantation, Jamaica*. University of Illinois Press, Urbana.
1998 Cultural Transformation among Caribbean Slave Communities. In *Studies in Culture Contact: Interaction, Culture Change, and Archaeology*, James G. Cusick, editor, pp. 378–401. Southern Illinois University, Center for Archaeological Investigations, Carbondale.

Armstrong, Douglas V., and Kenneth Kelly
2000 Settlement Patterns and the Origins of African Jamaican Society: Seville Plantation, St. Ann's Bay, Jamaica. *Ethnohistory,* 47(2):369–397.

Atherton, John Harvey
1983 Ethnoarchaeology in Africa. *African Archaeological Review,* 1:75–104.

Bafna, Sonit
2000 On the Idea of the Mandala As a Governing Device in Indian Architectural Tradition. *Journal of the Society of Architectural Historians,* 59(1):20–49.

Black, Clinton
1972 *History of Jamaica*. Canoe Press, Kingston, Jamaica.

Burke, Heather
1999 *Meaning and Ideology in Historical Archaeology: Style, Social Identity, and Capitalism in an Australian Town*. Plenum Press, New York.

Burton, Richard
1997 *Afro-Creole: Power, Opposition, and Play in the Caribbean*. Cornell University Press, Ithaca, NY.

Conkey, Meg
1990 Experimenting with Style in Archaeology. In *The Uses of Style in Archaeology,* M. Conkey and C. Hastorf, editors, pp. 5–17. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge .

Darling, Charles H.
1845 Report of the AGI, 28 October, pp. 84–87. Manuscript, Jamaica National Archives, Spanish Town, Jamaica.
1846 Letter to Lt. Governor Berkeley , 16 December. Votes of the Honourable House of Assembly of Jamaica St Jago de la Vega, pp. 97–98. Jamaica National Archives, Spanish Town, Jamaica.

DeCorse, Christopher R.
1989 Material Aspects of the Limba, Yalunka, and Kuranko Ethnicity: Archaeological Research in Northeastern Sierra Leone. In *Archaeological Approaches to Cultural Identity*, S. Shennan, editor, pp. 125–40. Unwin Hyman, London.
1999 Oceans Apart: Africanists Perspectives on Diaspora Archaeology. In "*I, Too, Am America": Archaeological Studies of African American Life*, Theresa A. Singleton, editor, pp. 132–158. University of Virginia Press, Charlottesville.

Delle, James A.
1998 *The Archaeology of Social Space: Analyzing Coffee Plantations in Jamaica's Blue Mountains*. Plenum Press, New York.

Ebanks, Roderick,
1984 Ma Lou, An Afro Jamaican Pottery Tradition. *Jamaica Journal,* 17(3):31–37.

Green, William A.
1976 *British Slave Emancipation: The Sugar Colonies and the Great Experiment 1830–1865*. Oxford University Press, Oxford.

Hauser, Mark W.
2001 Peddling Pots: Determining the Extent of Market Exchange in Eighteenth-Century Jamaica through the Analysis of Local Coarse Earthenware. Doctoral Dissertation, Department of Anthropology, Syracuse University, NY.

Helms, Mary
1986 Of Kings and Contexts: Ethnohistorical Interpretations of Miskito Political Structure and Function. *American Ethnologist,* 13:506–523.

Higman, Barry W.
1998 *Montpelier, Jamaica: A Plantation Community in Slavery and Freedom 1739–1912*. University of the West Indies Press, Kingston, Jamaica.

Jamaica Almanac
1915 *The Jamaica Almanac for 1915*. Office of the Royal Gazette and Jamaica Times, Kingston.

Jones, Siân
1997 *The Archaeology of Ethnicity: Constructing Identities in the Past and Present*. Routledge, New York.
1999 The *Praxis* of Archaeology. In *Historical Archaeology, Back from the Edge*, P. Funari, M. Hall, and S. Jones, editors, pp. 219–232. One World Archaeology Series. Routledge Press, New York.

Kelly, Kenneth
1989 Slaves No More: An Archaeological Comparison of Two Post-Emancipation House Sites on Drax Hall and Seville Estate, St. Ann's Jamaica. Master's thesis, College of William and Mary, Williamsburg, VA.

Kelly, Kenneth, and Douglas Armstrong
1991 Archaeological Investigations of a Nineteenth-Century Free Laborer House, Seville Estate, St. Ann's, Jamaica. In *Proceedings of the 13th International Congress for Caribbean Archaeology. Reports of the Archaeological-Anthropological Institute of the Netherlands Antilles*, 9:429–435.

Knibb Sibley, Inez
1978 *Dictionary of Place Names in Jamaica*. Institute of Jamaica, Kingston.

Moore, Melinda
1983 *Taravad: House, Land, and Relationship in a Matrilineal Hindu Society.* Doctoral Dissertation, Department of Anthropology, University of Chicago. UMI, Ann Arbor, MI.

National Library of Jamaica
1847 Plan of Priory, Parish of Saint Ann, Jamaica. Map for the Reverend J. Smith, Intended for the Purposes of Conveyance for Various Individuals, May, 1842. Maps, Saint Ann 349, National Library of Jamaica, Kingston.

Orser, Charles, editor
2001 *Race and the Archaeology of Identity*. University of Utah Press, Salt Lake City.

Parboosingh, Ivan
1984 An Indo-Jamaican Beginning. *Jamaica Journal*, 17(3): 2–9.

Provok, Carolyn V., and Mohammed Hemmasi
1993 East Indian Muslims and Their Mosques in Trinidad: A Geography of Religious Structures and the Politics of Ethnic Identity. *Caribbean Geography,* 4:28–48.

Roberts, George
1957 *The Population of Jamaica*. Kraus Reprint Co., Millwood, NY.

Sackett, James
1990 Style and Ethnicity in Archaeology: A Case for Isochrestism. In *The Uses of Style in Archaeology*, C. Hastorf and M. Conkey, editors, pp. 32–43. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

Shepherd, Verene
1988 Indians and Blacks in Jamaica in the Nineteenth and Early-Twentieth Centuries: A Micro-Study of the Foundation of Race Antagonism. In *After the Crossing: Immigrants and Minorities in Caribbean Creole Society*, Howard Johnson, editor, pp. 95–112. Frank Cass and Company, London.

South, Stanley
1977 *Method and Theory in Historical Archaeology*. Academic Press, New York.

Stark, Miriam
1998 *The Archaeology of Social Boundaries*. Smithsonian Institution Press, Washington, DC.

Thomas, Mary
1974 *Jamaica and Voluntary Laborers from Africa: 1840–1865*. Institute of Jamaica, Kingston.

Trigger, Bruce
1995 Romanticism, Nationalism and Archaeology. In *Nationalism, Politics, and the Practice of Archaeology*, P. Kohl and C. Fawcett, editors, pp. 263–279. Routledge, London.

Wadley, Susan
2000 From Sacred Cow Dung to Cow "Shit": Globalization and Local Religious Practices in Rural North India. *Journal of the Japanese Association for South Asian Studies*, 12:1–28.

WIESSNER, POLLY
1990 Is There a Unity to Style. In *The Uses of Style in Archaeology*, C. Hastorf and M. Conkey, editors, pp. 105–112. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge.

WILLIAMS, BRACKETTE
1991 *Stain on My Name, War in My Veins: Guyana and the Politics of Cultural Struggle*. Duke University Press, Durham, SC.

WUJASTYK, DOMINIK
1998 *The Roots of Ayurveda: Selections from Sanskrit Medical Writings*. Penguin Press, New Delhi, India.

DOUGLAS ARMSTRONG
DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
209 MAXWELL HALL
SYRACUSE, NY 13244

MARK W. HAUSER
DEPARTMENT OF ANTHROPOLOGY
SYRACUSE UNIVERSITY
209 MAXWELL HALL
SYRACUSE, NY 13244