

An Archaeology of Modernity in Colonial Jamaica

James A. Delle, Department of Anthropology and Sociology,
Kutztown University of Pennsylvania, P.O. Box 730, Kutztown,
PA 19530, USA
E-mail: delle@kutztown.edu

ABSTRACT

The rise of modernity in Europe resulted in the redefinition of social relations between those in control of the apparatus of the state and economy on the one hand, and those who worked and lived within that apparatus on the other. This shift in the definition of the basic social unit from subject to individual citizen was fraught with tension, and resulted in vast changes in the lives of colonized people throughout the European sphere of control. While the material manifestations of these historical processes were many, this article considers how two phenomena associated with modernity impacted the lives of people enslaved at Marshall's Pen, a Jamaican coffee plantation, in the opening decades of the 19th century. These two considerations included the spread of mass-produced goods mediated through the rise of consumerism visible through archaeologically recovered material culture, and shifting definitions of the relationships between space and social organization reflecting in changing settlement patterns of village life.

Resumen: La expansión de la modernidad en Europa redefinió las relaciones sociales entre quienes controlaban el aparato estatal y la economía y quienes trabajaban y vivían dentro de ese aparato. Este cambio en la definición de la unidad social básica, de sujeto a ciudadano individual, estuvo plagado de tensión y produjo vastas transformaciones en las vidas de los pueblos colonizados en la esfera de control europeo. Las manifestaciones materiales de estos procesos históricos fueron muchas; este artículo considera cómo dos fenómenos asociados con la modernidad impactaron en las vidas de las personas esclavizadas en Marshall's Pen, una plantación jamaicana de café, en las primeras décadas del siglo XIX: la difusión de bienes producidos en masa, mediada por el consumismo visible en la cultura material arqueológica; y las definiciones cambiantes de las

relaciones entre espacio y organización social, reflejadas en los cambios de los patrones de asentamiento de las aldeas.

Résumé: La redéfinition des relations sociales, entre d'un côté, ceux qui contrôlent l'appareil de l'état et de l'économie, et de l'autre, ceux qui travaillent et vivent dans cet appareil, est le résultat de la montée de la modernité en Europe. Ce changement dans la définition de l'unité de base du social, d'un sujet à un citoyen individuel, a été rempli de tension et a résulté en des changements importants dans la vie des colonisés dans toute la zone contrôlée par l'Europe. Alors que les manifestations matérielles de ces processus historiques ont été nombreuses, cet article considère comment deux phénomènes associés à la modernité ont eut un impact sur la vie des esclaves de la plantation de café jamaïcaine Marshall's Pen, dans les première décennies du 19^{ième} siècle. Ces deux considérations incluent la dispersion de produits de masse, véhiculés par la montée de la consommation et visible à travers la culture matérielle archéologique, ainsi que l'évolution des définitions des relations, entre espace et organisation sociale, visible dans le changement du mode d'établissement relatif à l'organisation de la vie villageoise.

Introduction

One cannot understand the broad historical movement known as “modernity” without understanding its entanglement with European colonialism. Modernity can be considered a social and intellectual cable woven from multiple strands—each of which can exist beyond modernity, but collectively making up the fabric modernity’s cable. The various strands of modernity include the mass production of what have become known as consumer goods, the definition of people as self-regulating subjects of a centralized state authority, and a belief or understanding that the universe and its physical and social manifestations operate on rational principles that can be scientifically understood and manipulated to liberate humanity from the constraints of nature. Colonialism in the late 18th and early 19th centuries was a process through which the elements of modernity—including consumerism, subjugation to a central authority, and rationalized ethnic, racial, and gender hierarchies—were negotiated between European and non-European peoples.

Whereas previous work on archaeology and modernity has critically analyzed the practice of archaeology as a product of both modernity and colonialism (e.g., Baker 1990; Lucas 2004; Schnapp et al. 2004; Silliman

2005, 2006; Thomas 2004a, b; Trigger 1984, 1989; Watkins 2003), this paper seeks to understand how modernity itself is manifested in the archaeological record in the context of a colonial plantation, Marshall's Pen, an early 19th-century coffee plantation located in central Jamaica. The point of departure for this analysis, as a work of archaeology, is the recognition that the many strands of modernity have left a material legacy that can be interpreted through archaeological practice. Here, we shall examine how the spread of consumerism of mass-produced goods and the re-organization of village spaces were manifestations of colonial modernity at Marshall's Pen. Before delving into the particulars of the case study, however, it may be best to situate Marshall's Pen in its historical context.

Slavery, Colonialism, and Coffee Production in Jamaica

It can be reasonably argued that the ascendancy of Europe in the 17th and 18th centuries, and the concomitant rise of modernity in Europe, was in large measure due to the success that various European polities had in establishing and exploiting overseas colonies. The experiences of colonial and colonized people in diverse parts of the world varied significantly, depending on a variety of social factors, not the least of which was the labour regime that framed social relationships between the various segments of the colonial population (Delle 1998; Lightfoot 2004; Milanich 1999; Silliman 2001, 2004, 2006; Rothschild 2003; Voss 2008).

African slavery was the dominant labour system in Jamaica from the time the British took the island from the Spanish in 1655 through to the abolition of slavery in 1834. Although there was some variation, the primary structuring principle of Jamaican slavery was what is known as the gang system. On most Jamaican plantations, the enslaved population was divided into three or more labour gangs, segregated by age and ability, with the strongest adults working in the "great" or "first" gang. Adolescents and weaker adults worked in the "second" or "small" gang, and children generally between the ages of 5 and 12 worked in the "third" or "children's" gang (Higman 1995:158–168). The field gangs were responsible for general agricultural labour; each was supervised by one or more enslaved "drivers." Other members of the enslaved community worked in specialized jobs, including skilled trades positions (e.g. coopers, carpenters, masons), medical trades (e.g. doctor, doctress, nurse, midwife), or as domestic servants (Higman 1995:170–179; Delle 2002). This system remained in place until 1834, when Parliament legislated the abolition of slavery in the West Indies. A limited form of bonded labour, called the "Apprenticeship," remained as a transitional socioeconomic formation until 1838, when it, too, was abolished (Delle 1998; Holt 1992).

The primary reason for the existence of this slave system in Jamaica was to provide colonial planters with a consistent supply of labour for the production of exportable agricultural commodities, notably sugar and coffee. The social relationships created under slavery were complex; among the complexities of Jamaican slavery was the necessity of the enslaved to feed themselves through the production of what were called “ground provisions,” generally tubers, vegetables, and fruits that the enslaved produced for themselves in kitchen gardens and small farm plots. These farm plots were located in what the Jamaican planters called “provision grounds.” Some enslaved families also raised fowl and swine that they used to feed themselves and to sell; plantation records indicate that the enslaved engaged in cash exchanges with the white plantation staff, who purchased foodstuffs from the enslaved members of the plantation community for cash (Delle 1998, 2002). Cash was also circulated among the enslaved through their participation in Sunday markets, generally held in towns, in which enslaved people exchanged goods they produced in their gardens and grounds, as well as purchased manufactured goods from independent merchants known as “higglers.” Itinerant merchants, many enslaved themselves, also travelled between more remote plantations, distributing manufactured goods to those without ready access to market towns. Although it was unlikely that many enslaved people in Jamaica worked for wages, they did own some of the products of their labour which they exchanged in these venues (Delle 2002; Hauser 2001, 2008; Mintz and Hall 1960).

The locus of production in Jamaica was the agricultural plantation. Although there was significant variation in plantation layout and design, the vast majority of estates shared a basic spatial logic. The plantation was spatially and socially segregated. Elite spaces included great houses, which were the plantation mansions in which the owners of the estates lived and socialized with their peers. Even if the owner of an estate was an absentee proprietor, i.e., they lived in Great Britain or elsewhere off-island, a great house would be built and maintained. The white plantation staff lived in a series of more modest houses, including an overseer’s house and occasionally a bookkeeper’s house. In the Jamaican social structure, the overseer was the plantation manager, while one or more bookkeepers would be on staff; these latter could be considered overseers-in-training. The books they kept were not necessarily the accounts for the plantation as in modern usage of the term “bookkeeper,” but rather journals of the daily operations of the estate. Usually young men, bookkeepers were responsible for supervising specific tasks to be done on a given day. Plantations also included industrial works in which the crops were processed for export. For sugar production this included a mill to crush sugar cane, a boiling house, a curing house, and usually a rum distillery. For coffee production, this included pulping and grinding mills for the processing of raw coffee berries

into exportable beans, and drying platforms known as barbecues on which the coffee beans would cure following the wet process of pulping. Plantations also included one or more villages in which the majority of the enslaved community lived, though several people, particularly domestic servants, might live in the overseer's house or the great house. Agricultural fields also were part of the plantation landscape, as were the provision grounds. Such was the social and physical context of Jamaica in the early 19th century, when the Earl of Balcarres established a coffee plantation to be known as Marshall's Pen.

An Archaeology of Modernity at Marshall's Pen

Like most people in pre-emancipation colonial Jamaica, the population of Marshall's Pen lived in a plantation village attached to an agricultural estate. Marshall's Pen was a coffee plantation located in the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains of central Jamaica and was one of three contiguous estates owned by an absentee planter, the former governor of Jamaica, the Earl of Balcarres. Balcarres, a military man who speculated on land and coffee production, had acquired the land that would become Marshall's Pen in 1812. In that same year, the first of two villages was built at Marshall's Pen, and would be occupied only for a single generation, as the village was abandoned in 1838, when apprenticeship was fully abolished in Jamaica, and the population was removed to a newly formed township.

The village was but one component of the plantation's built environment. Like other Jamaican plantations of the early 19th century, the infrastructure at Marshall's Pen included an overseer's house, which served both as a dwelling for the white estate staff on the upper floors and as a pulping mill for coffee production on the lower floor; a series of coffee drying platforms known as "barbecues"; a coffee warehouse known as a "coffee store"; a small great house (built in 1826–1827); a hospital for sick, injured, and pregnant workers; a graveyard; coffee fields; and provision grounds, where the enslaved workers raised food for their own use and for sale.

Marshall's Pen is interesting for a number of reasons, not least of which is that it operated for several years without the presence of white supervision on the estate, being supervised by an overseer on Martins Hill, another of Balcarres' plantations located some 5 miles away. Although the slave village was first built in 1812, by 1815 no great house or overseers' house had yet been built at Marshall's Pen. It was not until 1819 that William Powell, the first white employee at Marshall's Pen, was hired to supervise coffee production there; the documentary records of the estate suggest that this is the date that the house was completed. Prior to this date, at

least three separate groups of enslaved workers had been relocated to Marshall's Pen, creating a village, cemetery, and provisioning farms, simultaneously beginning the production of coffee on the estate. In 1814, the population of Marshall's Pen consisted of 59 enslaved people, 25 of whom were younger than 14; only 2 were aged above 31. The population of the plantation grew primarily by the introduction of new people through the purchase of existing labour gangs. In 1816 there were 109 people in the village at Marshall's Pen; by 1829 the number of enslaved people had increased, primarily through such purchases, to 367, though many of these people resided in a new village that opened in 1821.

Between 1998 and 2002, archaeological investigations were conducted in the first village at Marshall's Pen, a settlement that was occupied for 26 years (1812–1838). The archaeological work included a controlled surface collection of the village site, a mapping project that recorded the surficial remains of 10 house compounds, all of which consisted of multiple house platforms flanked by animal pens, the excavation of four house sites within the village, the controlled surface collection of a sheet midden associated with the overseers' house, and the excavation of a privy associated with the overseers' house. The data collected from these investigations inform the analysis presented here of how modernity's spread can be seen in the consumption of mass-produced goods and the continued re-definition of people as self-regulating individuals within a rationalizing sociospatial system.

Consumption of Mass Produced Goods

The 18th century explosion of mass-produced goods concomitantly resulted in the development of consumerism as one of the many strands in the cable of modernity. The rise of factory production based on the wage relationship created an historical set of social relationships mediated by the flow of commodities based on their exchange value; free labour thus became defined by the ability of the industrial oligarchy to set wage levels and determine prices without constraint from government forces, and thus best control the costs of production and the rates of profit. This represented a significant historical shift in the relationship between corporations and governments, as increasingly (particularly in the United States) governments became subordinate to the power and wealth of corporations. While increasing levels of power and wealth were accumulated by the captains of industry, modernity for the multitude largely became entwined with the pursuit of the means to consume what one needed or desired. The resulting conflict between the power of the state to regulate social and economic conditions, and the power of the corporations to freely exploit global

labour became a central issue in modernity's struggle to create cultural hegemony in the middle of the 20th century.

One of the contradictions that emerged in colonial Jamaica was the necessity by the enslaved to purchase industrial, mass-produced goods while not having the regular ability to sell their labour for a wage. Nevertheless, by the early 19th century, enslaved Jamaicans had ready access to cash by virtue of their participation in local market exchange, and a thriving consumer market, controlled by slaves, existed throughout the island (Berlin and Morgan 1991; Hauser 2001, 2008; Mintz and Hall 1960; Mullin 1995; Simmonds 2002). Most historical archaeologists recognize that the mass production of consumer goods after the 1760s changed consumer behaviour, and that this shift is visible in the archaeological record of places like Marshall's Pen (e.g. Cook et al. 1996; Jones 1993; Klein 1991; Mullins 1999a, b; Orser 1992; Shackel 1992). The ubiquitous presence of refined earthenwares in archaeological contexts—particularly creamwares, pearlwares, and whitewares—is a reflection of these shifts in behaviour, and has been associated with the emergence of early modernity by a number of historical archaeologists (e.g. Deetz 1977, 1988; Leone 1999; Mrozowski 2006; Orser 1996). On a larger scale, the introduction of cheap mass-produced consumer goods, including ceramics, led to the decline of local industries, and the increased centralization of the production of consumer goods in factories (Martin 1994, 1996; Miller et al. 1994; Mullins 1996; Staniforth 2003; Spencer-Wood 1987).

Archaeologically, in colonial contexts like Marshall's Pen, this process can be seen through a shift in percentages of mass-produced versus locally-produced goods recovered archaeologically, which logically reflects the types of goods being used at the time the village was occupied. Excavations of Jamaican plantations and urban sites dating to the first half of the 18th century and earlier tend to uncover a significant number of locally-produced coarse earthenware pots, known in Jamaica as yabbas (Armstrong 1990; Hauser 2001, 2008; Hauser and Armstrong 1999; Matthewson, 1972a, b, 1973; Meyers 1999; Reeves 1997). These low-fired ceramics have long been produced throughout the Caribbean—primarily by women—and have been used for a number of utilitarian purposes, including the storage of food and water, as chamber pots, and for cooking stews and pottages. However, these kinds of vessels were replaced over time by mass-produced items, like English refined earthenwares, glass bottles, and iron cooking pots as these became increasingly available. By the early 19th century factory-produced goods were quickly replacing yabbas in Jamaica. For example, at Marshall's Pen, only 1% of the ceramic assemblage was locally produced; Barry Higman's analysis of the ceramic assemblage recovered from Montpellier, a contemporary sugar estate, reflects this same trend (Higman 1998:227). In contrast, Doug Armstrong reports that locally

produced earthenwares make up nearly 12% of the ceramic assemblage from Drax Hall, an early 18th century sugar plantation site (Armstrong 1990:153). In his analysis of the material culture of early 19th-century enslaved households of Juan de Bolas and Thetford plantations in central Jamaica, Matthew Reeves notes a lower percentage of yabbas both in the more recently occupied households and in those households that had a relatively higher economic standing in the plantation hierarchy (Reeves 1997:193–282), reflecting differential access to mass produced goods across time and social distance.

While Higman (1998) supposes that the relative lack of yabbas at Montpelier may have been a function of aesthetic preference, I suggest that it is an artifact of a shifting local economy, in which imported manufactured goods circulated more freely than did locally produced goods, potentially because they were cheaper to procure or because they were more durable, particularly iron pots. Indeed, the accounts kept by Balcarres indicate that in July of 1814, five dozen iron cooking pots were shipped to Marshall's Pen, presumably for distribution to the working population; in 1825 another four dozen arrived. This is reflected in the artifact assemblage recovered from Marshall's Pen. A total of 15 iron cooking pots were recovered from site, distributed equally between the house areas excavated. Similarly, the plantation purchased crates of sundry and assorted earthenwares, shipped from Liverpool, also presumably to be used by the enslaved plantation population. Wilkie and Farnsworth (2005) have argued that such mass produced goods may have found their way into local provisioning markets in the Bahamas, and thus may have been available for purchase by the enslaved (see also Wilkie 2000, 2001). This may also have been happening in Jamaica.

While the wider availability of more durable cooking ware may have led to the decline in use of yabbas, in his study of 18th-century yabbas from several sites throughout Jamaica, Mark Hauser suggests that the observed drop-off in the manufacture and use of locally produced ceramics may be also related to the shifting role women began to play following the abolition of the slave trade in 1807. For many and complex reasons, it has been generally recognized that women played increasingly important roles as field labourers in late 18th- and early 19th-century Jamaica (e.g. Bush 1990, 1996; Delle 2000, 2002; Mair 2001; Mintz and Hall 1960; for others see Hauser 2001:38–39). Hauser suggests that as Jamaican planters began incorporating women more directly into the production of export commodities, women may have had less time for other kinds of activities, like the production of pottery for local markets; the drop-off in yabbas may thus be related to a relative shortage based on a decline in production. The trend toward the feminization of the work force was clearly observable at Marshall's Pen, where in 1825, 62% of the field labour force was comprised

of women, and 85% of adult women were field workers (Delle 2000), a trait that can be observed in other plantation settings (e.g., Bush 1990, 1996; Delle 2002; Dunn 1993; Mair 2001; Shepherd 1999:47–53). This trend reflects the developing economic hegemony of industrialized over local production resulting from modernity's emergence, which presaged if not laid the foundation for the rise of globalization in the subsequent century. This dramatic shift, from local production and consumption to an increased dependence on mass-produced imported goods, clearly would have impacted the daily lives of people in many ways. Material culture plays an active role in the negotiation of daily life (Appadurai 1986; Buchli 2002; Cochran and Beaudry 2006; Kuchler and Miller 2005; Loren and Beaudry 2006; Miller 1986, 1998, 2001; Thomas 1991). A significant element of the quotidian experience of modernity has been, and is, widespread interaction with factory-produced goods transported great distances. Access to and interaction with these objects, cheaply produced and widely consumed whether by choice or necessity, is key to the definition and negotiation of modern individuality, that is, the active expression of self-defined agency within the web of modernity. Indeed, to this day, the iron cooking pot remains a powerful symbol of African Jamaican identity—a symbol and an identity that emerged through the negotiation of colonial modernity.

Social Space and the Self-regulated, Moral Individual

One of the goals of the project of modernity was the liberation of individuals from non-rational social entanglements, including serfdom, *encomienda*, slavery, and other forms of bondage justified by tradition and not on a rational social order. As practiced, this tenet of modernity did not imply equality, but a newly organized form of social hierarchy which imagined the colonized (as well as members of other subordinate social strata) as intellectually, culturally, morally, and ethnically non-modern, and therefore inferior to the modern elite. Modernity imagined the individual existing as part or component of a hierarchically organized social whole—enculturation or habitualization of this social logic was necessary for the successful reproduction not only of the individual but of the whole of society—however that logic be defined. To conform to modernity's demands, labourers needed to be alienated from independent sources of wealth, notably land, and had to be re-trained into the demands and discipline of wage labour (Delle et al. 1999; Johnson 1996; Leone 1995; Orser 1988; Shackel 1993, 1996).

Some historians of slavery, notably Eric Williams (e.g. 1944), link the abandonment of slave labour to the liberalization or modernization of the emerging global capitalist economy that best functioned with wage labour.

Under the slave regime, human beings were considered a capital asset, much like land or the physical plant of a plantation. Planters' wealth was assessed in large measure by the value of the enslaved workers attached to their estates. This conception of labour radically differed with modernity's definition of human beings as nominally self-regulating and disciplined members of a coherent socioeconomic order, whose lower ranks would be valued by their economic output (measured by a complex ratio of profits to wages) rather than as a capital asset. The tensions that emerged from this contradiction resulted in a legislated end to slavery in the British West Indies through the passage of the Emancipation Act of 1833.

The planters' frustration with the inability to control labour and impose standardized wages following emancipation has been well documented. For example, in a previous study on coffee plantations on the southern slope of Jamaica's Blue Mountains (Delle 1998, 1999), I documented that many coffee plantation labourers acquired land through purchase, lease, or rent, primarily to free themselves from relationships with the plantation system. Apprenticed labourers routinely refused to work beyond their allotted 45 hours for the plantation managers, preferring to work their own land instead. One plantation manager noted that the apprentices on his plantation were "lazy, insubordinate, and extremely insolent" (PP 1835:50) and that he had "several times begged them to pick coffee in their own time... but could not get one to do so this year" (PP 1835:100). Between August 1834 and August 1835, Stipendiary Magistrates assigned to supervise the transition away from slavery recorded over 20,000 incidents of apprentices found guilty of either neglect of duty, disobedience, or indolence (Delle 1998:175). What these incidents record is the way that emancipated Jamaicans were contesting the imposition of wage labour. Not surprisingly, coffee production declined dramatically during the apprenticeship period throughout Jamaica, falling nearly 34% on average from the 5 years previous to emancipation (16 million pounds of coffee exported) to the 5 years following emancipation, which included the apprenticeship period (11 million pounds of coffee exported).

The colonialists in Jamaica attempted to impose not only labour discipline, but moral discipline onto the emancipated slaves. To this end, as I have argued elsewhere (Delle 2001), missionaries and planters co-operated, at least inherently, in the design and construction of post-emancipation townships as part of the concerted effort to re-enculturate the labouring population simultaneously to the demands of wage labour and the Protestant God (Delle 2001). Prior to emancipation, enslaved workers throughout Jamaica had access to small subsistence farms in the provision grounds (Mullin 1995; Sheridan 1995; Mintz and Hall 1960), which provided them with a space free from the constant gaze of white supervisors. Access to provision grounds allowed for the development of a sophisticated internal

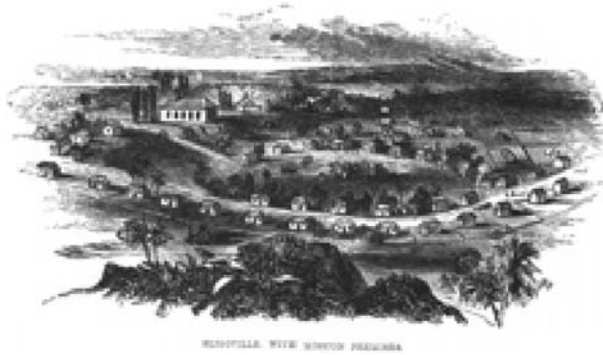


Figure 1. Sligoville, a post-emption town in central Jamaica. Source: Phillippo 1843

market system through which enslaved peoples could sell surplus production for cash and through which they could purchase consumer goods for their own use (Hauser 2001, 2008; Mullin 1995). This system created some measure of economic independence from the estates. However, modernity depended not on the creation of an independent peasantry, but wage-labourers. While many emancipated slaves desired to own or lease land and thus to become self-sufficient after slavery, the planters needed access to cheap and continuous labour. Creating townships near estates was one strategy employed by planters, with the cooperation of missionaries; selling or charging rent on small pieces of land was one strategy employed to alienate the population from the provision grounds and to encourage dependency on wages.

One missionary involved in the creation of the post-emption townships was James Phillippo, who published a memoir of his missionary efforts in Jamaica, in 1843. Phillippo described several townships, including Sligoville and Clarkson's Town. According to his account, plots within the townships were small, oblong squares, regularly placed along intersecting streets. He notes through a quoted letter from a correspondent that many "of the settlers had not a penny when they came; but they worked, and paid for the land...They have erected comfortable cottages, and are now living in perfect happiness" (Phillippo 1843:222). Contemporary images of the pre-emption townships suggest that the houses were laid out on a grid pattern, with the land subdivided and sold to those who could afford to purchase the land apparently through selling their labour to neighbouring estates (Figure 1).

For the villagers of Marshall's Pen, this element of modernity was manifested in the shifting settlement patterns of village organization that emerged following the full emancipation of the work force in 1838. During the course of its operation as a coffee plantation, two slave villages were

constructed and inhabited at Marshall's Pen. The earlier of the two was built in 1812 (CM 23/8/67) and populated by a mixed group of people between December 1813 and April 1814; some were relocated from another of Balcarres's estates, while the majority were purchased as a group specifically to work at Marshall's Pen (CM 23/8/71). By October 1821 a second village was constructed to house a group of people relocated from the contiguous Martins Hill Plantation, which was undergoing a transition from a coffee plantation to a type of cattle ranch known in Jamaica as a pen; many of the enslaved workers from Martins Hill were shifted to this New Village at Marshall's Pen, as comparatively few people were needed to work the pen. At the conclusion of the apprenticeship period, the earlier village—in which we excavated—was abandoned, and the newer village transformed into a township, known to this day as Balcarres Town or Balcarres Township.

Several lines of evidence indicate that there was a considerable shift in village organization between 1812 and 1821. The earlier village, which was constructed in several phases, was built largely without direct supervision by the white estate staff, whose functions included not only supervising the construction of Marshall's Pen, but the day-to-day operations of two other estates, including Martins Hill and Shooters Hill Pen. Two early maps of the estate indicate the location of the two villages, and give a rough approximation of the shapes of the villages (Figure 2). The earlier village

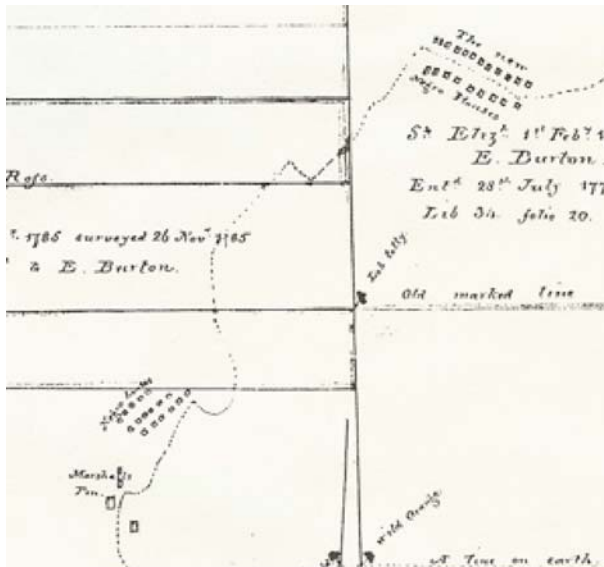


Figure 2. The relative locations and layouts of the villages at Marshall's Pen. Source: Crawford Muniments

consisted of a clustered series of houses ranging up a hill, while the second village was more rationally organized in two rows of houses lining either side of a central road (Figures 3 and 4). As part of our archaeological investigations, the earlier village was mapped, as the ruins of the village,

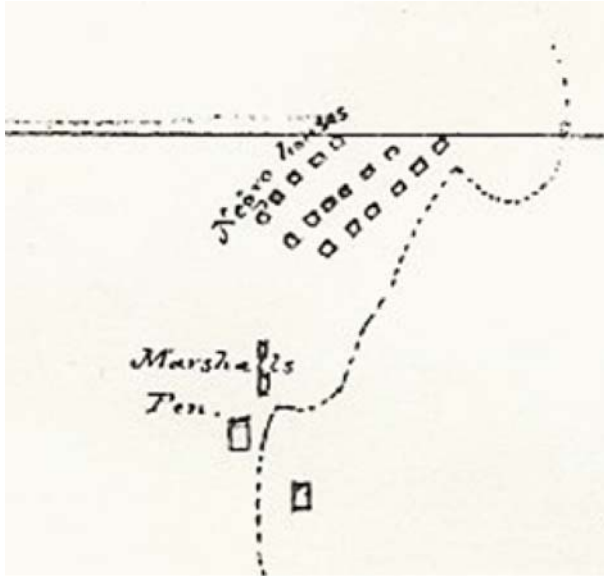


Figure 3. The first village at Marshall's Pen. Source: Crawford Muniments

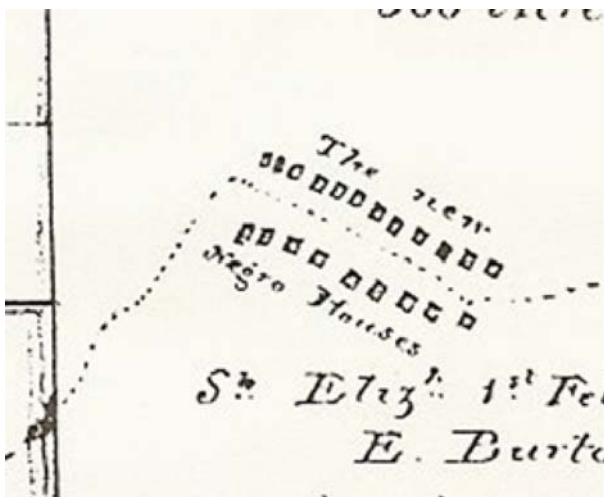


Figure 4. The New Village at Marshall's Pen. Source: Crawford Muniments

including house platforms, retaining walls, and animal pens, are still visible from the surface. Unfortunately, because Balcarres Township is still inhabited, we could not conduct a similar survey there. However, the layout of the modern township, which can be reconstructed from government survey maps and aerial photographs, does give a sense of how the township—and quite likely the antecedent village—was organized.

The results of our archaeological survey indicate that the earlier village was organized as a series of 10 multi-house compounds, each bounded either by a stone fence or a series of retaining walls. The houses tend to surround a central yard space, and several are flanked by stone pigpens. European observers had difficulty understanding the spatial logic of villages organized this way. Phillippo, for example, described slave villages as unsightly; to his eyes the houses “were thrown together without any pretense to order or arrangement” (Phillippo 1843:216). What he may well have been witnessing was a settlement organization very similar to the clustered house compound pattern we recorded at Marshall’s Pen, and similar village plans noted elsewhere in Jamaica by Higman (1998) and Armstrong and Kelly (2000). The cartographic data also indicates that several houses were dispersed among the provision grounds and coffee fields of Marshall’s Pen (Figure 5). This arrangement would have allowed people the opportunity to live nearer to their fields. Alternatively, these

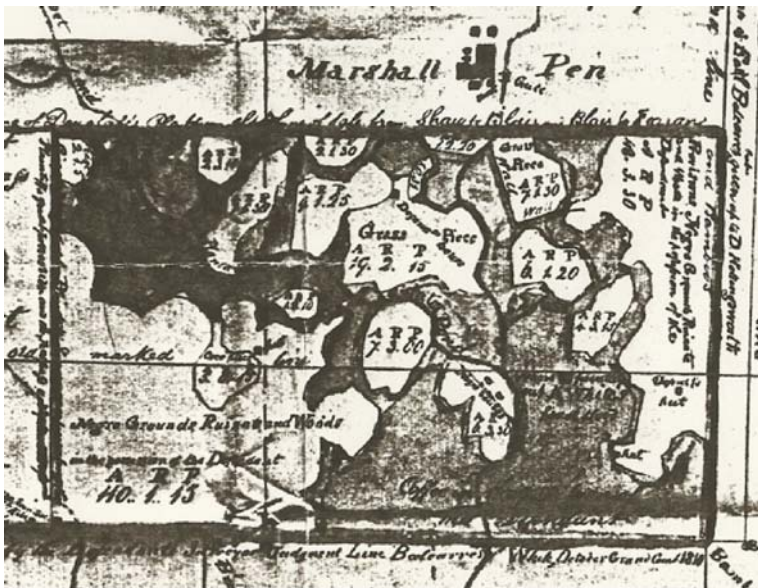


Figure 5. Houses dispersed through the provision grounds and coffee fields. Source: Crawford Muniments

may represent smaller houses that were occupied periodically by people who lived in the villages, but maintained smaller shelters near their provision grounds, using them for shelter during sudden storms, or as a private retreat. This settlement pattern can still be observed among Jamaican farmers today, who may reside in a village or other settlement, but maintain a small house on lands they cultivate, which sometimes can be several miles away from their main home.

The rationalization of slave housing and villages was a topic some planters thought deeply about. In the years following the 1807 abolition of the slave trade, a number of treatises were published to provide advice on how best to keep the existing enslaved population alive. This was of particular concern to the planters following the abolition of the slave trade, as the enslaved Jamaican population had not been able to maintain itself through natural increase. Such advice on what was termed “amelioration” of the conditions of slavery can be read as a system of modernization, or the imposition of the ideas of modernity onto the enslaved population. To this end, one reformer, Dr. David Collins, suggested that the organization of houses and villages attached to estates needed to be rethought. In his estimation “houses should be placed more apart than they are now; an interval of 30 feet being the least that ought to be allowed....They should be arranged in equidistant lines...to admit a more direct communication between them” (Collins 1803:118–119). Such advice seems to have informed the construction of the second village at Marshall’s Pen, and thus by extension, the settlement organization of Balcarres Township (Figures 4 and 6). The linear, equidistant arrangement of houses, reflecting the symmetry and order of modernity’s imagined social structure, is visible both in the historic map of the pre-emancipation village, and in the modern settlement pattern of Balcarres Township. It should come as no

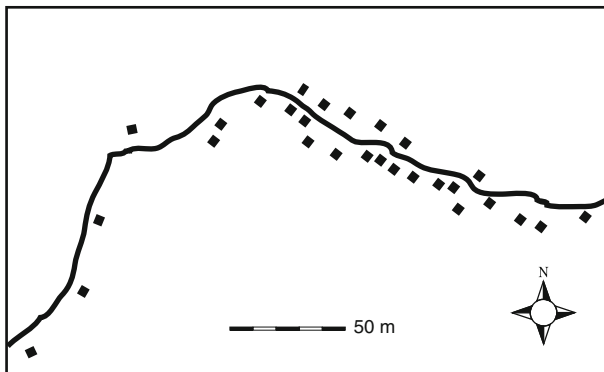


Figure 6. A composite reconstruction of the layout of Balcarres Township, redrawn by James A. Delle in 2008. Sources: Jamaica Survey Department, Crawford Muniments

surprise that the population was evicted from the older village, organized as it was into house compounds with shared access to yard, garden, and animal pen space, and moved to the more “rational” settlement that would become Balcarres Township. By thus removing people from the spaces they had designed and occupied, including the provision grounds, the plantation managers were attempting to create a condition by which the villagers would be required to work for wages, in order to pay rent on their houses in Balcarres Township.

The new structural form of the township served to reinforce the socio-spatial logic of modernity. Rather than live in shared yard compounds, which was evident in the spatial pattern of the first village at Marshall’s Pen, those living in the township lived on individual house lots, linearly organized. This form of village layout both reflected and help create the sense that each individual was a separate component part of a rationally ordered social whole, and spatially served to sever the ties of family and community evident in the more communally organized village built in the absence of direct white supervision.

Conclusion

Following the thesis of Horkheimer and Adorno (2002), I believe that one of the central thematic tensions of modernity as an historical process is the contradiction between the concepts of free will and authoritarian constraint. While the question of colonial slavery has been but one of the many contradictions to plague modernity, in the first half of the 19th century it was arguably the central question, and would presage the crisis of modernity faced by the authoritarian regimes of the 20th century. While the significance of the contributions to the overthrow of colonial slavery made by those fighting for their own freedom cannot be overstated, their success occurred within a context in which deeper historical processes, relating to the emergence of modernity, redefined economic and social relations, and thus changed the expectations the African peoples in the Caribbean had as to what part they would play in modernity’s emerging world order.

For the villagers of Marshall’s Pen, modernity was experienced in many ways. Like colonized people throughout the Caribbean, the imposition of ethnic and racial hierarchies would marginalize people as non-modern, and full citizenship would be denied to them for decades. The imposition of a wage structure, a contested process, would marginalize many colonial peoples economically, just as racial hierarchies marginalized them socially. The construction of new physical and social spaces would reinforce modernity’s social and economic order on the physical and social landscape of

Jamaica. The shift in the kinds of material culture available to enslaved Jamaicans, from locally produced wares to factory-produced goods, served to transform many Jamaicans from producers to consumers. The negotiation of these colonial processes, evident at places like Marshall's Pen, wove the colonized all the more tightly into the cable of modernity.

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