

JAMAICAN ETHNIC DRESS: AN EVOLUTION OF CULTURES FROM POST  
EMANCIPATION 1838 TO INDEPENDENCE 1962

by

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ABSTRACT

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Jamaican Ethnic Dress: An Evolution of Cultures from Emancipation 1838 to Independence 1962

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The purpose of this study was to examine the cultural background and clothing of the women who came to Jamaica during and after slavery, with the intention of creating contemporary ethnic garments reflecting the evolution of these cultures.

The literature review illuminated the fact that the people of Jamaica have evolved from a historical process of colonialization that brought various peoples together forming a multi-ethnic nation. The Jamaican culture is a synthesis of all these various cultures which occurred during the process of creolization, however the popular culture is heavily influenced by the African heritage, while all formal lifestyle and behavior is definitely British. This evolved from a long process of resistance and struggle with colonialism and

slavery. All immigrants brought their customs in dress to Jamaica but had to adapt to their new environment and the demands of the dominant ruling culture of the Europeans. This resulted in European styled clothing for all Jamaicans.

Traditional garments from three of the cultures (Africa, India and China) were selected as design inspiration for the new ethnic garments. This resulted in ethnic garments combining modern western, African, Indian and Chinese elements with a Jamaican influenced fabric. This fabric was designed by the blending of elements from the national symbols to represent a Jamaican value and national identity. Embodied in these garments are the past, present and the future.

The findings revealed that although Jamaica is a multi racial country, the majority of Jamaicans are of African descent that resisted and protested the domination and oppression of the ruling European culture. Adopting European dress by these women was a political act that expressed their rejection of oppression, and also shows that they too can be 'ladies'. Dress was a form of expression and resistance.

This design study created new garments for the modern Jamaican woman that reflects her heritage and roots. The new designs inspired by the Jamaican multi racial cultural heritage were executed in the newly designed fabric which was the unifying element. The combination of several elements from the various cultures into one outfit truly reflected the national motto Out of Many, One People. The garments showed influences from the past, but were modern, functional, suitable for different occasions, and are aesthetically pleasing. The garments and presentation boards were displayed at UW-Stout Research Day.

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Jamaica is a diverse island, mixing African traditions with cultures from the English and Spanish influences (Whigham-Desir, 1996). The Island has evolved into this modern indigenous culture as a result of its unique history. According to Dow (1995) this evolution of culture is the direct outcome of freed slaves, other plantation workers, and a broken colonial system of white ruling class at the top and slaves at the bottom.

Each group of people left behind a trace of its culture that is uniquely blended into one culture hence the motto "Out of Many, One People". Dixon (1998) has documented in the Jamaica Vacation Guide, several cultural influences on food, dance, music, language and religion but no reference was made of the influence on clothing.

The historians have recorded that the Arawak or Taino Indians who were the first inhabitants, wore very little or no clothing. The National coat of arms shows the Indians wearing only skirts made from leaves. The Africans, the largest of all the groups of people imported to the island by means of slavery, were not allowed to retain any of their cultural artifacts. However, slavery did not completely erase the memories and stories of African cultures that were passed on from one generation to the next by word of mouth. The African influence is seen today in story telling, especially about the mystical and cunning Anansi, an African fable; dance such as Kumina and the Gerrah; and music such as the mento. While the Africans were the only people who came as slaves, other immigrants came as indentured workers and were not forced to abandon their cultures. After approximately 300 years of British rule, the people were socialized into a British lifestyle and value system. White meant power and everything good, while

Black or African was considered powerless, uncivilized, worthless, ugly, and lacking in prestige and status. This was extended to dress and appearance. Miller (1973) stated that black was considered powerful only in terms of physique for hard labor and excessive sexuality.

When the island became independent in 1962, a national costume was developed. This dress was designed in a peasant style using fabric that came from India (Appendix A). This fabric called "Bandana" (Hindu for handkerchief) is lightweight plaid cotton, originally called Madras. It was originally cut and sold in squares and was used for handkerchiefs. The story is recorded that a shipment of bandana was sent from Madras to Bombay in India. However the shipment ended up in Bombay, Manchester in Jamaica. This fabric was auctioned off to the slave owners who in turn gave it to their slaves. They wore it as head ties and long skirts on festive occasions (Weir, 2000). This researcher grew up seeing her great grand mother (a direct descendent from a slave) wearing this fabric in the form of head ties and aprons. It was the norm in the community to wear such attire.

The national costume is used in cultural activities all over the island as a costume, not as a normal regular garment. Therefore the researcher proposes to develop garments shaped by the unique cultural experiences of the Jamaican people with emphasis on the African roots and accents from the other cultures. These garments would be modern and appropriate for national events, and could be adapted to suit different occasions and tastes.

This study will show how styles from the different cultures can be used to inspire contemporary ethnic dresses that will be functional and aesthetically pleasing for all social classes in Jamaica.

#### *Statement of the problem*

The purpose of this study is to examine the cultural background and clothing of the women who came to Jamaica during and after slavery, with the intention of creating contemporary ethnic garments reflecting the evolution of these cultures. Data will be collected from history books, newspapers, and photographs from the archives in the National Library, and the University of the West Indies.

#### *Research Objectives*

This study will focus on the following objectives:

1. Giving a brief historical overview of Jamaicans with emphasis on the arrival of the different cultures, and the impact of slavery and colonialization on these cultures.
2. Examining the traditional clothing worn by the Europeans, Africans, Indians, and Chinese women, upon their arrival, which would be used as a means of design inspiration for creating the new ethnic garments.
3. Executing a collection of women's garments inspired by the clothing worn by the dominant cultures, using a new fabric design. This design will be an abstract or stylized motif that will be inspired by the national symbols that truly exemplify Jamaica.
4. Exhibiting the finished lines of garments in a public forum.

### *Assumptions of the study*

The researcher has assumed the following:

That the women had a traditional style of dressing originating from their home country.

### *Definition of terms*

These are terms that will be referred to in the study.

*Colonialism 1:* A policy by which a nation maintains or extends its control over foreign dependencies.

*Creolization 2:* The process of adaptation of the dominant people in Jamaica, to the social, economic, and ecological conditions of the island.

*Creole Society 3:* A society evolving from a colonized space, where elements of the society are mixing, blending and changing its manners, customs, habits inhabitants, and cuisine.

*Emancipation 4:* Freedom from slavery and oppression.

*Ethnic dress 5:* Clothing relating to a racial, religious, national, or cultural group.

*Independence 6:* The state of being political autonomous, free from colonialist rule.

*Indentured servant:* A contract binding one party into the service of another for a specified term.

*Jamaicanized 7:* The process of adaptation of the dominant people (Europeans and Africans) in Jamaica to the social, economic, and ecological conditions of the island.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to design for the modern Jamaican woman this paper will review literature on the various people who constitute the cultural composite in Jamaica. It will discuss the process of creolization and the evolution of the Jamaican identity, reflecting the motto 'Out of Many, One People'. It will also include discussion on some of the relevant social, political and economical changes that occurred during the creolization process.

#### *Historical overview of Jamaicans*

Who are Jamaicans? Sealy (1997) paraphrased Sherlock and Bennett's definition of Jamaicans by stating that the Jamaicans are African people from various parts of West Africa, coming together to form a multi-ethnic nation called Jamaica. They also mentioned the other groups of people who came, but emphasis was placed on the Africans, the largest group who struggled with the Europeans to maintain their identity and culture in a new land. In Murphy's (1995) definition of Jamaicans she acknowledged that the people of Jamaica are mainly of African descent with small but well-established communities of Indians, Chinese, Arabs, Jews, and Europeans. These people from the various continents were brought together through the process of certain historical events that helped to define them in a social hierarchy that exists even today. Both authors have concluded that the present Jamaicans have evolved through a process called creolization or a synthesis of the various cultures heavily influenced by the informal African heritage and a formal British style.

Shepherd (1999a) reiterated the fact that the Jamaican women are of diverse ethnic origins with various cultural backgrounds, which have helped in the shaping of the Jamaican history. This contribution was obscured by the seemingly more important activities of the men such as warfare, trade, religion, government and colonization. Early records did not focus on the indigenous women and only limited research was done on the Portuguese, Lebanese and Jewish women in Jamaica (Shepherd, 1999). Today Jamaican women are more assertive and are demanding a voice in all aspects of life such as education, health care, and politics.

### *The Arawaks*

The history of Jamaica actually started with the Taino Indians or Arawaks from South America who inhabited the island between AD 600 and 900. The Indians named the island Xayamaca, meaning land of wood and water. They lived very simple lives based on fishing, hunting and cultivation of cassava (Essix, 1995). Sherlock and Bennett (1998) argued that although the Indians were continually being described as docile and peaceful, they were in fact Jamaica's first freedom fighters against slavery and the colonization of the early Europeans. They further emphasized that the Taino communities were well organized with established religious beliefs, government and set roles and behaviors for males and females.

Shepherd (1999a) described the Taino Indians as tall attractive people who went about naked or scantily dressed with their bodies decorated with paint, ornamental beads and necklaces. The young women were especially described as very attractive with long straight black hair, and well-shaped naked bodies, which they proudly

displayed. The married women wore underwear and a small piece of cloth around their hips.

The Tainos lived a peaceful life and respected law and order. Their only fear was the man hunting Caribs who captured their women and the fierce god Huracan who brought the hurricanes in the summers. Their lifestyle was basically a communal one in which several families lived together and shared administrative and domestic activities (Sherlock and Bennett, 1998). Shepherd (1999a) recorded a detailed description of the roles of the women. She stated that the women were considered industrious and resourceful, as they did both household and agricultural work. While the men concentrated on non domestic tasks such as warfare, building houses and canoes, fishing, hunting and the training of the boys, the women were involved in childcare, food preparation, and pottery making, and weaving of cloth for making hammocks. The women were considered to be the fertile ones so they tilled the soil and planted crops such as cassavas, sweet potatoes, maize and peppers. It was pointed out that women also performed in non-traditional roles by helping in warfare activities. They were as efficient as the men with a bow and arrow and knew how to defend themselves against the Caribs who constantly captured them as slaves.

The men were the rulers and had all the important roles. They governed the society as chiefs or caciques and were considered as the elite in the society. They were also privileged to have more than one wife. The women were respected and considered very important as they produced the heirs.

The Tainos enjoyed relaxing under the trees, smoking tobacco, telling stories, singing and dancing. According to Morris (date unavailable), men and women enjoyed

playing ball games called batto or batey. This game was played in an open court and was even used to decide the spoils of war (Sherlock and Bennett, 1998).

Religious philosophies were also important to the Indians. They believed in life after death, purgatory and evil spirits. They worshiped a god called Zemis, which was made from clay, stone or cloth. This they would wear around their necks to protect them from evil spirits, hurricanes and the man hunting Caribs (Allen, 1989). Festivals were also an important part of their worship. According to Sherlock and Bennett (1998) the Tainos paid homage to Zemis and the dead chiefs. After purifying themselves, the women would dress up in ornaments and present cassava bread to the Zemis while singing and dancing. The ceremony would end with prayers for protection and prosperity of the people.

. The 60,000 Indians were completely exterminated by the Spaniards during their 80 years of colonizing the island. The few women who survived were raped and their labor exploited. Finally a few escaped to the forested Blue Mountains and later provided refuge for runaway slaves known as the Maroons (Sherlock and Bennett, 1998). Their influence is seen in fishing villages around the island. The famous fish and bammy dish is a prominent part of their legacy.

### *The Europeans*

The first known European to have come to the Caribbean (West Indies) was Columbus (Allen, 1989). When Columbus and his crew arrived in Jamaica in 1494, they were welcomed as gods because of the local legend. According to Sherlock and Bennett (1998), the Tainos believed that strangers fully clothed would come armed with lightening and thunder from the heavens. They presented the strangers with gifts, food

and worked for them for a year after the invasion (Sherlock and Bennett, 1998). In return the Spaniards were very cruel, ungracious and very abusive. They lost no time in claiming the island for Spain and enslaving the people.

Sherlock and Bennett (1998) acknowledged that the Spaniards were encouraged to settle in Jamaica because of the belief that the island possessed great wealth in minerals such as gold. Many Spaniards became disillusioned when no gold was found and so left the island. Others settled and resorted to logging and farming of both local and imported food and animals. The Indians were made to work as slave labor on these farms.

Essix (1995) stated that the Spaniards did very little for the development of the island except to use it as a base for the conquest of the Americas. But according to Sherlock and Bennett (1998), the Tainos under the Spanish supervision built the first Spanish settlement in New Seville, the Governor's palace and started stone carvings on a church, which was never completed. This recognition of the skills of the Tainos seems to be the only positive benefit left by the Spaniards as the indigenous population quickly collapsed under their colonization. Shepherd (1999a) also acknowledged some of the negatives of Spanish occupation. Communities and families were broken as both males and females were used as slave laborers to work in fields and unproductive mines. The women were raped or taken as concubines and domestic workers. The Indians did not survive the brutality of the Spaniards; many Indians committed suicide and infanticide rather than succumb to the inhumane treatment. The Spaniards responded to the depleted Indian labor force by importing Africans to replace them.

The literature reviewed revealed very little about Spanish women. It was documented by Shepherd (1999a), that the earlier explorers and colonizers were men. There were no women on board Columbus's first three expeditions and the few women who came later went mostly to Cuba. The Spanish male made constant reference to the beauty of the Tainos in comparison to their own Spanish women. Sherlock and Bennett, (1998) stated the 1611 census showed 523 Spaniards living in the island but no reference was made about females. When the English took over the island in 1655, 70 Spaniards moved their families, women, children and personal belongings to Cuba and Campede (Sherlock and Bennett, 1998). The reference did not clarify the women as white or native but it can be assumed that maybe they were native as Shepherd (1999a) recorded that the Spaniards settled with the Taino women as concubines and had children with them. These women were the ones who cared for the sick Spaniards, and taught them the skills of food preservation, and growing and weaving cotton.

The influence of the Spanish settlement on the present lifestyle is very minimal. Names of a few places remained intact, such as Ohio Rios, Santa Cruz, and Savanna la Mar. Spanish Town (Jago de la Vega) still has buildings with distinct colonial architectural styles and the significant veranda; a traditional feature in Jamaican homes, is of Spanish influence. Another important legacy is the rice and peas dish that is a favorite of all Jamaicans at home or abroad. The Spaniards ruled the island until 1655 when the English conquered it. The Spaniards eventually fled the island after freeing their slaves. The freed slaves fled to the hills and were a constant irritant to the British. These groups of people, called the Maroons, intermarried with some of the Spaniards who fled to the hills (Brigham Young University, 1999).

The British ruled Jamaica for over 300 years and therefore had the greatest European influence on the people. According to Dow (1995), many of Jamaica's institutions and ideals such as marriage and nuclear family are essentially English. The British captured Jamaica as a consolation prize for England when the expedition failed to capture Hispaniola (Haiti). The island was under populated when the Spaniards left and the slaves fled to the hills. In order to populate the island and acquire workers for the plantations, the British used various schemes to encourage European settlement that continued well into the mid nineteenth century. Many of the early settlers were enticed with land, and all the benefits, privileges and advantages of Englishmen who were born in England (Sherlock and Bennett, 1998). In 1661 only six years after the invasion, Jamaica was made a royal colony in order to extend land titles, credit, and slaves to soldiers and civilians as incentives to migrate (Montieth and Richards, 2002).

Dow (1995) stated that convicts were brought in from England, Scotland, and Ireland to work on the plantations as indentured servants. Both male and female prisoners were promised that after working for 5-10 years, they would be set free and given as much as 30 acres of land (Allen, 1989). This indentured service which was almost equated to slavery, continued until the mid nineteenth century with the arrival of the Indians and the Chinese. Not all white settlers were recruited indentured laborers. Bryan (1998) reported that in 1840 farmers were recruited from Scotland and Germany to occupy the highlands in Jamaica and to reduce access to the blacks. This experiment with European labor failed, so the British resorted to importation of Africans to be used as slaves on the sugar plantations (Essix, 1995).

Massive recruitment of European women started a year after the English took over to correct the imbalanced ratio of males to females and to increase the white population through procreation. The women who came to Jamaica were from different countries and social classes that impacted on their lifestyles on the island. These European women were usually described as beautiful, cultured and delicate depending on their social status and education. There were three main classes of women, the wealthy elites, the middle class who were wives of small estate owners or professionals, and the working or poor class who were mainly indentured and ex-indentured servants (Shepherd, 1999a).

Shepherd (1999a) revealed that the elites were wives of the large plantation owners and government officials such as Lady Nugent who was the Governor's wife. These women were usually educated but were not prepared for a profession. They basically lived a life of leisure in their great homes with slaves to do all their housework and gardening. Their time was spent attending church, literary clubs, tea parties and organizing dances and dinner parties with elaborate food, wines and china much as the gentries in the motherland. Bryan, edited by Johnson and Watson (1998), described the activities of the white elites in the nineteenth century as caste like. These activities such as golfing, bicycle riding, tennis playing, attending the races, concerts, theatre horticultural shows were linked to great wealth acquired through the labor of slaves on the sugar plantations. The early European women did not enjoy much of this social lifestyle of leisure. Shepherd (1999a) revealed that the lifestyle was frugal and basic, it was not until the nineteenth century when the profits from the estate ballooned that the life of luxury started.

Not all European women could live like the elites or the middle class who owned property and slaves. Some women came as indentured servants to work on the estates and were treated almost like slaves. According to Beckles, edited by Johnson and Watson (1998), many of these lower class women were motivated by the pursuit of wealth and a higher social status. Shepherd (1999a), reiterated the fact that these women were mainly prostitutes and convicts. Under their contracts they were given food, clothing and shelter in exchange for labor as field workers, maids, seamstresses and even partners for other white workers. These women had very restricted family lives as the planters felt that this would have a negative impact on their good behavior. Some women rebelled and fled to the hills with the Maroons.

At the end of the indentured period these women were free to work for themselves. According to Shepherd (1999a), many worked as housekeepers, seamstresses and governesses for the elites, others were employed as nurses, teachers and some were involved in trading and operating lodging houses. Others were not as fortunate and emerged as poor illiterate whites who lived mainly in urban slums. They earned their living as higglers who bought and sold produce and other goods in the market. Few ex-indentured workers married elite men and moved to the upper class.

According to Bryan (1998) there were strict division among the white population on the basis of occupation and income. However, the Jamaican white had one prominent common feature, that of "not being black". This strict class division took on a caste- like culture. Bryan (1998) noted that whites maintained their social exclusiveness through marriage and mating patterns, social organizations, and dress.

The elites and middle class did not socialize with the working and poorer class whites as they were considered to be inferior. The German, Scottish and Portuguese laborers, who were recruited as agriculturists, were treated with disdain by both the upper and middleclass whites and the blacks. The arrival of these Europeans created white communities in rural Jamaica. Because they lacked the elite status of white superiority they were described by the term “white laba” (white laborer) by the blacks who had learned that poor whites were also inferior.

The Jews came to the island from Spain and Portugal as early as 1494 (Jamaica Heritage Trust 2001). They are described as a small ethnic group within the white minority population in Jamaica. McGibbon (2001) recounted the history of the Jamaican Jews in a recent newspaper article. She stated that the first Jews were Sephardim who were expelled from Spain and Portugal during the Spanish inquisition. The Jews were recruited to grow sugar cane on the plantations during the reign of the Spaniards but they purchased land and settled down with an active involvement in trade and commerce that continues even today. Even though the Jews were established very early in the history of the island they were discriminated against by the rest of the white population. According to Bryan (1998), they were tolerated because of their wealth, acquired through trading, but, they were not accorded the civil and social freedom as the rest of the white population. The Jews maintained their distinct identity as they evolved into a visible influential and wealthy group. By 1849 they were prominent in politics, social and cultural affairs. Today the Jewish population is very small but their influence is felt in poetry, literature, business and commerce, manufacturing, housing,

and farming. They have served Jamaica as ambassadors, ministers and in the legislative and justice system.

The Syrians and Lebanese came in the last decade of the nineteenth century. They were initially involved in farming of bananas but eventually abandoned that for the more lucrative commercial ventures. Today they play a significant role in commercial and industrial development of the economy. Syrian bread is a very popular Jamaican food.

The British were the most influential of all the Europeans who came to the island. They controlled land, labor and capital, and enjoyed total political power for almost 300 years. The Major legacies of the British are the parliament system, education system, judicial system, religion, architecture, formal lifestyles (meal patterns, eating styles, social events, dressing, etc.) and the prestigious game of cricket. The European minority population in Jamaica today still possesses social power regardless of their original class positions.

### *The Africans*

The first Africans known to have landed in Jamaica were brought there in 1517 by the Spanish settlers who were involved in cattle ranching and animal husbandry (Warner-Lewis, 2002). Under the Spanish colonization the indigenous labor force was exterminated, which necessitated the importation of another cheap exploitable labor force, the Africans. According to Afroz (1999), these Africans were actually Moors of mixed blood of Arabs and Negroes from North Africa living in Spain. The English brought in the second group of Africans during the development of the sugar plantation era. When the English captured the island from the Spaniards in 1655 there were

approximately 2000 Africans on island, most of who fled to the hills to form the Maroons. Warner-Lewis (2002) stated that with the rapid development of the sugar plantation the number of imported Africans grew to 45,000 by 1703. But Shepherd (1999a), recorded a higher figure of eighty eight thousand (88,000) during the same period of 1655-1700 and Burnard (2001), pointed out that the black population showed such rapid growth during that period of 1680-1740 by moving from 32,000 to 117,900, that Jamaica was transformed into a black country. By 1780 forty years later, a total of 544,484 Africans were shipped to Jamaica. This number even surpassed the total number of whites that shipped to all the colonies at that time. According to Sherlock and Bennett (1998), by 1807 there was a total of 747,506 Africans in Jamaica, widening the black- white ratio to 10-1. Regardless of the variation in numbers by the various writers, there was one basic fact: the number of Africans had increased tremendously in the early years. Shepherd (1999a) pointed out that initially more males were imported than females because they were considered to be stronger. Later females were imported to provide company for the males and to perform domestic and fieldwork. Females eventually outnumbered the males by 1829.

According to Burnard (2001), the importation of Africans was necessary because of the failure of white settlement, the continued ill health of the white population who were also dying from diseases, natural disasters and wars. Sherlock and Bennett (1998) and Shepherd (1999a) reported several other reasons for this massive importation of the Africans. They were to help in forming new plantations, increase the labor force and replace the workers who had died from overwork. The Africans were thought to be

better suited to the tropical climate and finally they were thought to be sub-humans who were being rescued from savagery into civilization.

Burnard and Morgan (2001) reported that the Jamaican slaves came in large numbers from every slave-trading region of Africa, except the southeast. He underscored the four main regions that accounted for 90% of slaves in Jamaica. They were Bight of Biafra, the Gold Coast, West Central Africa, and the Bight of Benin. The planters could not select slaves from any particular ethnicity because slaves were gathered from a variety of areas to make a shipment. This resulted in a heterogeneity of ethnic origins that was a feature of African migration to Jamaica. Warner-Lewis (2002) stated that the people who came from Bight of Biafra and central Africa were referred to as moko/moco/mocho and Congo. Allen (1989) stated that 80% of the Africans were from the Ebo tribe in Benin with smaller percentage of the Asante and the Koromantyn tribes. The third and final group of Africans from Yoruba or Congo tribe came in 1864 after emancipation, as indentured servants or laborers. Burnard (2001) concluded that this ethnic diversity of Africans has made a significant mark not only on the demographic profile of Jamaica but also on the cultural life of its people.

Each ethnic group brought a cultural heritage that was quickly adapted in the new environment of slavery and domination. According to Buckridge (1999) the Africans had a rich heritage in dress that reflected one's role, status, age, sex and occupation. This was indicated by the types of ornaments, masks, fabric, jewelry and hairstyles that were worn. Beads made from shells, stone, animal teeth, silver, brass, gold and copper were important not only for decoration but to communicate wealth, sex, age and religious beliefs. Buckridge (1999) pointed out that headdress/ hairstyles also

indicated one's status. Hair was dressed with oil or butter, then plaited or twisted with gold or cotton or shaped with bamboo. These elaborate hairstyles were given names that communicate one's availability. Married or wealthy females wore the more elaborate hairstyles. Headscarves worn either casually or for special occasions were very popular and were both decorative and functional. They were usually made from the same fabric as the dress and provided the woman with a quick alternative to hairstyling. The headscarf also protected the hairstyles, and helped to balance loads on their heads. Buckridge (1999) described the African dressing as very artistic. The body was draped in intricately woven textile made from cotton, which was dyed and printed with natural products such as indigo. This rich heritage of West African custom in dress was quickly dismissed as uncivilized by the Europeans. They believed that the Africans were all naked savages and that the semi nude dress was a sign of backwardness. The African women with their black skin, wooly hair, flat noses, thick lips, high derriere and large bosom were deemed ugly by the European standard. Laws were then passed to civilize the Africans by insisting on their adopting the European dress. The planters gave minimum European styled clothing made from osnaburg, a cheap imported fabric to the slaves. As the number of slaves increased, they were given fabric and sewing tools to produce their own clothing. The slaves then used their creativity and cultural heritage to adapt the European styles to suit the new environment.

The British and the laws that they instituted to control and protect their property, the slaves, governed every aspect of life for the enslaved people. Not only was the law on dressing established but laws on punishment, treatment, family life and religion were enforced. Shepherd (1999a) emphasized the fact that under the law slaves were

property to be controlled by their masters. As a result the Africans were abused both physically and mentally. The white males sexually abused the women even when they were considered to be ugly, inferior, and immoral savages. Shepherd (1999a) reported that some white male even recorded such rapes. One overseer recorded that he raped a woman 42 times. Buckridge (1999) reported that the woman's body was considered to be a breeding machine to reproduce labor force in exchange for some of the basic necessities of life such as clothing. Laws also determined how the slaves cohabited. Marriage was allowed only with permission from the master, and the slave's family could be separated and sold to other estates on the island without notice.

Laws for punishment were adhered to as opposed to the laws for treatment. Planters ignored the laws about treatment as they felt that the slaves could only be controlled by punishment. Shepherd (1999a) pointed out that both males and females were whipped for various offences from 50 lashes for stealing of corn to 300 lashes for running away. Religious beliefs brought from Africa were considered to be backward and the religion of the masters was not for the savages and so was not encouraged by the clergy. The planters felt that converted slaves were difficult to control and would put the island in danger. Religion possibly encouraged equality in all people. Sherlock and Bennett (1998) concluded that the whites had a deep fear of the blacks and their increasing numbers and therefore use these laws to pervert justice and to leave the slaves defenseless.

The lives of the slaves especially the women were difficult as they labored on the plantation. Not only were they used as breeding machines and sex objects but the

greater percentage was given field work because they were considered to be strong and accustomed to agricultural labor in Africa. According to Shepherd (1999a), the women worked 12-16 hours per day in the scorching sun, weeding, digging and planting sugar cane. They were monitored by drivers who were not afraid to use their whips on the backs of these women. Even children as young as 4 years old were grouped in gangs with the elderly and forced to work in the fields. The house slaves or domestics were ascribed a higher status but were required to work even longer hours than the field slaves and were sexually abused and punished severely for resistance, insolence and any tardiness in work. Shepherd (1999a) recorded Ferguson's report on the severity of punishment that was meted out for trivial incidents. A pregnant slave was stripped naked, tied to a tree and flogged by both master and mistress until she lost the baby. She was then flogged to death. This was punishment for not tying a cow securely.

The slaves secured food and money for themselves by cultivating ground provisions such as yams, cassava, corn, bananas and breadfruits and selling in the market on Sundays. This was encouraged by the masters in order to reduce the cost of slave maintenance and as an additional financial endeavor for themselves as slaves had to return a percentage of their earnings. Women sold the ground provisions in the market on Sundays. Sunday market was very important not only for selling but for communicating with slaves from other estates (Shepherd, 1999a). This market system was influenced by traditional forms of West African provision marketing done by women (Simmonds, 1987). Simmonds (1987) also pointed out that the market women were

very important traders in West Africa and have become an important part of the culture of the majority of women in Jamaica.

The enslaved population prepared their food in much the same way as they did in Africa. According to Sherlock and Bennett (1998), basic starchy foods such as yams, plantains and bananas were pounded or beaten with a pestle in a mortar and eaten as 'tum-tum, 'fufu' or buff. Similar foods were given different names depending on the ethnic African origin. Steamed starches such as cassava, and cornmeal were popular in Africa. This was eaten with fish okra, and gungo peas all cooked in coconut milk. Some of these foods are still being prepared and eaten in Jamaica today but with slight adaptations. Warner-Lewis (2002) pointed out that turned cornmeal, a steamed starch, is still being eaten in but was demoted to dog food by the middle class. Salt fish fritters, and porridge made from bananas, corn, and rice are still breakfast foods. A traditional dinner for the slaves was called *musa* or *run down* and consisted of grated green bananas seasoned and made into dumplings and boiled in coconut milk. Another feature of the African food preparation was the use of *annatto* or *ruku* that was used to add a reddish color to oil and food. This was used until the early twentieth century and was then replaced with tomato sauce. *Ackee*, a vegetable imported from West Africa for the slaves, was prepared with salted codfish. It is now the national dish and is prepared in the same manner.

The religious practices of the early African slaves reflected their belief systems taken with them from Africa. One such belief was the concept of the living dead and multiple souls. According to Warner-Lewis (2002), the Africans believed in *duppies*, the

soul of the dead, who could avenge any wrong done to them when they were alive. As a result of such beliefs the slaves performed special death rituals such as wakes, nine night and tombing, to prevent the dead from interfering with the living. Warner-Lewis (2002) recorded a religious practice called Mayal which involved a ritual dance depicting death and rebirth to purify the individual or society from the forces of evil. Tanna (1987) pointed out that a dance ritual called the dinki mini was performed to give support to the bereaved and to emphasize life force. Most of these rituals are still practiced today but have been adapted and evolved into new religious practices or cultural art forms.

Since the slaves came from different ethnic groups with different languages, they had to learn to communicate and so created a new language. According to Sherlock and Bennett (1998), there was no 'Jamaica talk' in the 1700 but by 1800 the Africans learned the English language with an infusion of African influence in words, body movements and proverbs. These Proverbs were a part of the everyday speech for the slaves and are still being used today. One popular proverb from the Ebo tribe about the process of maturity was found in 'pig ask im mooma, 'wha mek yuh mout so long', pig mooma answer, 'yuh a grow; you will learn' (Warner-Lewis, 2002).

Sherlock and Bennett (1998) stated that slaves amused themselves with ring games and dancing songs in African language. Tanna (1987) quoted Nettleford (1985) who said that dancing was more than recreation; it was an instrument of survival used by the slaves to express themselves in a way that was beyond the control of the masters. Dancing became a weapon and a valuable means of self-defense. The

Juncunoo, a traditional African dance, and masquerade were used to mock the masters. It was performed at Christmas time and has been adapted and modified over time to include traditions from the English.

The African slaves who came from different parts of Africa with their distinct cultural practices united because of the common bond of blackness and the desire for freedom. This became the base for most of the Jamaican culture. The influence of the African culture and heritage in Jamaica is tremendous. It is reflected in food, folkways, stories, songs, music, dance, drama, religion, art, language, housing construction, and family life.

### *The Indians*

The East Indians are the largest ethnic minority in Jamaica. They were brought to Jamaica as indentured laborers between 1845 and 1917 (Mansingh and Mansingh, 1976). They have evolved through the struggles of indentureship, social, economic and religious conflicts to become an integral part of the Jamaican society.

After emancipation in 1838, many ex slaves left the estates and moved to the urban areas or settled as small hillside farmers far away from the plantations. Some were driven away from the plantation and their houses destroyed by the plantation owners. These ex slaves refused to work on the sugar plantations mainly to erase the harsh memories of slavery, and also because of the meager wages. This created a serious labor shortage that would severely affect the Jamaican economy. The planters resorted to the indentured labor system which was organized to encourage workers from other countries to come and work for a set number of years after which these

workers were free to leave or extend their contract. The Indians were recruited after the planters effort with European labor failed. According to Mansingh and Mansingh (1976), the planters were so desperate for labor that they imported Negroes from U.S.A., Bahamas and West Africa but this was not sufficient to fill the gap. Finally the East Indians were recruited to expand the Jamaican economy based on the fact that they were successful in reviving the plantations in British Guiana. This kind of labor proved successful and continued until 1917 (The Indian, 1940).

According to Shepherd (1994), the first shipment of 261 East Indians called hill coolies, arrived in Jamaica from Chota Nagpur in 1845. Most of the recruits came from the Northwest Provinces of Agra and Oudh, and others came from central India and Nepal. Most of these Indians who immigrated to Jamaica came from the lowest rung of the ladder which did not portray India in a prestigious light. As a result all East Indians were classed as coolies and were treated as inferiors (The Indian, 1940).

The indentured system under which the East Indians came was a harsh and brutal one and was merely a modified version of slavery.

Many Indians were brought to the island against their will, some being kidnapped. They were kept in depots, were shipped in cramped quarters, female Indians were sexually abused by the white crew and they were subjected to the harsh conditions of labor on the plantation (Shepherd, 1999b, p. 20).

Many East Indians came to Jamaica to achieve economic stability and to start a better life in India. However they were cheated, abused and decentralized.

Mansingh and Mansingh (1976) recorded that the Indians were lured to Jamaica by an inflated picture of prosperity by unscrupulous recruiters. Initially mostly men were

recruited while the women stayed home awaiting the riches. Later entire families were recruited with special emphasis on young women who were needed to help alleviate the shortage of women and to lower the resulting sex crimes. This resulted in kidnapping of several young girls and women. The initial contract under the indentured system stated that the Indians should work on a plantation for a minimum of five years during which they would be provided with proper housing and health care. They were also guaranteed a return passage to India at the end of the contract.

The reality of working in Jamaica was a far cry from the stated contract. Movements on the plantations were restricted and harsh fines were inflicted for infringement of the excessive rules that were imposed upon them. Wages for the 54 hour work week were low, housing inadequate, and health care non-existent. Singh (1940) reported that these extremely low wages affected the Indians' ability to feed themselves and their families properly which resulted in starvation. This rendered the Indians incapable of working. With free return passage to India ignored or forgotten by the government, many Indians resorted to begging in order to survive. Many succumbed to the diseases caused by the unsanitary living conditions, poor nutrition and overwork. Many Indians died without realizing any of the promised wealth.

Research by Mansingh and Mansingh (1976) revealed that 60% of the Indians settled in Jamaica after the end of the contract period. Several reasons were given for the settlement. The official records stated that the Indians stayed because of the poor economic conditions in India, but the research revealed that in fact the return passage was denied or deferred by the government because the hardworking Indians were needed to continue building the economy. Some accepted the money or land that was

offered in lieu of the passage. Shepherd (1985) stated by 1906 the land grant was discontinued because it was more expensive than the passage. Others had formed relationships and new families and many were too poor to return home. Sixty nine percent of the Indians who were introduced between 1845 and 1879 settled in the island and by 1930, when organized repatriation was terminated, the East Indian population was a total of 17,599 (Shepherd, 1985).

Mansingh and Mansingh (1976) elucidate the fact that although the Indians settled in the island, they were treated with prejudice, hate, ridicule and exploitation by many. This was mainly because the Indians were doing the work that the ex-slaves refused to do and because of their 'strange' religion and culture. They were exploited mainly because of inability to communicate in English and not necessarily because of their lack of education. The Indian (1940) stated that because the Indians were recruited from the illiterate section of India and of the lowest caste, they were uneducated and ignorant thus falling prey to various unscrupulous people and schemes. However Mansingh and Mansingh (1999) revealed that the immigrants were in fact taken from a cross section of a village or community. This included not only farmers but professionals, artisans, land owners and priests. Mansingh and Mansingh (1999) also emphasized the fact that all Indians were knowledgeable in agriculture.

Singh (1940) recorded that the several grievances experienced by the Indians were investigated and a protector of the immigrants was appointed to address all the problems. As a result contracts were continually reviewed and adjusted. One major adjustment was health care; the union hospitals were implemented along with a place

for burial. After continued lobbying and resistance from the Indians, importation under the indenture system finally ended in 1917.

The lifestyle of the Indians was greatly influenced by their strong religious practices and traditions taken with them from India. Every cultural, artistic and philosophical activity of an individual has a religious significance (Mansingh and Mansingh, 1976). The majority of the 37,000 Indians imported in the island were Hindus with a limited number of Muslims. All their dressing, food, social customs and festivals were linked to Hinduism and were viewed with prejudice by the western society.

According to Mansingh and Mansingh (1976;1999), the East Indians all arrived in their native dresses, men in kurta-dhoti (shirt) and janghia (short pants), kachha (underwear), ganjibanain (undershirt), topi (cap), Pagrdi/safa (turban), and the women in saree, lahanga (long skirt), choli (blouse) and udhni (small shawl). Jewelry was a must and makeup an integral part of the Indian's women dressing regardless of status. Jewelry made of gold and silver including ear-ring, bracelets, waist belts, necklaces and anklets was worn even when performing daily chores and working in the fields. These traditional garments were soon changed to western style clothing. As soon as the early immigrants disembarked, they were given western style working clothes similar to what was given to the slaves. Later they had to change into these clothing even before they disembarked. Both Shepherd (1999a) and Mansingh and Mansingh (1999) described this clothing. The men were given trousers and shirts made from cheap linen called osnaburgh and Holland. The women were given long skirts, tops and head ties made of brown calico and Holland. The traditional clothing was completely

abandoned by all male except the priests; however the women wore them on festive occasions.

Mansingh and Mansingh (1976; 1999) recorded that life on the plantation was similar to life in an Indian village. Each day started and ended with prayer and worship. In the evenings while the women did domestic chores the men worked on their personal farming, and making of furniture and jewelry. After dinner there was the evening sessions of story telling, a means of educating the children in the culture, history and religious practices, similar to the African slave's custom and tradition brought with them from Africa. One significant difference was the smoking of ganja and later the excessive drinking of rum. Sunday was reserved for washing, religious, cultural, and community activities such as traditional dinners, music, and dancing.

The Hindus were mainly vegetarians but most modified their diet to include curried goat, fish, lamb and duck. Pork which was eaten by the sub-caste in India was not eaten in Jamaica. A typical Indian diet consisted of roti or daal served with curried goat or callaloo, or stuffed with lentils or other pulses. Fried or curried vegetables such as okra and egg plant were served regularly. Rice which introduced by the Indians was served mainly in the evenings. Every meal was served along with mango, tamrind, mint, or coconut chutney. The meal service followed a traditional pattern where children were served first, followed by the men and then any female guest. The food was served directly from the pot to the plates. Several plants and spices used in the diet were introduced by the Indians. The most popular ones are; mango, coolie plum, jackfruit, tamrind, betal nut, rice, a variety of pulses, hemp for making an intoxicating drink and

ganja for smoking in the famous chilam pipe. Popular spices include black pepper, turmeric and cloves for making curry powder.

The health care provided by their contracts was extremely limited so the Indians depended on old folk medicines for survival. Some of these treatments were used by most Jamaicans and some are still being used in rural Jamaica. Popular treatments are; treating boils with milk from green papaya fruit, wet tobacco leaves for headaches and castor leaves wrapped around neck for mumps. Chew stick and fine ash was used for dental hygiene. The Indians were just as superstitious as the ex-slaves and used various charms to ward off evil. Young Indian children and girls wore a black mark on the face to protect them from evil.

According to Mansingh and Mansingh (1976), marriage is a big expensive occasion in the life of the Indian. The traditional costume is worn and the ceremony performed with several rituals, traditional music, and dancing. Other celebrations were religious festivals such as Run Naui (birthday of Lord Rama), and Janamashtmi (birthday of lord Krishna). However the most popular is Moharram now known as Hosay is celebrated by both Hindus and Muslims.

As the Indians settled in the island, they formed new relationships with members of different castes and religion thus eliminating some traditional customs and the blending of others. Religion continued to play a major role in the Indian's lifestyle which resulted in Hindu and Muslim practices even after conversion to Christianity. Today the East Indians are the largest ethnic minority in Jamaica. They have introduced several plants, trees and food into the Jamaican culture.

### *The Chinese*

The Chinese were the last group of people to be imported to Jamaica and represent a very small proportion of the Jamaican population, but their impact is felt in the areas of commerce and food (Jamaica Heritage Trust, 2001). According to Shaw (1985), the shortage of labor on the sugar estates after emancipation prompted this importation of the first group of Chinese laborers in 1854. The literature reviewed showed variations in why and from where the first Chinese came into the island. However the 1854 date of arrival is consistent throughout all literature. Both Senior (1979) and Bryan (1996) recorded that the first Chinese arrived in the island directly from Hong Kong in 1854 and the second set arrived from Panama later in the same year. This second group of Chinese was originally contracted to work on the Panama Railroad and according to Senior (1979) was sent to Jamaica by the Panama Railroad in exchange for Jamaican workers. Tom Yin's (1963) earlier report revealed that the Chinese laborers actually demanded to leave Panama with the belief that Jamaica could offer them a better life. They were exhausted from overwork, suffered ill-health from the tropical diseases, and were alarmed by the high death rate of their fellow workers some of whom committed suicide. As a result, approximately 197 Chinese workers were sent to Jamaica mainly because of its proximity. According to Tom Yin's record, only 30 of these Chinese survived (Tom Yin, 1963). The total number of Chinese imported in 1854 was approximately 472. Shaw (1985) recorded that most of this 1854 importation either died from exhaustion and overwork, a few deserted the estates and became beggars, and a few went into the grocery and wholesale business thus laying the foundation for the Chinese community in trading.

The second batch of 200 Chinese laborers was imported from British Guiana, Trinidad, and Panama in 1864 (Bryan, 1996). They were recruited by the American companies involved in planting coconuts, bananas, and sugar, basically because they were proven to be hard working and thrifty. Shaw (1985) reported that in 1884, about 30 years after the first importation of Chinese laborers, a third group was engaged to work on the sugar plantations. Approximately 690 Hakka Chinese arrived from Tung-Kuan, Wei-yang, and Pao-an in the Kwangtung Province in southern China (Haile, 1999). The majority was sent to St. Mary, and St. Thomas to work on the new estates involved in planting bananas (Bryan, 1996). Shaw (1985) reported that these Hakka Chinese complained about their working conditions and wages. Bryan (1996) and Tom Yin (1963) recorded the details which revealed that the Chinese insisted that the terms of contact be observed and even staged a sit-in strike to call attention to the injustices that were imposed upon them. This resulted in imprisonment, injuries, and death. The Chinese eventually deserted the estates at the end of the contract to set up small grocery shops across the island. These grew into large enterprises in retailing and wholesaling (Jamaica Heritage Trust, 2001). By 1888, the total number of Chinese settlers in Jamaica was approximately 800 (Tom Yin, 1963). Bryan (1996) stated that immigration continued with an influx of Chinese businessmen in the 1900s and 1940s. In the 1980s they came to establish businesses in garment manufacturing in the free zones.

The Chinese women were not encouraged to migrate with their husbands basically because of the role of the woman in the Chinese culture and also the belief

that the men would not only send remittances but eventually return home to their families. According to Shepherd (1999), the early migrant women who came were not indentured laborers but were required to live on the estates with their husbands. Few women chose to work in the fields with their husband when they realized how meager the wages were. The Jamaican authorities started to encourage the entry of female Chinese in the island from as early as 1879. One expressed rationale was that this would reduce the cohabitation with the native women (Bryan, 1996). By 1943, the number of females had increased from 22.5% to 37% as the successful Chinese men brought in their wives and fiancées.

The first generation Chinese men cohabited with the local women mainly because of the shortage of Chinese women. This resulted in a growing colored Chinese population. Bryan (1996) recorded that the 1943 census revealed the colored Chinese population was 5,508 approximately one thousand difference when compared to pure Chinese population of 6886. According to Bryan (1996), the Chinese believed in purity of the Chinese race, so concubinage was more prevalent than marriage with the Afro-Jamaicans who were considered to be inferior. The colored Chinese were regarded as lower class and were not accepted by the pure Chinese, some were however sent to China for cultural socialization. In this regard they were like the Euro-Jamaicans. The family structure in the Chinese community was mainly extended where family was expected to financially support relatives. According to Bryan (1996), the first generation Chinese continued some of their cultural traditions. However, this was influenced and modified by both local and international societal changes.

Look Lai (1996) recorded a description of the Chinese as seen by other cultures. As a people they were described as peculiar because of their shaved head and the single plait of long hair worn by the men. The bee-hive hat that was worn to protect them from the sun was also ridiculed. Their complexion was described as fair or swarthy depending on their origin. The women with their small almond shaped eyes, plump rosy lips, black hair, and unnaturally small feet were not perceived as beautiful. The clothing of both men and women was purported to be an unattractive smock-frock or long loose jacket with short wide trousers made of blue cotton (Appendix B). As they settled in the island and adopted the Christian religion (Roman Catholicism), they also adopted the dress of the general population. However as they progressed economically they assumed not only the European dress but also their lifestyle and mannerisms. They were also described as a shrewd and industrious people who lived a frugal lifestyle, in that they lived on the compound and worked long hours. According to Shaw (1985), most of the early immigrants saved so that they could send money for their families in China, and support their incoming relatives. As the Chinese moved away from agricultural work and into the grocery retail trade they still maintained their frugal lifestyle. They lived upstairs and worked downstairs in the shop, thus providing extended and flexible open hours to the community. They were also noted for extending credit to their customers. Even though the Chinese provided invaluable service to the community they were perceived by the local people as cunning, deceitful, and lawless as it was reported that they were involved in gambling, using falsified scales, falsifying records, and smuggling of both goods and people into the island (Shaw, 1985). They eventually became apart of the growing middle class as they rapidly rose in the scale of

society from laborers to shopkeepers and formed a major part of the economic progress in the island.

The Chinese population remains as a very small part of the Jamaican population but their culture is very evident in the island. The Chinese cuisine, gambling, and wholesale stores are all an important part of the cultural heritage. According to Davidson (2002), the celebration of Chinese festivals including the lion and dragon dances have been creolized to some extent and are now included in the National Festival events.

### *Creolization*

Gupta (2001) defined creolisation as the process of developing a way of life and language peculiar to the new locale, but over time, becoming a third lifestyle and mother tongue of the community. Creolisation was a term used primarily in the nineteenth century to define descendents of both European colonists and enslaved Africans who were born in and committed to living in Jamaica. The Euro-Creole enjoyed an exalted position with an English lifestyle that was gradually transformed both by African and African-Creole influences and the climatic conditions of a tropical island. Wynter (1967) recorded several incidents from Lady Nugent's diary about the creolization of the Europeans during her stay as the governor's wife, living in Jamaica. Lady Nugent mentioned in her diary that the Euro-Creole women were viragoes, who did nothing but gossip about their husband's affairs with the black and colored women, speaking with a disgusting creole drawl. The only custom that Lady Nugent approved of was that of creolizing which was an easy way of lounging in a warm climate (Wynter, 1967).

The Europeans brought their customs in dress which was unsuitable for the climate and their health but they were very slow to adapt. Instead they influenced others to dress in European fashion by promoting the notion that all other forms of dressing were uncivilized. Buckridge (1999) pointed out that the excessive heat made the elaborate and ornate dresses not only uncomfortable but also unhealthy. According to Buckridge (1999) European dress did change but only to reflect the fashions in Europe. The Europeans believed that their form of dressing was proper dressing regardless of the environment, and that this was necessary in order to govern the slaves and to show superiority. However a few creole white women were inspired by the head wrap of the black women and imitated this style to protect their complexion. This was short lived (Buckridge, 1999).

On the other hand the enslaved population had an inferior position in the society that was shaped by European racist and condescension (Burnard, 2001). This statement is reemphasized by Buckridge (1999) who also summarized the attitudes in the dressing of black Jamaicans:

The constant attack on African heritage, beauty and intelligence gave rise to negative self-images. Stereotypes of African people included characteristics such as lazy, worthless, unreliable and backward. As a consequence, many women sought methods to elevate themselves socially and in the process receive some type of validation for themselves and their race. This 'negation' of 'Africanness' encouraged several slaves, when possible and affordable, to adopt to British standards and attributes. However, accommodation was not merely an attempt to elevate the African out of the pit of 'niggerhood'; it also provided the opportunity

for members of a servile population to experience the 'Other', a bit of 'whiteness', and to show that they too could be beautiful. Furthermore, it could be argued that since expressions of wealth and status, such as elaborate houses or land were denied to most slaves, the more accessible mode of dress became much important. Some servile women also saw adoption or adaptation of European cultural standards in dress not as a desire to be like whites, but as resistance in itself, because to adopt was a political act which expressed their resentment and rejection of their slave status (Buckridge, 1999, p 111).

This black population with their degrading and oppressive position still managed to unite their various African cultures, along with European lifestyles thus, creating new cultural elements on the island. Blacks dressed in British styled clothing were often ridiculed by the whites as was recorded by both Robertson (1995) and Buckridge (1999). Black women received information about European styled clothing by observing what the whites wore, or pictures from newspaper and magazines. The styles created were a mixture of European and African aesthetics (Buckridge, 1999). Robertson (1995) noted that the European dresses were not practical for the working peasant class and were adapted thus creating the creole dress in the nineteenth century (Appendix B). Dresses were shortened by tying cord around hips and pulling dress up to create a pouf. Sleeves were also adjusted for greater ease and comfort in movement (Appendix C).

The process of creolisation took years of struggling with colonialism, self-identity, social and national changes that eventually evolved into the people becoming "Jamaicanized". Miller (1973) stated that the phenomena of slavery, British colonialism and acceptance of a British social philosophy have shaped the social structure and

climate in which Jamaican people identify themselves. According to Burnard (2001), blacks rejected both their slave and African heritage and aspired to be like their European oppressors. Burnard (2001) summarizes the effect of slavery on Jamaicans self image. He stated that people, customs, food, dress, and ideas of European origin are of greater worth than similar items of different racial origin, especially of African people. Upper class individuals identified by birth and education, dress in European fashion, speak English with a particular accent, are perceived to be of greater worth and significance than others. This perception was so entrenched into the people that it was not until the Marcus Garvey Movement and other social events that people began to examine their roots, culture, self-perception, and image.

According to Essix (1995), major social, political and economical changes took place after emancipation in 1838. These changes lead to independence in 1962 with the creation of the motto "Out of Many, One People". The Creole society shaped by slavery, colonialism, and interaction with other race groups produced a multi-ethnic group of Jamaican women. However the defining groups are the dominant white minority at the apex of the pyramid and a subordinate black majority at the bottom. Gupta (2001) reported that intermarriage between the blacks and whites resulted in light skin colored people that composed the second largest sector of people in Jamaica.

The colored women in the Creole society were considered to be very attractive and in high demand. Not only were they considered attractive but skilled in housekeeping, nursing care, and were devoted companions or mistresses to the white males. The colored woman was aware of her position and so endeavored to improve or upgrade the status of her children in the society by cohabiting with wealthy white males

(Shepherd, 1999a). Having children with lighter complexion did put them on a higher social scale but did not remove the stigma of being labeled bastard or illegitimate and it certainly did not guarantee financial security for the mother. Although the majority of colored women were mistresses, they still had to earn a living to support their family and many engaged in the keeping of lodging houses or inns.

Shepherd (1999a) pointed out that these women of color were never fully accepted in the white society even though they adopted white cultural standards in all aspects of their lives including dress. Their clothing of cheap silk in bright colors, high hats and bright patent shoes were basically cheap imitation of their white counterpart. It was noted by Shepherd (1999a) that colored women spent a considerable amount of time trying to out dress the whites (Appendix C). They were always in the latest fashion and jewelry. This group of women continued to grow and became visible by their economic involvement and social activities. They eventually emerged as the fabric of the middle class. Gupta (2001) pointed out that they see themselves as the leaders of the country because of their ability to assimilate into the white ruling class. This group of colored people was eventually challenged by an expanding black middle class who had risen to this position by political and economical changes influenced by Garveyism in the early twentieth century.

The Indians, Chinese and others who were imported into Jamaica after emancipation, made the island multi-racial. However these cultures did not change the definition of creolisation as the social structure and codification was already in place. The Chinese, Jews, and Syrians are viewed by their economic position rather than by racial or ethnic origins. The Chinese dominated the retail trade by exploiting their

ethnicity. They were not concerned with emulating the white ideal or in the showing of contempt for the blacks (Shaw, 1985). They maintained their social distance until well into the 1940's. The Indians were classed as "coolies," a condescending term for poor immigrant minority. Many were converted to Christianity and so abandon most of their cultural traditions. According to Gupta (2001), they all added biologically to the Creole mix by intermarrying with blacks to become "Jamaicanized".

The period after emancipation leading into independence in 1962 was both a settling and unsettling period for ex slaves as they moved away from the plantations and the shackles of slavery. They settled into a peasant lifestyle in the hills far away from the plantations, others squatted on crown lands. This was a period of land settlement and establishing homes. Rebellions and revolts were a part of the struggles for land that eventually ended with the death of two of the national heroes.

Throughout the history of the island women have played a strong role in resisting oppression and abuse. According to Shepherd (1999a) women have been active in revolts during slavery, with female leaders like Nanny and Cubah. During the period leading into independence women were actively involved in fighting for justice. They organized strikes, marches and demonstrations, and using stones and bottles as weapons when necessary. The middle class women were not involved in any protest until the twentieth century. Shepherd (1999a) pointed out that these women were involved in non-violent political activities opposing the traditional views on women's role and the control of political power by the males.

According to Essix (1995), major political and economical changes took place during this period. Decolonialization started with the national movement, which was

influenced by the teaching of Marcus Garvey. Miller (1973) expounded the basic philosophy of Garveyism. It advocated liberation of black people everywhere from subjugation. Black people should unite and show a sense of pride and dignity in themselves. The dockworkers united and rebelled against low wages and poor working conditions. The two major political parties and labor unions were formed from this rebellion. This started the nationalist movement that not only secured independence but also that lobbied for constitutional change that led to universal adult suffrage in 1944.

Although the nationalist movement composed mainly of brown and black people, arose as a reaction against Garveyism, it succeeded not only in achieving political independence but promoting social justice and equality for all Jamaicans (Miller, 1973). It opened opportunities in education, employment, religion, land ownership and business to all sections of the society. It was during this period that the Chinese were fully accepted into the society, and blacks became more acculturated. The Nationalist movement sought to establish a national identity that was politically stable. This image of a united multicultural “Jamaicanized” society was important for international recognition and economic benefits. According to Miller (1973), the Nationalist Movement gave way to the Development movement, which did not adequately address the creolisation of all cultures into the Jamaican society. They still accepted the British culture as superior while promoting folk culture in the name of cultural development.

They gave only passing glances to the cultural survival of the Jews, East Indians, Chinese, and the Lebanese which is seen mainly in religion and dietary practices. Gupta (2001) questioned this pattern of Creole structure. Why are the East Indians and

Chinese still excluded from the Black-Brown-White? Is Black exclusively African? Why must “brown” show disdain for blacks? She concluded that although the National Motto: “Out of Many, One People” reflects the Creole culture of Jamaica, the act of creolisation is still one of becoming “Jamaicanized” which means adaptation of the dominant culture which remains Afro-European.

### *National Symbols of Jamaica*

The national symbols embodied several issues of national importance to Jamaica. They represent many aspects of Jamaica’s political, cultural and economic life. The following symbols were selected for design inspiration for this project.

#### *The Flag*

The Flag has a diagonal cross or saltire with four triangles in juxtaposition. The diagonal cross is GOLD and one-sixth of the length of the fly of the flag; the top and bottom triangles are in GREEN; and the hoist and fly triangles are in BLACK. The exact shade of green used in the flag is Emerald T8 17, British Admiralty Bunting Pattern.

“The sun shineth, the land is green and the people are strong and creative” is the symbolism of the colours of the flag. Black depicts the strength and creativity of the people; Gold, the natural wealth and beauty of sunlight; and green, hope and agricultural resources.

#### *The National Flower*

Lignum Vitae (*Guaiacum officinale*) is indigenous to Jamaica and was found here by Christopher Columbus. It is thought that the name "Wood of Life" was then adopted because of its medicinal qualities. The tree grows best in the dry woodlands along both the North and South coasts of the island. In addition to shedding an attractive blue flower, the plant itself is extremely ornamental. The wood is used for propeller shaft bearings in nearly all the ships sailing the Seven Seas.

*The National Tree*

Mahoe (*Hibiscus elatus*). This has been regarded as one of our primary economic timbers. It is currently much used for reforestation and is a valuable source of cabinet timber. Of an attractive blue-green color with variegated yellow intrusions, it is capable of taking a high polish showing to advantage the variety of grain and color tones

*The National fruit*

Ackee (*Blighia sapida*). It was originally imported from West Africa, probably brought here in a slave ship, and now grows luxuriously producing each year large quantities of edible fruit. Ackee is derived from the original name "Ankye" which comes from TWI language of Ghana.

The tree was unknown to science until plants were taken from Jamaica to England in 1793 by Capt. William Bligh of "Mutiny on the Bounty" fame, hence the botanical name "*Blighia sapida*" in honor of the notorious Sea-Captain.

Jamaica is the only place where the fruit is generally recognized as an edible crop, although the plant has been introduced into most of the other Caribbean islands.

### *The National Bird*

Doctor Bird (*Trochilus polytmus*). The "Doctor Bird" or Swallowtail Humming Bird lives only in Jamaica and is one of the most outstanding of the 320 species of Humming Birds. The beautiful feathers of these birds have no counterpart in the entire bird population and produce iridescent colors, characteristics only of that family. The Doctor Bird has been immortalized for many decades in Jamaica folk lore and song (National Library of Jamaica, 1979-2003).

### *Summary*

The people of Jamaica have evolved from a historical process of colonialization that brought various peoples together forming a multi-ethnic nation. The original Taino Indian settlers were completely exterminated by the Spanish settlers but some aspects of their culture survived. The Spanish left their influence in many names of places and in architecture. The British governed the island for almost three hundred years and so had the greatest influence. Under the plantation system cheap labor was needed so Africans were imported in great numbers under the slave trade. The result of the slave trade was that the majority of the Jamaican population was of African descent. With the arrival of the Africans there was miscegenation, producing a large population of colored people. With emancipation and the end of slave labor, cheap labor had to be sought

elsewhere and so the East Indians were imported as indentured laborers. They comprised the second largest ethnic group of people in the island and a strong influence on the food habits of Jamaicans. The Chinese represent a small proportion of the Jamaican population but they also intermarry with non-Chinese Jamaicans contributing to the island's racial mixture. The Chinese influence is present mainly in commerce such as wholesale and retail businesses. The Jewish and the Syrian population are very small however the Jews are very influential in politics and commerce. The European immigrants who were imported as indentured workers were unsuccessful mainly because they were unsuitable for working in the climate. The German peasants were imported as settlers to act as role models for the ex-slaves. This was a failure; the Germans settled as farmers and eventually intermarried with the blacks.

A synthesis of all the cultures occurred during the process of creolization however the popular culture was heavily influenced by the African heritage, while all formal lifestyle and behavior was definitely British. This evolved from a long process of resistance and struggle with colonialism and slavery.

All immigrants brought their customs in dress to Jamaica but had to adapt to their new environment and the demands of the dominant ruling culture of the Europeans. During the nineteenth century the slaves adapted the European dress to suit their working conditions and added their African heritage thereby creating what was known as the creole dress.

The Jamaican culture has evolved out of all these cultures which resisted the exploitation of and domination of the Europeans to produce a strong unique blend of people called Jamaicans.

## CHAPTER THREE

### METHODOLOGY

#### *Description of methodology*

The purpose of this study was to examine the various cultures of the Jamaican people and use the information as sources of design inspiration for creating contemporary ethnic garments for the women. Design elements were taken from the national symbols and used to create a new fabric design for the garments.

#### *Research Objectives*

The research objectives were to:

1. Give a brief historical overview of Jamaicans with emphasis on the arrival of the different cultures, and the impact of slavery and colonialization on these cultures
2. Examine the traditional clothing worn by the Europeans, Africans, Indians, and Chinese women, upon their arrival and during the nineteenth century, which would be used as a means of design inspiration for creating the new ethnic garments.
3. Execute a collection of women's garments inspired by the clothing worn by the dominant cultures, using a new fabric design. This design will be an abstract or stylized motif that will be inspired by the national symbols that truly exemplify Jamaica.
4. Exhibit the finished lines of garments in a public forum.

## *Procedures*

This section includes the description of the design process of the garments and the fabrics. A summary of the main construction details will also be discussed.

### *Design Process for the Garments*

Several garments were designed using pictures of original garments from three selected cultures as the primary source of inspiration as stated in research objective two. The designs were sketched by hand and shown to the research committee members. They selected the three final designs that best represented three cultures within Jamaica. These designs were simple, classic styles that will endure through time. Elements were taken from the Chinese, Indian, and African clothing to create contemporary garments with an ethnic flare for Jamaican women of all sizes, color, and figure types. Variations of these three designs were created and developed into a line of garments called "Afrincha" which were presented on storyboards. The three main designs were then developed into garments by using flat pattern and draping techniques. The finished garments and presentation boards were displayed during the University's Research Day exhibition on April 16, 2003.

### *Design Process for the Fabrics*

The National Symbols (indigenous tree, flower, bird, and fruit) were selected as the design inspiration for creating surface designs for the fabrics as was stated in research objective four( Figure1).



Figure 1.

The researcher examined several textile prints from Africa, China, and India from books and the internet. However the inspiration for arrangement and coloring of the stylized motif named “Jamique” was from traditional Chinese designs. Different sections of selected symbols (tail and wings of the bird, the ackee and the flowers) were combined to form a circle which indicates that there is wholeness, completion, and unity in the combination of these elements (Figure 2).



Figure 2. Jamique Motif 1

This motif was then stylized to produce two other variations that would be needed to produce several patterns to incorporate all the selected cultures. This was done by

placing a mirror along different sections of the motif above to see what the mirror image would look like. This was done several times until an approved view was selected and then developed into the second motif (Figure 3). The third motif was done by simplifying the first motif (Figure 4).

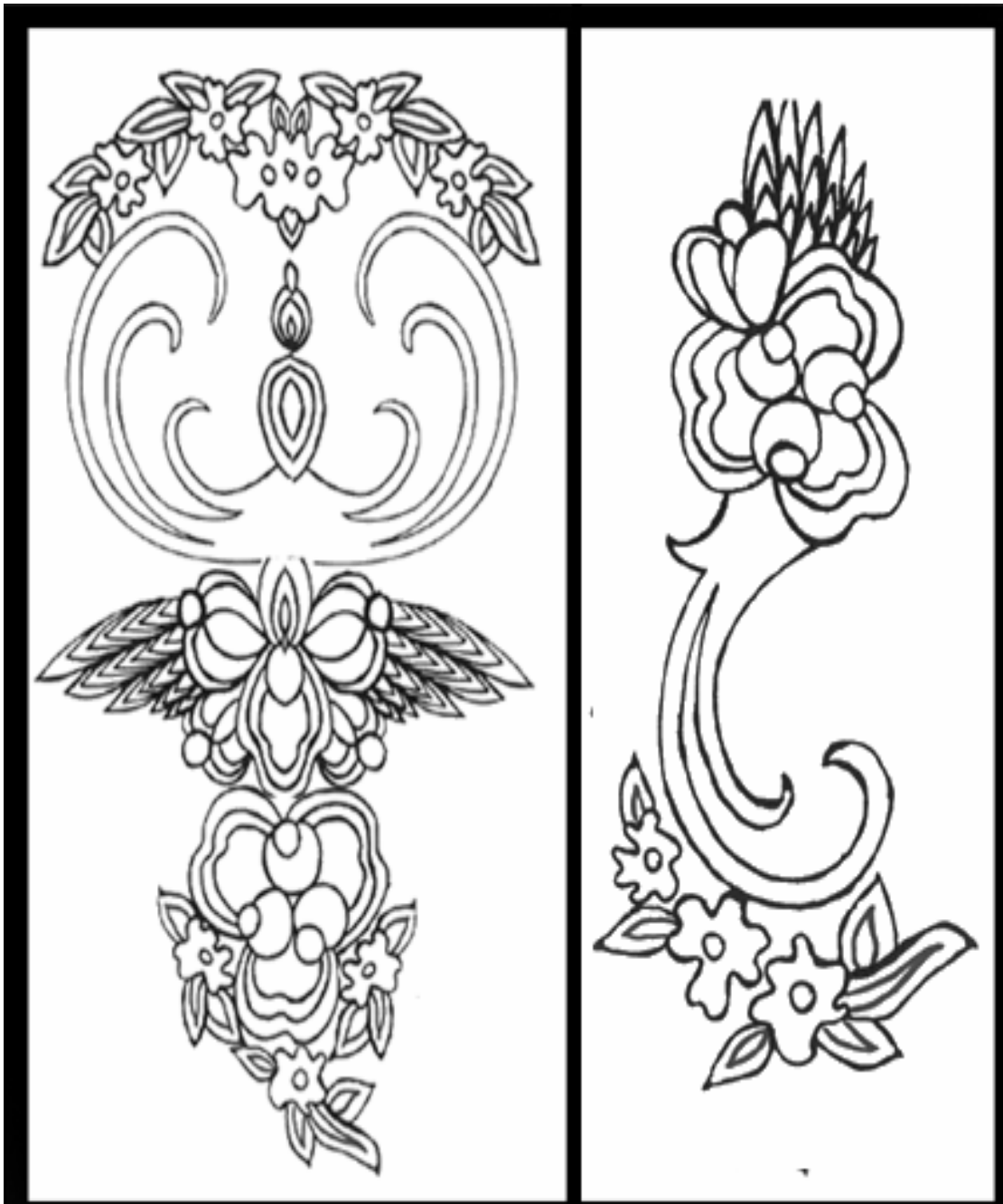


Figure 3. Motif 11

Figure 4. Motif 111

The Jamique symbol (meaning unity in diversity) printed on cloth made the fabric a part of the Jamaican history and heritage and should be worn with pride. The colors in the motif were the natural colors taken from the national symbols. They were then assigned names and meanings as described below:

Yellow and all its variations (Sunshine Yellow and Ackee Gold) were associated with sunshine, life, energy and strength of the women who had to work hard to support their families, and the ripe luscious tropical fruits and vegetables.

Red and all its variations (Pale Ackee, Ackee Skin, Chinese red) were associated with fire, passion, the spirit of courage and bravery of the women who fought against abuse, and Nanny (National Hero) the freedom fighter.

Purple and its variations (lignum vitae) were associated with pride in the Jamaican heritage, prestige, and royalty.

Green and its variations (lush green, doc green, swallow green) are associated with the land and trees, new life, hope and the omnipresence of God.

Black (hard black) was associated with hardship, struggles and endurance of the Jamaican women.

Brown was associated with the earth that brings forth food, and humility.

All the motifs were colored and presented to the committee for approval (See Figure 5 and Appendix E).

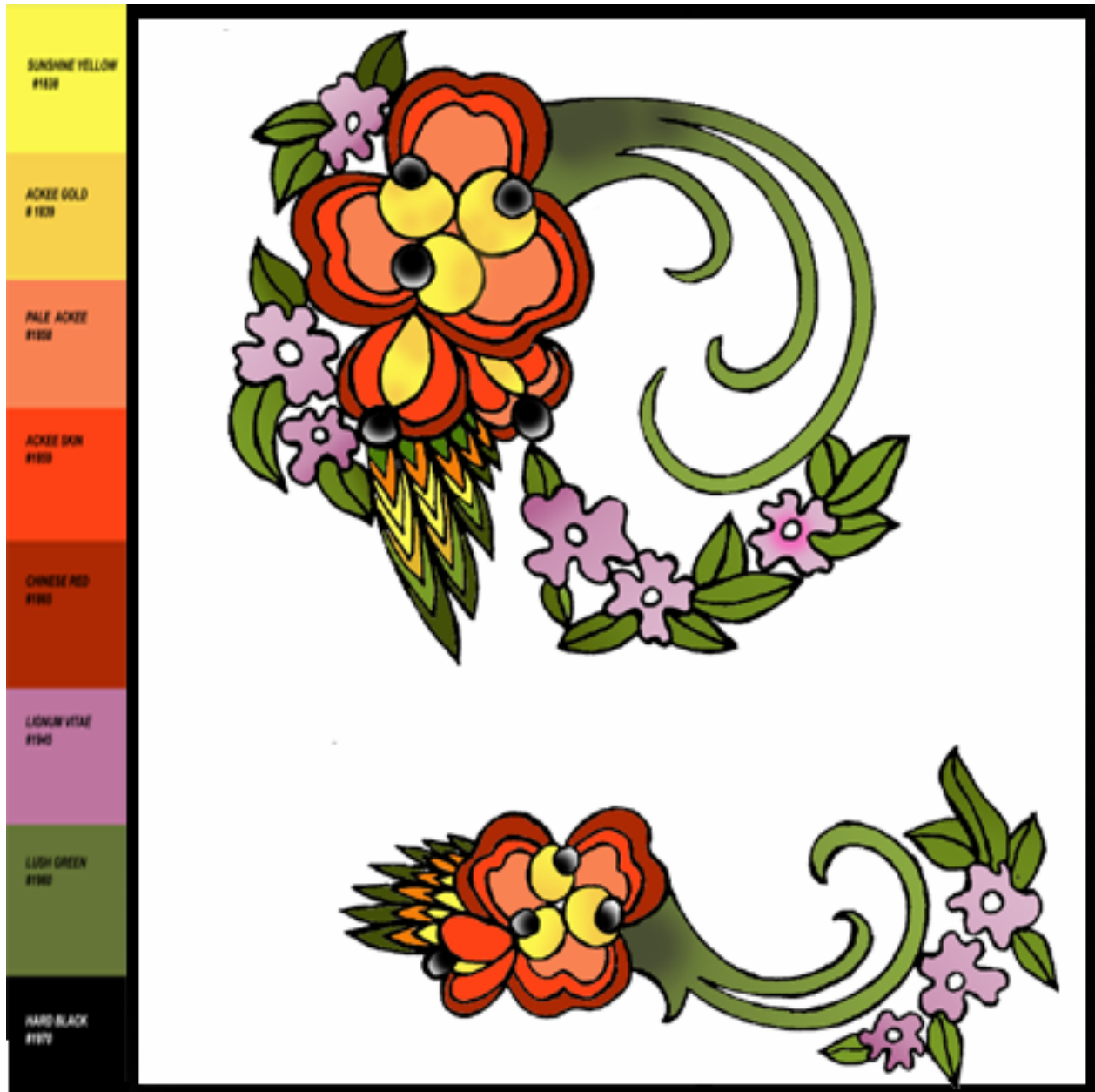


Figure 5. (Colored Jamique)

The main motif was proportioned, resized on the computer and then filled as pattern to two of the hand sketched designs that were scanned into the computer. These were also presented to the committee to show the use of the Jamique motifs. After the

research committee approved the design of the motifs they were copied to a disc and sent to the printer for a test print. The test print of the colors was excellent so this researcher went to work on the patterns for the fabric. This researcher examined the block printing techniques done by the West African Akan people and used that as the inspiration for creating the all over touch design using the Jamique motif. This was done by arranging four motifs together to form a larger motif. This large motif was then repeated to create a pattern (See Figure 6 and Appendix F).

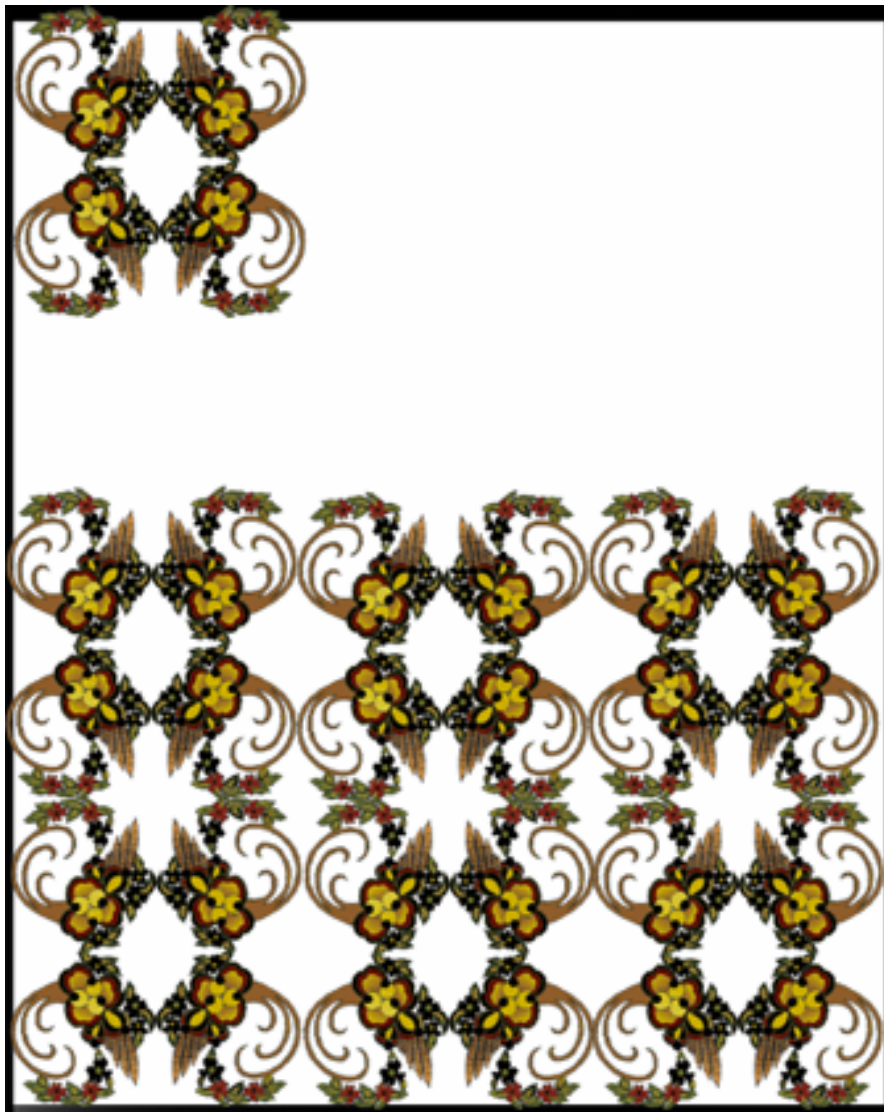


Figure 6.

These colors were then varied into tints, tones and shades to create the all over touch pattern design, and coordinating border design that was then printed on the fabrics. To create the border prints the researcher examined printed fabrics from India. The information and inspiration gleaned from this was utilized in arranging and modifying the other motifs to create the border (See Figure 7 and Appendix G).



Figure 7. Jamique Border

All fabric designs were created on the computer using Adobe Photoshop and Illustrator programs. The researcher experimented with different arrangement of the motifs, different colors, and texture for both motifs and background until the final ones were approved. The research committee especially liked the textured background of the brown fabric. This was achieved by taking the winged section of the design and stamping it all over the colored and textured background. The pattern was then added to the textured background (figure 8).



Figure 8. Jamique textured background and pattern.

The line drawings of the garments were scanned into the computer which enabled the researcher to fill them with the pattern and experiment with different colors and textures. The pattern designs were organized into repeats suitable for printing on 60" wide fabrics in three different color ways. This was then copied to a CD and sent to a fabric designing and printing company, called B 3 Designs, in Charlotte, North Carolina U.S.A. where the designs were digitally printed onto the fabrics.

Plain mercerized cotton, rayon challis, and silk chiffon were purchased from Testfabrics Incorporation in Pennsylvania USA. The fabrics were treated so that they could accept the dye from the printer before they were sent to B3 Designs for printing. There were several problems with the finished printed fabrics:

1. There were streaks of white throughout the entire length of the brown printed fabric which resulted in wastage of fabric when cutting out the garment.
2. The colors on the printed fabrics were significantly different from the colors viewed on the computer e.g. all the pantone black was printed as blue-purple on the fabric.
3. The borders were not printed in the assigned position as was indicated in drawings and in written instructions.

The researcher was able to solve the problems by making minor adjustments to the designs in terms of the placement of borders, and reordering extra fabric. The plain chiffon ordered to match the blue-purple came in shades of purple interspersed with whites streaks which were impossible to avoid in making up of the garment. Despite the printing problems this new fabric design was the unifying element in all the garments and made all the designs truly Jamaican regardless of which culture was selected for

the design inspiration. Samples of the printed fabrics, a doll's dress and accessories such as belts, ties, and scarves done in the printed fabrics were displayed along with the finished garments.

### *Construction of garments*

The three designs were constructed using the rayon challis with coordinating fabrics in linen and chiffon. Flat patterns were drafted for each design to fit the selected model. All garments were first tested in rayon fabrics with similar weight and draping properties to that of the final fashion fabric. Only minor adjustments were needed before working on final fabrics. All garments were lined except the linen pants. The lining added support, a clean finish, and a touch of luxury to each garment. The major challenge was not in the actual construction of the garments but in cutting out the garments to show the continuity in the flow of the pattern design throughout the entire garment. One way and single ply lay up was employed where necessary in order to achieve the desired effect. Gentle coaxing of fabric, careful pinning, pressing and tacking were crucial as pattern design and fabric grain was not always aligned at a ninety degree angle. Soft fusible woven interfacing was utilized throughout the construction process to add necessary weight, support and definition where needed.

### *Summary*

Several garments were designed using inspiration from the traditional garment designs from Africa, India, and China. The fabrics used for constructing the three selected garments were digitally printed with the Jamique motifs, arranged in an all over touch design arrangement. The Jamique motifs were designed by using elements from the national symbols of Jamaica.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS

#### *Results and Discussion*

This chapter includes the objectives and results. A discussion of the results is included.

#### *Research Objective One*

1. Giving a brief historical overview of Jamaicans with emphasis on the arrival of the different cultures, and the impact of slavery and colonialization on these cultures.

According to the literature reviewed, the main impact of slavery and colonization was the domination of the Europeans over all other cultures. The women were raped both physically and mentally. The black woman thought of as ugly and inferior, was sort after by all males for cohabitating and procreation, but not for marriage. Most of the women were abused and treated as inferior but the black women were portrayed in the most negative way. As a result the black woman was always trying to increase her social status by wearing expensive western styled clothing. The elite European women might not have experienced the physical abuse of the others, but they were impotent as they watched their husbands openly had affairs with several women even in their own homes.

Domination by the Europeans also resulted in the attempt to strip all the women of their cultural heritage which was considered to be uncivilized. The very first act was to dress the women in western styled clothing upon their arrival which eventually resulted in an abandonment of their traditional clothing. However the European women continued wearing imported European clothing that was totally unsuitable for the

climate. During the creolization process the slaves found creative ways of blending and adapting their African styles with European influences that resulted in a Creole dress that was distinctly Jamaican. This eventually evolved over time with new fashion trends. The other cultures such as the Indians even adopted aspects of the Afro-Jamaican dress such as the head tie.

The modern Jamaican woman may be a combination of several racial bloods and cultures but there is one distinct characteristic in all these women and that is strength, both physical and mental strength. They all had to fight for freedom, and to bring change in their community. The indigenous women resisted capture and enslavement, the enslaved African women were active in slave resistance movements that started with Nanny the Maroon, and the Asian women struggled for their rights under the indentureship policies (Shepherd 1999). They were the stabilizing factors in the families, the bread earners and in many instances the financial controllers. They have evolved through the horrors of slavery and colonization, changes and hardship during emancipation that led to independence and a new national identity that recognizes their cultural roots and heritage. The researcher has designed these garments for the Jamaican woman who is not ashamed of her heritage and can appreciate the fact that she is a combination of all these different cultures not only in the dietary practices but in clothing as well.

*Research Objective Two and Three*

2. Examining the traditional clothing worn by the Europeans, Africans, Indians, and Chinese women, upon their arrival, which would be used as a means of design inspiration for creating the new ethnic garments.

3. Executing a collection of women's garments inspired by the clothing worn by the dominant cultures, using a new fabric design. This design will be an abstract or stylized motif that will be inspired by the national symbols that truly exemplify Jamaica.

According to the literature reviewed all the women came in their traditional dress which was abandoned for the western styled clothing that they were forced to wear. The researcher collected several pictures from the Institute of Jamaica and utilized the information to create the following designs (See Inspiration page in Appendix H and I). The researcher chose to focus on three cultures, Chinese, Africans, and Indians. The name for the line was created from these three cultures- Afrincha and all the garments were designed with some element from these selected cultures. Elements from other cultures were sometimes included in the designs. All garments were executed in the newly designed fabric called Jamique as was stated in objective three.

*Afrincha one*

Afrincha one (See figure 9) was inspired by the Hakka Chinese basic apparel as was described in the literature review. The original loose design was modified to a western look with a fitted top and a short fitted skirt. The top has long fitted sleeves and an asymmetrical hemline. The fabric and accessories were chosen to present an African charm and appearance. The gold and black piping gave definition to the neckline and sleeves which were done in the coordinating textured background fabric.

The selected African designed buttons created a focal point on this out fit. The rayon challis fabric was printed to look African by using mud color brown and printing over a printed textured background (Figure 9).



Figure 9. (Afrincha One)

The researcher used the computer to modify this basic Chinese inspired style (Afrincha one) to represent the West African cultures in Jamaica (Figure 10). These were presented on story boards.



Figure 10 (Modified Afrincha One)

In order to appreciate the cultural expression in dress of the Afro-Jamaicans the researcher had to resort to the source of origin, Africa. The skirts in figure 10 were tailored into western styled skirts but they could be substituted with the wrapper from the Yoruba traditional dress. The gold and black loose fitting top has the Chinese detail but is called buba by the Yoruba tribe. It can be worn inside or out and is suitable for any size or figure type. The Brown top from Afrincha one was modified by changing the long fitted sleeves to a pair of large puff ones inspired by an early nineteenth century European gown. The added head tie gave the outfit an African influence (Figure 10).

*Afrincha Two (Figure 11)*

This outfit was inspired by the Chinese, Indian, and African cultures. The common elements are the pants and long loose top. The loose tunic is worn by both males and females in West Africa and is called boubou. The tunic was converted to a fitted duster with two long slits at the side. The Kimono sleeves were shortened to cap to capture the Chinese look. The attached draped scarf represents both Indian and African influence of draping the fabric over the shoulder. The Indians' love of gold is seen in the selection and use of gold piping on the neckline, sleeves, and scarf. Gold braid was applied to the scarf and across the front of the bodice. The rayon challis fabric was printed with the Jamique motifs and a Chinese red background color. The Fabric design was inspired by the Indian culture. This top can be worn with a long or short skirt or pants (Figure 11).



Figure 11 (Afrincha Two)



Figure 12 (Modified Afrincha Two)

Afrincha design two was modified to look western. These designs were presented on story boards at the display. The flared section of black dress was inspired by the Spanish culture (Figure 12).

*Afrincha Three (Figure 13)*

The inspiration for this design came from the Chinese, Indian, and African culture. This formal gown was made from Jamique motif printed on rayon challis with a deep purple for the background color (Figure 13). The top has a banded angled section that crosses over to the back. The front top section was inspired by the asymmetrical detail on the Chinese top. A double layer of plain chiffon is attached to one shoulder at the front and extends to the back in a cascade of folds. The chiffon layers were cut and hung for a week to drape before reshaping and roll hemming. This draped chiffon gave the dress the Indian and African influence.

Afrincha design three was modified on the computer to show the use of the other fabric designs. The banded neck facing was removed to create a one-shoulder design. The flared drape was partially attached to a cuff in one design (Figure 14). All the finished garments and designs that were created on the computer were displayed on Research Day a public forum for students and faculty to present their research.



Figure 13 (Afrincha Three)



Figure 14 (Modified Afrincha Three)

### *Research Objective Four*

1. Exhibiting the finished lines of garments in a public forum.

### *The Presentation Process*

A public display of all design work is a requirement of the Design Thesis Option and was stated in research objective four. The approved garments and boards were displayed on Research Day Wednesday, May 16, 2003 from 9.00am to 3.00pm.

Research Day an annual event, was organized by the university as forum for students and faculty to present their researches to the public. The researcher extended special invitation to the other graduate students to view the display.

The theme or title poster was meticulously designed to emphasize the people and their culture. A great deal of time and effort went into creating this poster. This collage started with a slave proclaiming freedom in 1838 and ended with a girl in the national costume created in 1962. In the center is a circle of modern Jamaican women of all color, ages, and ethnic background which was retrieved from the internet. They are surrounded by their cultural heritage; ex slaves, European, mulatto, Indian and Chinese women. People dancing, going to church and to the market, and art form such as sculpting were all depicted in the poster (See Appendix J). All these pictures were collected from the Institute of Jamaica and used with their permission. There were six large presentation boards created as panoramas showing all the created designs (See Appendix Ki and Kii).

The display was organized and set on two skirted tables in the Crystal Ballroom. The display started with the titled poster and the statement of problem on the first

section of the large board. The next section was draped with samples of all the fabrics (See Appendix Kii). Under the poster the researcher placed the Jamaican doll in National costume, and first panorama showing information about the costume. This was followed by the second panorama showing the process of designing the new fabrics. The second doll was dressed in the newly designed Jamique fabric that showed off a Spanish- Indian ethnic flare(See Appendix L). The other boards were placed on the table along with a booklet called Brawta (Jamaican patois- meaning a little extra). This booklet showed the Afrincha line in styles inspired by back bustle of the nineteenth century European culture (See Appendix Mi). The Jamique accessories (printed silk scarf, belt, tie, and head tie) were also displayed. The final section showed the mannequins dressed in the garments (See Appendix N). All this was set amidst the flowing rhythm of Jamaican music and a live model moving amongst the guests. The model worn a modified version of Afrincha three (figure 11). The top was done in a brown border printed Jamique fabric and the long tailored skirt was made from the coordinating brown background printed fabric (See presentation picture in Appendix N).

Photographs were taken of the display which were scanned into the computer and included in the document as Appendix Ki and Kii. The guests were very impressed with all the designs especially the fabrics. It was noted from comments that the deep purple dress (Afrincha three- Figure 13) was the favorite among the Caucasian while the Asians and blacks favored the red outfit (Afrincha two-Figure 11).

### *Summary of Findings*

Findings from the research objectives revealed that Jamaica is a multi racial country but, the majority of Jamaicans are of African descent with a submerged retention of African cultures. This resulted in a negative self image for the blacks, and finally an abandonment of most aspects of traditional clothing. The dominant culture of the white minority was the accepted culture for all Jamaicans regardless of their cultural origin. This resulted in European styled clothing for all Jamaicans. The culturally inspired garments constructed with the Jamique fabric epitomized the concept of Jamaica's national identity, "Out of Many, One People".

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### *Summary*

##### *The Problem*

The purpose of this study was to examine the cultural background and clothing of the Jamaican women with the intention of creating functional, ethnic garments that were aesthetically pleasing for Jamaican women of all social classes.

##### Methods and Procedures

Every designer must know the client or market to design for, if the garments are to be marketable. Therefore related literature was explored to ascertain the relevant information on the history and culture of the Jamaica people especially the women. This vital information was then interpreted into garment and fabric designs suitable for the defined Jamaican woman.

##### *Results*

Three styles were selected and approved by the research committee for production. The finished garments were photographed on a live model. The prints were then scanned into the computer and then adjusted for presentation on various boards along with the other designs. One garment was replicated in different color way which was worn by a live model during the final presentation (Appendix N). The other garments were dressed on mannequins and displayed along with all the fabrics and other designs in the Crystal Ballroom at UW-Stout on Research Day May 16, 2003. Research Day, an annual event, was organized by the university as a forum for students and faculty to present their research to the public.

### *Conclusions*

This study created new garment designs for the Jamaican woman who has evolved undaunted by history's cruelty, endowed with the strength of her ancestors, and is always ready to boldly face any future challenge. The women of African descent, the largest group, managed to nurture and maintain some of their African heritage, despite the attempt by the Europeans to deculture and dominate them. The head tie is one aspect of dress that has been maintained and even adopted by other cultures. All the women have been exploited in some form but the black women use some of this exploitation to their advantage. They used their sexuality to increase their status and to acquire clothing. The modern Jamaican woman has garments that reflect her heritage and roots.

The new designs inspired by the Jamaican multi racial cultural heritage were executed in the newly designed fabric which was the unifying element. The combination of several elements from the various cultures into one outfit truly reflected the national motto Out of Many, One People. The garments showed ethnic influences but were modern, functional, suitable for different occasions, and are aesthetically pleasing.

### *Business Implications*

Ideas for business ventures are as follows:

1. Create a public cultural show with music and dancing could be organized to advertise the garments.
2. Design and publish new fashions each year for Emancipation and Independence Day celebrations, using the Jamique fabric.

3. Create a line of accessories using the Jamique motif and fabric.
4. Create new fabric designs by combining the Jamique motif and indigenous techniques for fabric designing such as batik, and tie-dye.
5. Create cut work embroidery patterns for apparel using the Jamique motifs.

*Recommendations for further research*

Further research could be done in the following areas:

1. Design ethnic garments for the Jamaican male.
2. Investigate the culture and dress of the Portuguese, Scottish, Jewish, and German women who came to Jamaica so that some of the designs could reflect these cultures.

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APPENDIX A



Jamaica National Costume – peasant style designed with the bandana fabric

## APPENDIX B



Peasant woman on the left in simple creole dress compared with draped skirt of the European creole on the right.

## APPENDIX C



Creole dress with shorten skirt, and sleeves, and head tie. Note the bare feet which indicated a working class status.

## APPENDIX D



Nineteenth century dress in Jamaica - Colored woman on the right, imitating the dress of Euro-Creole woman on the left.

APPENDIX E



Jamique Motifs

APPENDIX F



APPENDIX G



Jamique Border Prints

APPENDIX H



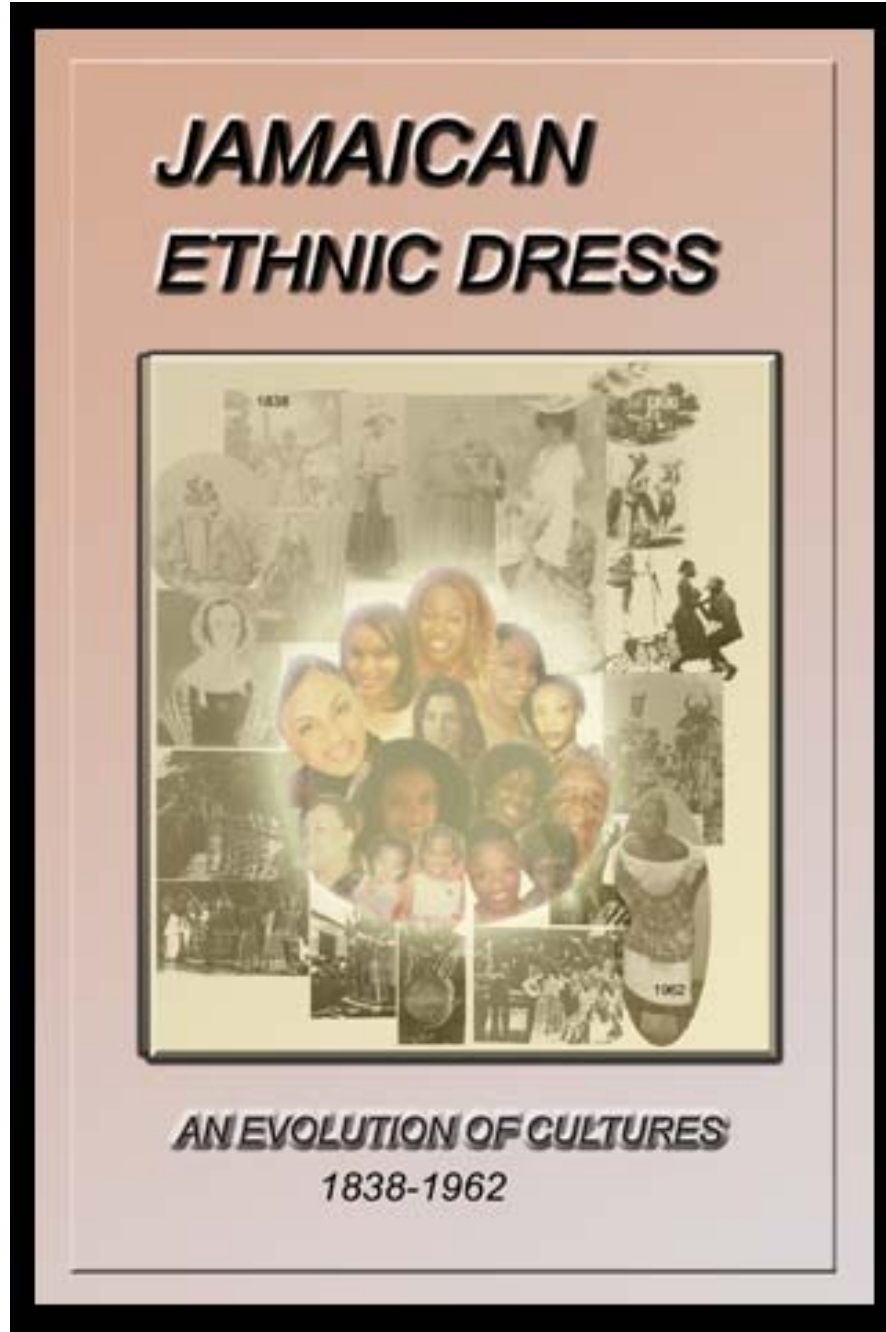
Inspiration Page- showing traditional Chinese clothing.

APPENDIX I



Inspiration Page -showing traditional African and Indian dress

## APPENDIX J



Theme poster- Used at public display of garments and presentation boards at the UW-  
Stout Research Day.

## APPENDIX K i

An overall view of display



Public presentation of garments, boards, and fabrics.

## APPENDIX K ii



A close up view of fabrics and boards, taken at public display on UW-Stout Research Day.

## APPENDIX L



Doll's dress showing afrincha with a touch of Spanish influence in the flared hemline

APPENDIX Mi



Styles from Brawta('a little extra' in Jamaican patois) booklet

APPENDIX M ii



Styles from Brawta booklet showing use of Jamique fabrics.

## APPENDIX M iii



Styles from Brawta booklet showing Jamique motif used as screen printing design on a caftan. Motif can also be embroidered- seen on linen suit.

## APPENDIX N

## Live model with mannequins



Live model in Afrincha two variation- Brown border print top paired with brown skirt finished in the coordinating fabric.

APPENDIX O



Modified Afrincha One