Cricket in the West Indies: A Postcolonial Assessment of Structure, Identity, and the Oriental

Douglas C. Steeples

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Contemporary West Indian society exists as a hybridized collection of identities that has been forged by centuries of ethnic and ideological exchanges, a process that continues to this day. In those Caribbean Islands once under the authority of the English Crown, the legacy of British colonialism is particularly striking, due in part to the fact that the British presence lasted, in many cases, over a period of centuries, and given that independence from Britain came only very recently. The British desire to solidify concepts of Anglo-Saxon superiority led them to introduce a number of institutions from the mother country. The game of cricket was one such institution brought across the Atlantic, but the evolution of the sport in the West Indies over the course of centuries eventually succeeded not in reinforcing British control, but in creating a venue for West Indian cultural expression and resistance.

By visualizing the British colonial system and the game of cricket through the work of post-colonial geographers, while at the same time incorporating an assessment of structuration theory, it is possible to identify the role cricket played in the broader British attempt to maintain cultural, political, and social superiority over West Indian peoples. Furthermore, these same theories can help highlight the local West Indian element that, over time, was instrumental to the production of a distinct Caribbean form of expression and identity, which manifested itself both on the cricket field and off. A study of Orientalism can illuminate the development of the processes that the British used to subjugate the colonial population in the Caribbean, which in turn created important racial structures to be assessed as well. Through conceptions of "locale," one can view the position of cricket and cricket grounds within local society, and assess the influence such places have had in enhancing the depth of the West Indian relationship with cricket, as well as the game's role in the creation of a fledgling regional identity. The game of cricket and its importance within West Indian society can be assessed by way of this structurational analysis, which serves to highlight important aspects of the game that have

made it a historical and cultural institution of the utmost importance across the English speaking Caribbean. My initial points will focus on Orientalism, in an attempt to describe how this philosophy became an incredibly strong British academic institution, and assess the ramifications this production had in the West Indies, both on the cricket field and off. Then I will highlight the non-Orientalist geographic processes that did shape the creation of a unique West Indian relationship with the game. Finally, I will examine the role that the sport of cricket played in the production of a West Indian identity that stands in opposition to the entrenched doctrines of Orientalism. For those unfamiliar with the game, I have included an introductory explanation at the end of the work in Appendix I. Cricket is a sport that supersedes mere athletic spectacle in the West Indies, and hopefully this thesis will clarify some of the processes that have made the game such an integral part of the cultural fabric in the former British colonies of the Caribbean.

I. THE ORIENTALIST TRADITION IN THE BRITISH EMIRE & ITS IMPACT ON THE WEST INDIES

Following the decline of the European colonial empires after the Second World War, new post-colonial geographies were developed to assess the repercussions colonialism had in producing the structures that continue to shape daily life, both in former colonies and in the former colonial metropole. A seminal tract of this post-colonial movement is *Orientalism*, by Edward Said, a work that seeks to uncover the process by which European powers have differentiated themselves from the lands they once controlled, and the effect that this disjoint has had in social, political, and racial affairs. Said identifies the “Orient” in former European colonial outposts around the world, and claims that the Orient is not so much a fixed geographical area, but rather a construct of the European colonial imagination that was

produced through social and ideological discourse. Said states that the Orient has evolved into a form that provides a vivid definition of the "other" for former colonial powers, and that they in turn define themselves in opposition to this "other."[1]

Owing to the size of their colonial empire, this "Orientalism," or dualistic vision of European power opposed to colonial inferiority, takes on a British form over large swaths of global territory, including the West Indies, which makes it an important theme for consultation in relation to cricket. The "Orient" and "Occident" (Poles of colonial authority) are man-made constructs, and the Orient that Said deals with is in fact the constancy of ideas about the Orient from Occidental areas, which do not reflect the actual cultural and social situations in the "real" Orient.[2] Said states that these comparisons have fueled European notions of cultural superiority in relation to the areas of the Orient that came to be seen as "backward." In the era of colonialism, Great Britain viewed "an absolute demarcation between East and West," with the West (specifically Europe), consistently being seen in a position of strength when related to the East.[3] This Orientalist vision can be clearly identified in the relationship between the West Indies and Britain with regard to cricket, making it an important factor in any consideration of the game's cultural role in the Caribbean.

By assessing Orientalism, the process behind the creation of English views on cricket in the West Indies can be identified. Said's thesis, as he defines it, is to show that Orientalism as a process was not developed by sudden European access to new troves of information about the Orient, but rather that Orientalism evolved from "a set of structures inherited from the past, secularized, redisposed, and reformed."[4] In this way, Orientalism can be viewed as a substitute

[1] Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978), 1-3

[2] Said, 4-5

[3] Said, 39

[4] Said, 121

or alternative version of the structure of Christianity, which was on the wane in its official guise by the 19th century. Missionary aspects of Christianity, such as the desire to spread morality and European values to alien stretches of territory, are readily evident in the Orientalist viewpoint, as is a subdued yet consistent opposition to non-Christian sects.

This recreated structure is apparent in the sport of cricket in the West Indies as well, where the game was seen by English colonial authorities as providing an opportunity for the "backward" natives to acquire new traits like "moral fortitude."[5] Many British observers believed that the local Caribbean population lacked such skills, and commented as such in distinctly Orientalist manners. The English cricket player and writer Pelham Warner describes a "stonewalling" West Indian batsman in one account of a tour to the Caribbean in order to make a proclamation about "moral fortitude" and success in cricket. The batsman, who happened to be deaf, was incorrectly given out by the umpire and forced to leave the field. When the umpire realized his mistake and recalled the batsman to the crease to bat once more, the player was weeping and visibly shaken. Warner attributes the fact that the deaf batsman promptly ran-out two of his teammates as proof of a West Indian inability to show resolve in the face of adversity, and their lack of a so called "fighting spirit." This Orientalist interpretation is seriously flawed, however, in that the nature of the game of cricket necessitates clear communication between the two batsman who are sharing the pitch, particularly when running between the wickets. The fact that the batsman was deaf clearly limited his ability to establish a clear rapport with his teammate, and as such this is a far more likely explanation for the run-outs than a supposed lack of "moral strength."[6]

[5] Said, 121-123

[6] P.F. Warner, *Cricket in Many Climes* (London: William Heinemann, 1900), 51-52

On another occasion cited in Warner's account, the missionary superiority apparent in the English approach is evident as well. Warner recounts an antic-dote about a black West Indian batsman who was playing England, and "had 'conceived' the idea that he would shout 'come on' when he meant 'stay where you are' and vice versa, in order to confuse the fielding side." For one over the English were befuddled, but then the side's captain realized that the batsmen were fooling around, and "fixed upon the peccant butler a gaze of such stern intensity that the worthy black man trembled in his shoes and promptly stopped his antics."[7] This illustrates the perception of superiority the English possessed with regard to the local population regarding cricket, and their notions of "proper" competition within the sport. It also highlights the differing approaches to game play between the English and the West Indians, which will be further assessed in the second section of the thesis.

At the beginning of the 1800's in Britain, remarkable social transformations led to important ramifications for colonies under the Crown. Growing numbers of English middle class bourgeois reformers began to call for greater societal access, since they were subject to the immense powers of the aristocrats both at home and in the colonies. These reformists branded themselves "humanitarians," and were strongly influenced by evangelical principles. Their focus expanded to account for the hardships faced by various segments of the population, which shows a widening lens shift from the individual level to include visions of large groups of the oppressed. The reformers pushed the British Empire to outlaw the slave trade in 1807, and to abolish the institution all-together in 1839, but the motives behind these social directives are interesting indicators of the developing Orientalist vision.

Through the abolition of the slave trade and other measures to expand social access, a large portion of the humanitarian cohort sought to construct "on the one hand, 'a world of

[7] Warner, 52

autonomous individuals contracting freely,' and on the other, 'a landscape of moral discipline and government.'"[8] This situation saw recently freed slaves in Jamaica remain on the plantations of their former masters for up to four years to learn a trade that would allow them to become "acceptable" members of society. In effect, these middle class British reformers were "claiming sovereignty" over those they were seeking to help, be they lower class industrial workers in England or liberated slaves in the colonies. They sought not to bring the members of lower social levels onto an equal footing with others, but rather to construct a new social hierarchy which would place the middle class in a position of relative strength vis-a-vis the weakened aristocracy.[9] The developing ideologies of the humanitarians reflects a great deal of "othering" between the classes, and Orientalist visions could be seen when middle class reformers displayed their supposedly superior knowledge of what was best for the native population without consulting the natives themselves. The attitude of the middle class toward the recently freed slaves can be identified in a quote from Holt. "They [colonial subjects] would be free to pursue their own self-interest but not free to reject the cultural conditioning that defined what that self-interest should be."[10]

By the 1840's, however, the humanitarian reformers had seemingly abandoned their vision of the "transformative" power of their program for the independence and subsequent "civilization" of the recently freed slaves in the Caribbean. This disillusionment stemmed from a disconnect between the reformers expectations that a majority of freed slaves would remain on their former masters' plantations and learn "culture" from them while adopting "respectable"

[8] Felix Driver, *Power and Pauperism: the Workhouse System 1834-84* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 18-19, quoted in Alan Lester, "Constructing Colonial Discourse," in *Postcolonial Geographies*, ed. Alison Blunt and Cheryl McEwan (New York: Continuum, 2002), 31

[9] Lester, 31-32

[10] Thomas Holt, *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor, and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832–1938*, (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992), 53, in Lester, 32

forms of Christian worship and the realities on the ground in the West Indies. By the 1840's in Jamaica, more than half of the former slave population had obtained individual plots of land and continued to practice mystic local forms of Christianity, which led one reformer to note that the slaves had "moved (…) beyond the reach of civilizing forces, and reverted to African barbarism."[11] Some observers began to take these opinions as evidence that West Indians were incapable of ruling themselves, and that they required the assistance of a "civilized" British individual to direct them. This belief would shape later English decisions regarding the captaincy of the West Indian cricket team until the 1960's, as the predominantly black team representing an area with a predominantly black population was constantly directed by a white captain. English views on the development of cricket from the mid-19th century onward were also shaped by, and in turn shaped elements of Orientalist discourse within the game.

As mentioned earlier, cricket developed in the English mind during the Victorian and Edwardian eras as a game that promoted the moral worth and vitality of England itself, and closely paralleled notions of Christian morality with its entrenched codes of sportsmanship and respect. The so-called "historicist element in English culture" gives enhanced significance to the traditional and ancient, for example, the Magna Carta; and can be identified in accounts of cricket that seek to trace the invention of the game back to the Middle Ages. Although cricket's conception in the Middle Ages is a highly unlikely scenario, its existence on the mythical English historical continuum can help explain how the English came to see the sport itself as incorporating traditional English values.[12] This perception of cricket as a quintessential English sport is supported by visions of the game in the countryside, where "even today cricket is often presented as a sport played on a village green fringed with trees with the spire of the Anglican

[11] Holt, 116-117 and 146, in Lester, 35-36

[12] Jack Williams, *Cricket and Race* (Oxford: Berg, 2001), 15-16

church and the village inn as indispensable features of the scene."[13] Williams postulates that connecting cricket to the mythic countryside invokes the tradition of English pastoralism, which is glorified as the locale for the production and preservation of English national values. With such a strong traditional historical connection to the game, English notions of propriety within the sport became closely linked with conceptions of proper behavior in general, and as such served as an area for the reinforcement of British ideal notions of rules and authority. When the game was transplanted to the Caribbean and modified by local West Indians, however, the sport held far less mythic value in the eyes of the natives, who saw it in an entirely different light as both a sport of the colonizing forces and an avenue for cultural expression denied them in most other areas of society. These differing visions of the game can also help explain the development of alternative playing styles found in the West Indies.

The theme of classification is also essential to Orientalist studies pertaining to the West Indies. Said states, "the intellectual process by which bodily (and soon moral, intellectual, and spiritual) extension- the typical materiality of an object- could be transformed from mere spectacle to the precise measurements of characteristic elements was very widespread."[14] Moral characteristics were developed and strengthened in the 19th century when they were paired with "genetic type derivation," which saw particular genetic traits assigned to denote the "primitive" state of certain "Orientals." Writers about the Orient were limited in what they could describe, since Orientalism depicted a binary structure as the norm, with a normal "us" residing in the metropole opposing a foreign and alien "them" in the colonies. This system influenced works on the Orient, which in turn influenced the scholarship that followed,

[13] Williams, 16

[14] Said, 119-120

developing an ever strengthening cycle of “knowledge” production that correlated weakly with actual situations in the Orient.[15]

Authors like Thomas Carlyle facilitated the evolution of Orientalist thought from a humanitarian viewpoint during the first half of the 1800's to a more stern approach in the century's second half. Carlyle utilized the theme of classification to promote a reactionary view based heavily on accounts of “natural” differences between peoples and races. Addressing recently freed Caribbean slaves, he stated “you are not 'slaves' now, nor do I wish, if it can be avoided, to see you slaves again; but decidedly you have to be servants to those that are born *wiser* than you, that are born the lords of you; servants to the whites, if they *are* (as what mortal can doubt they are?) born wiser than you.”[16] Carlyle sees these supposed differences in ability across the entire racial and social spectrum, spurning the Irish population by claiming they are a “savage” race who “rebel against the 'laws of nature.'” Carlyle claims that the only “true liberty” for those afflicted by such inferiority, be they Irish, Jamaican, or even working class English, is the “indisputable and perpetual *right* to be compelled, by the real proprietors of (…) the land, to do competent work for his living.”[17] Here we see the “sentimentalist” disposition of the humanitarians criticized, and can sense a lack of focus on the sufferings of those in far off areas of the empire, as the study of the Orient began to take on a cold and calculated outlook.[18]

Classification served to legitimate British notions of superiority, and allowed Orientalist study to continue as a tool for the strengthening of the Empire. Arthur Balfour, a leading colonial authority, gave a speech on British domination of Egypt in the early 20th century which claimed that knowledge was the key to power, and since Britain supposedly knew more about

[15] Said, 43-44

[16] Holt, 280-281, in Lester, 40

[17] Holt, 281-282, in Lester, 40

[18] Lester, 41

Egypt than anyone else by virtue of her Orientalist studies, the Empire could logically claim to be the most legitimate rulers of the nation. This approach to the Egyptian question assumes that Egypt existed only as the British knew it, discounting any opportunity for local organic creations to have an effect on society. By arguing that the Orient had never known self-government, the British claim to power was strengthened, and led to the imposition of an authoritarian structure with which the locals were supposedly more familiar with.[19] The process of classification can be seen as an offshoot of a broader Orientalist trend in the British Empire, and its effect on the English relation to cricket in the West Indies is immense.

As a sport of the empire that sought to spread English morality to the "backward" colonial races, cricket was closely linked to the process of racial classification from the moment it was introduced to the Caribbean.[20] This can be seen in Warner's firsthand account of a West Indian tour to England at the turn of the 20th century, where he claims, "the Black men will, I fear, suffer from the weather if the summer turns out cold and damp, as their strength lies in the fact that their muscles are extremely loose, owing to the warm weather to which they are accustomed."[21] Noted cricket writer Neville Cardus also clearly employs the principles of classification in his description of the famed 1920's black West Indian cricketer Learie Constantine. Cardus notes that, "when we see Constantine bat or bowl or field, we know at once that he is not an English player, not an Australian player, not a South African player; we know that his cuts and drives, his whirling fast balls, his leaping and clutching (…) are racial; we know they are the consequences of impulses born in the blood, heated by the sun, and influenced by an environment and a way of life much more natural than ours- impulses not

[19] Said, 31-33

[20] Williams, 18

[21] Warner, 9

common to the psychology of the over-civilized quarters of the world."[22] These highly racialized accounts often filled the popular press, which perpetuated incorrect views on the nature of Black West Indian cricketers throughout the English population. H.J. Henley, writing for the Daily Mail in 1928, stated that "several of the West Indies team seem to become intoxicated by the exuberance of their own brilliancy (…), none the less, these batsman must continue to play that is in their blood. They cannot change their temperament."[23] These accounts revitalize the notion of a lack of West Indian "moral fortitude," which served to legitimate British opinions on the creation of the West Indian style of play.

These English Orientalist visions, based strongly on racial characteristics and an assumption of British superiority, have been dismissed in recent decades as racist accounts used to confront a style of play that many English had not yet seen. But the differences that distinguish West Indian play from that of England are noticeable, even to this day, and the creation of this form poses an interesting problem that can be consulted through geographical research. What differentiates the West Indian style from that of others? How and why was this style crafted? I will attempt to shed as much light as possible on these questions in the following section of the thesis.

II. CARIBBEAN STRUCTURAL INTERACTION AND CRICKET

While British colonial observers perpetually identified the playing style of West Indian cricketers as a by-product of their racial characteristics, and held that these preconceived "facts"

[22] Williams, 36-37

[23] Williams, 35

of knowledge applied throughout the Caribbean, in actuality cricket was developing in a wildly complex fashion on the islands. The English use of Orientalist viewpoints in their studies required a lens too broad to examine local productions, since Orientalism sought to encompass the history and culture of half of the world without the subdivision seen in other academic disciplines.[24] In the era of colonialism and beyond, the "absolute demarcation between East and West" in the English imagination was confronted by West Indian cricket, where a novel playing style evolved that incorporated local elements into the British structure of the sport.[25] The creation of this style would have important ramifications throughout the cricketing world during the latter half of the 20th century, as innovative West Indian methods saw the formerly colonized population become world champions, and the sport become a major area for Caribbean cultural expression and the creation of West Indian identity.

The development of these unique West Indian methods of expression on the cricket field cannot be identified using the old Orientalist model seen in traditional colonial scholarship. The theory of Structuration as put forth by Anthony Giddens holds that modern geographic thinkers need to consider social systems across a time-space continuum. Giddens draws upon the work of Haggerstrand, who saw the concept of "time-geography" as the routine character of daily life, which when analyzed could show how humans move, act, and communicate in their environment with regard to the physical constraints placed upon them. These physical constraints, i.e. the continual force of gravity, the finite human life span, and the fact that movement in space is movement in time are all limitations that shape the way humans behave.[26] Giddens recognizes the legitimacy of this belief, but when expanded to include

[24] Said, 50

[25] Said, 39

[26] Anthony Giddens, "Time, Space, and Regionalization," in *Social Relations and Spatial Structures* ed. Derek Gregory and John Urry (New York: Palgrave Macmillian, 1985), 265-266

broader sociological questions, he advocates a nuanced view of the structure-agency debate; unlike many Marxist geographers, he claims that "social structures are both constituted by human agency, and yet at the same time are the very medium of this constitution."[27]

This incorporation of a dualistic approach to the debate over structure-agency is useful for the analysis of cricket, a highly regimented game with a formal structure that also provides opportunities for individual innovation and action. The game of cricket itself features numerous structures, such as the temporal structures that mandate strict break times for lunch and tea, addressing the human capability constraints of hunger and thirst in an attempt to satiate the needs of the players and thus improve their on-field performance.[28] Yet there are other constraints within the sport that made it an attractive cultural export for the British Empire, such as the strict rules regulating player conduct and the emphasis on reverent respect for the umpire and his decisions. These aspects made the game highly regimented and established an order of authority which Britain sought to have the natives emulate, showing ultimate respect towards both the umpire and the Queen, and reinforcing the racial and class based hierarchical structures of the era. In this way, cricket became a component of the broader British colonial structure which sought to control the natives and teach them English concepts of proper behavior.[29]

Cricket began as an important social occasion for landed upper class British whites when it was introduced to the West Indies in the late 18th and early 19th centuries. Giddens belief that "in all societies there are social occasions which involve ritual forms of conduct," and feature "sanctions regulating 'correct performance'" is applicable to cricket in the British West Indies

[27] Giddens in Introduction to *Marginalized Places and Populations: A Structurationist Agenda*, ed. David Wilson and James O. Huff (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1994), XIX

[28] Giddens, 268

[29] Michael Manley, "Sir Frank Worrell, Cricket, and West Indian Society," in *An Area of Conquest: Popular Democracy and West Indies Cricket Supremacy* ed. Hilary Beckles (Kingston, Jamaica: I. Randle, 1994), 145

during the colonial era.[30] The strict rules and conservative style of play advocated by imperialists allowed cricket to become a socio-cultural weapon for the empire. The game was played at first strictly by the elite, who displayed their perceived notions of propriety to the West Indians and reinforced their social dominance over the impoverished non-whites by using cricket as a tool of oppression within the broader system of structural oppression.[31] This type of display fits into Cosgrove's notion that power is expressed and maintained through the reproduction of the dominant culture, in this case, English culture in the form of cricket.[32] Cricket's "rightness" or "correctness" in the English imagination can be identified in the common English phrase, "That's not cricket," which essentially translates to "That's not right/o.k." In this example the literal definition of the word "cricket," when placed in the context of the phrase, is "right," illustrating that cricket and correctness, at least in the English mind, go hand in hand.[33]

When cricket was introduced it was a tool of the imperial elite, and served to strengthen the power of the British colonial effort. But beginning around the turn of the 20th century, members of the lower classes, many of whom were black, began to infiltrate the domain of white imperialists.[34] They were not playing inside the gated clubs of the rich, but were instead recreating the game to suit their economic and social conditions. The game that had been introduced as an instrument of hegemony and used to differentiate the elite from the poor black masses began a slow evolution which saw lower class players work within the structure of

[30] Giddens, 277-278

[31] Hilary Beckles, "The Radical Tradition in the Culture of West Indies Cricket," in *An Area of Conquest: Popular Democracy and West Indies Cricket Supremacy* ed. Hilary Beckles (Kingston, Jamaica: I. Randle, 1994), 43

[32] Denis Cosgrove, "Geography is Everywhere: Culture and Symbolism in Human Landscapes," in *Horizons in Human Geography* ed. Derek Gregory and Rex Walford (Totowa, NJ: Barnes & Noble Books, 1989), 124-125

[33] Manley, 144

[34] Beckles, 44

the game and reshape it to facilitate local cultural expressions and foster a regional sense of identity. This process of West Indian restructuring was, however, gradual, and came in fits and starts.

Recreated West Indian actions with regards to cricket can be identified through a focus on the concept of duality within structuration. This structurationist concept of duality claims that individuals can work somewhat independently within a structured society, their agency facilitating change within the very structure that confines them. When applied to studies of cricket in the West Indies, this concept helps illustrate how and why the institution of cricket was reformulated to reflect a more West Indian character.[35] The motivation to resist colonial rule became an instrumental force within the game of cricket for numerous West Indians, who saw in the game an opportunity to confront their colonial superiors and exercise expressions of free will. As Maurice St. Pierre states, "cricket does afford the player the opportunity to fully express his inner self," and examples from actual West Indian play confirm this notion.[36]

Local expressions via cricket allowed West Indian subjects to vent frustration at colonial rule in a socially acceptable place and manner on the field. West Indian cricketers interacted with the game through the emotion of restrained anger in many cases, seizing upon the opportunity to show aggression when social structures off the field prevented such displays.[37] This property of aggressiveness can be seen in the play of Learie Constantine, a talented black cricketer of the 1920's-30's whose desire for victory at all costs in a match versus England illustrated the differences in attitude between the elite cricketers and lower class West Indians. Where Constantine used cricket as an instrument to carry out emotions of displeasure over his

[35] Cosgrove, 120

[36] Maurice St. Pierre, "West Indian Cricket - Part I: A Socio-Historical Appraisal" and West Indian Cricket - Part II: An Aspect of Creolization," in *Liberation Cricket: West Indies Cricket Culture* ed. Hilary Beckles and Brian Stoddart (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 127

[37] Giddens, 267

mistreatment, the white elites saw the match as more of a social encounter, and were appalled at Constantine's aggressive methods.[38] This unique system of local West Indian play was not seen among the elite who played the game in its "proper" fashion, and fits with Giddens view of structure which places less emphasis on macro-level structures controlling everything underneath them and focuses more on localized rules and constructions existing within the larger structure as a whole.[39]

This local play incorporated aggressiveness and ingenuity to create a distinct West Indian form, and by the 1960's a discernible Caribbean style of play became evident, a style which continues, in an evolving form, to this day. An example of this style is the West Indian tendency to hit the ball with more ferocity and power than seen in the "pure" form of the game that was introduced as a part of the English colonial structure. The effect of a high bat-lift among West Indian batsmen allows more force to be exerted during the stroke, thus increasing the power of the shot. English notions of propriety and batting with "beauty" and "grace" were downplayed in the local cricket culture of the West Indies, which focused on aggression, and can be seen as an expressive West Indian response to the British colonial leadership within the structure of that leadership itself.[40] This lack of "grace" in West Indian play may have contributed to English perceptions of Caribbean inferiority, but in fact the powerful strokes instituted by the West Indians enabled their sides to score runs more quickly. The unorthodox styles were used by West Indians not only to express anger at English domination, but also to differentiate themselves from the imperialists. Powerful strokes and technically radical approaches to batting created the novel West Indian form that altered identity within the structure of the British Empire.

[38] Beckles, 46-47

[39] Wilson and Huff, XX

[40] St. Pierre, 113-114

Ingenuity and an ability to think "outside the box," or to confront the structural limitations of game play imposed upon them by the English rules allowed the West Indians to introduce numerous new innovations to the game that were distinctly Caribbean in nature. One such example is the "falling pull" shot developed by Rohan Kanhai and displayed during the 1963 test match at the Oval in England, which served to express an individual desire within the broader purpose of securing his side a victory against the colonial rulers.[41] This approach to the game extended beyond the practice of batting, however, influencing the West Indian mentality towards the game itself. When the West Indian side finally saw a unified team under the black captain Frank Worrell in the 1960's, the rest of the cricket world was afflicted with a "welfare state of mind," emphasizing safe and oftentimes dull play and captaincy in order to avoid a loss at all costs, even if it meant passing up a chance for a victory.[42] The West Indian team under the captaincy of Worrell, and later Garfield Sobers, employed a new and daring approach that emphasized victory.[43] This desire to challenge structural norms in an effort to secure a win can be seen in Worrell's decision to field a team with four fast bowlers, when conventional wisdom maintained that only two fast bowlers should be included to make room for two slow spin bowlers.[44] By introducing these radical concepts to the cricket world, the West Indies served to alter the conceptions of the game around the globe, and thus reproduce their interpretation of proper action within the structure of the game and disseminate it outward through that structure.

[41] St. Pierre, 128-129

[42] In cricket, if no side has won the match outright after five days of play, the game is declared a draw, so some teams employ slow, safe methods in order to "bat out" the rest of the match and avoid a loss.

[43] Tim Hector, "West Indian Nationhood, Integration, and Cricket Politics," in *An Area of Conquest: Popular Democracy and West Indies Cricket Supremacy* ed. Hilary Beckles (Kingston, Jamaica: I. Randle, 1994), 123

[44] Manley 147-148

But the development of this novel style of West Indian batting that the world came to identify as Caribbean from the 1950's-60's and beyond was not immediately apparent at the highest levels of the game. According to Cosgrove, the centrality of the dominant culture and the elite members of society affect the local landscapes by concentrating a surplus of capital in those areas frequented by the elite. In this way, the cricket landscape of the West Indies was altered, with an abundance of capital poured into the elite clubs, which kept fields pristine and saw players closely adhere to the style of play brought forth from the mother country.[45] Thus the so called "proper" form of the game prevailed in elite areas of the West Indies, such as the clubs and the institutions of higher learning. But a distinction must be made to distinguish these centers of imperial style cricket from other locations where the game was played. These elite dominated clubs and schools fall into what Giddens defines as a "front area."[46] "Front areas" were rarely infiltrated by members of the lower echelons of society, and as such these citizens were not exposed to technical training and instruction regarding "proper" mannerisms on the cricket field.

The main transformations of cricket activity which would lead to the development of what came to be known as the West Indian style emanated out of the "back areas" of society. Giddens compares the "back areas" of society to the off camera area of a film set. Here ritualized motions and events can be carried out where there is less pressure to conform to the societal norms of the powerful structure (i.e. the set director.) In the "back areas" of West Indian society where cricket was played, the lack of elite supervision allowed cricketers to experiment with new methods and introduce new forms to the game. Structure still managed to play an important role regarding developments in this field however, since smaller scale local

[45] Cosgrove, 128-130

[46] Keith Standiford, "Imperialism, Colonial Education, and the Origin of West Indian Cricket," in *An Area of Conquest: Popular Democracy and West Indies Cricket Supremacy* ed. Hilary Beckles (Kingston, Jamaica: I. Randle, 1994), 11-12

structures regulating behavior and motion in the "back area" were still present during West Indian experimentation within the game. This can be seen as a contributing factor in the incorporation of West Indian notions of play and mentality, which imposed structural constraints of a local nature to a product that would eventually challenge the structure of the elite.[47] The impoverished West Indian residents of the "back areas" engaged with a different kind of cricket than the type seen in the elite grounds and parks. Unable to purchase expensive official equipment, readily available materials were used to craft bats, balls, and stumps, thus shaping the "back area's" structural relationship with cricket in a local manner. The institution of beach cricket emerged from the "back areas" of these Caribbean societies, a local version of the sport where games were played on the firm sand portion of a beach with unofficial local materials. Beach cricket evolved into a game favoring batsmen who could hit hard shots past fielders surrounding him on all sides. The environments encountered by West Indians in the "back areas" of society and their efforts to adapt to such situations contributed to the development of the aggressive West Indian cricket mentality.[48] The need for quickness of sight and foot coupled with a lack of formal instruction in beach cricket saw the creation of unorthodox playing styles that existed as distinct creations of the "back areas" of West Indian society, which were strongly influenced by local structural factors.

This vision of "back areas" and "front areas" as depicted by Giddens contrasts with the conception of structure as a system of uniform impulses which radiate across all landscapes, as put forth by Althusser and other structural Marxists. Structuration and the incorporation of "front" and "back" areas allows local structural introductions to be considered within larger

[47] Giddens, 277-278

[48] L. O'Brien Thompson, "How Cricket is West Indian Cricket? Class, Racial, and Color Conflict," in *Liberation Cricket: West Indies Cricket Culture* ed. Hilary Beckles and Brian Stoddart (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 167-168

trans-local structures, such as the British Empire.[49] The melding of micro-level and macro-level conceptions of structure within structuration theory facilitate the analysis of local West Indian developments relating to cricket which can then be placed in the context of their effects on the larger macro-level structures of cricket and the colonial empire itself. The unorthodox West Indian styles emerging from the "back areas" of society served to confront the sanctions regulating "proper" performance within the dominant structure.[50] West Indian cricket styles represented an alternative, *emergent*, culture featuring its own forms and rules that challenged the dominance of the ruling culture. Cosgrove cites the emergent hippie culture of the 1960's, which challenged the dominance of the elite and possessed its own "back areas" of interaction such as food co-ops and organic farms.[51]

With cricket, the innovations of the "back area" were slowly incorporated into the larger structure of the game as the importance of the elite schools waned and plebeian cricket leagues formed to allow lower class involvement with the sport during the 1930's. These teams played in a far different manner than those that were accustomed to the methods of elite cricket, as the plebeian game was conceived of as a contest rather than as a friendly social occasion.[52] The respective cultures were reproduced on the cricket field when teams of opposing class played each other, and many of the traits developed by players in the "back area" found their way into the structured format of legitimate, official games which resembled those played by the elite. Actions developed when playing beach cricket or street cricket (a similar local construction played on the streets and alleys of "back area" communities) became routine over a period of

[49] David Wilson, "The Limits to Human Constructiveness: Giddens and Structuration Theory in Geography," in *Marginalized Places and Populations: A Structurationist Agenda*, ed. David Wilson and James O. Huff (Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers, 1994), 29

[50] Giddens, 277-278

[51] Cosgrove, 132

[52] Thompson, 170-172

time, which can help explain why unorthodox styles seeped into the mainstream culture of elite cricket as class and race barriers were slowly torn down, and why such actions can continue to this day in continually shifting forms.[53]

Cricket's function in West Indian society has been shown to have engaged emotional expressions through the game itself, with players confronting colonial injustice through new, powerful techniques honed within local environments. But the importance of cricket in the West Indies can be seen at a greater level as well, extending beyond the expressions of the players and functioning as an avenue for expression among the masses of spectators. The cricket stadiums of colonial and post-colonial Caribbean society are not mere "locations" or simple points in space, but rather function as "locales" of communal interaction and expression, which are given legitimacy and cultural meaning by virtue of their relationship with the local environment.[54] Human interaction determines the cultural weight of a particular location, and West Indian interactions with cricket sights have served to make the cricket grounds of many West Indian towns' important areas of local culture. These grounds and stadia serve as areas for society *and* sport throughout the West Indies.[55] The West Indian cricket stadium is a "locale" that features numerous geographic layers of activity, all of which act independently and simultaneously over the course of a match. Cosgrove's depiction of a mall walkway is useful here in grasping the presence of multiple interests being carried out through a single medium. The mall features many groups with clashing objectives and identities, from customers to retailers, loiterers, and charity representatives. The mall example helps to show that distinct

[53] Cosgrove, 123

[54] Giddens, 271

[55] Cosgrove, 123-124

groups can coexist in a single location and attempt to carry out their personal objectives, which can be applied to the study of cricket.[56]

West Indian political objectives were slowly introduced through the structure of the cricket stadium as a means of expressing political beliefs which were not given adequate attention by either colonial or early democratic governments. Over time, the West Indian cricket stadium became a politicized location, an area where local opposition to colonial rule or the new independent leadership could be expressed.[57] Giddens view of boundaries defining a region stress the fact that there is variable permeability to outside society, and in such a way West Indian political emotions existing "beyond the boundary"[58] of the cricket field could be brought in and expressed through the medium of a cricket match.[59] Cricket as a spectator sport gained an immense amount of cultural weight due to the fact that supporters frequently used the occasions to express political beliefs, acts that occurred at the same time as the players themselves were carrying out protests of a sort through their distinct West Indian style of play. The cricket stadium offered non-elites a chance to watch locals face off against the team of their colonizer, which had traveled across an ocean to reinforce the cultural dominance of the mother country and continue British cultural influence, even after political ties for some islands had been severed in the 1960's. These moments allowed West Indians to comment on their condition in a direct fashion that could be witnessed by those in power.

These encounters rarely evolved into violent displays, even if they were not necessarily peaceful. But in politically charged atmospheres, of which there were many in the turbulent

[56] Cosgrove, 118-119

[57] Beckles, 50

[58] The line separating the field of play from the non-playing territory is literally called a boundary, and C.L.R. James used the phrase "Beyond a Boundary" as the title of his classic account of cricket in West Indian society.

[59] Giddens, 274

1960's, occasional violence erupted onto the cricket field. One such instance came in Kingston, Jamaica in 1968, when an umpiring decision that went against a West Indian batsman sparked a bottle throwing incident and forced the match to be temporarily halted. Although many commentators of the era saw it as a signal of the poor and irresponsible nature of West Indian crowds, the situation can also be viewed through the prism of politics and the opportunity for political expression. The political climate in Jamaica at the time of the riots was tense, with a recent beauty pageant having been accused of slighting black contestants, an occurrence that clashed with the ideals of the growing black pride movement.[60] Williams states that, in certain situations, individuals will feel and express a certain identity more strongly or weakly than at others.[61] Within the unstable political structure that existed in the first years after independence from England, the match versus England served as the best method for lower class residents to disseminate their viewpoints within the "locale" of the cricket field, and do so with an identity in strong opposition to the English. Events such as these served to fuse cricket with politics in the West Indies, so that the game itself exerts a great deal of influence "beyond the boundary," as is made clear by Tim Hector, who states "We have fought no wars. Our means of national expression was and is, in the main, cricket."[62]

The behavior of local crowds attending cricket matches in the West Indies has served to alter the local landscape and facilitate the "symbolization" of the cricket ground. The French philosopher Gaston Bachelard wrote about the "poetics of space," which highlighted the differences between objective space and emotional space. While a house may feature objective spaces such as rooms, cellars, and walls; these spaces are far less crucial than the emotional and rational weight the spaces receive through poetic discourses, which serve to create meaning

[60] St. Pierre, 137

[61] Williams, 3

[62] Hector, 122

within the space.[63] Cricket landscapes in the West Indies have been transformed in the Caribbean imagination through the poetic interactions between the ground and the spectator. Landscape, as defined by Cosgrove, is a Renaissance era term that emphasizes the visual forms of the world and their spatial structure. The rational order of the human designed landscape helps show the intentions behind such constructions, which usually strive to enhance human control over one aspect of society or another.[64] The human impetus to incorporate elements of the ruling structure into the landscape itself can be identified in many circumstances, and in these cases the landscapes produced as instruments of the dominant culture are given a particular symbolic value, with the rules and regulations of the dominant structure systematically woven into the landscape itself.

This conception of landscape mirrors the "science of the concrete" espoused by Claude Levi-Strauss, which claims that all humans seek to place order in their immediate surroundings. Strauss imagines groups in a small area assigning symbolic meaning to items found locally, providing the example of a small tribe giving a positive connotation to a fern leaf, while a nearby tribe provides a negative connotation for the very same leaf.[65] An example from the colonial era can be seen in the Victorian gardens of the 19th century British Empire, landscapes which possessed clear boundaries and strict codes of conduct which appealed to the elite society of the era and were worked into the structure of the park, as well as into the structure of society at large. A desire for moral and social control defines modes of "normal" behavior within the park, with distinct paths serving to keep people off the grass and the presence of social customs that enforce strolling, and not running, as the preferred means of transportation within the park.[66]

[63] Said, 54-55

[64] Cosgrove, 121-122

[65] Said, 53-54

[66] Cosgrove, 125-126

These structured devices of landscape creation are also evident in the concept of propriety which was incorporated into cricket by the British elite who created the game. A cricket field, in the English sense, has a well defined boundary separating competitor from spectator, a series of intricate lines and zones on the field itself which identify barriers not to be stepped on or entered as a part of the rule structure, and the presence of two powerful umpires whose decisions are to be accepted as fact and never protested. Thus the cricket field itself serves to reinforce the idea of structural limitations, and when distributed by the British in this form during the colonial era, it served to enhance colonial authority by incorporating notions of a rigid rule structure and deferential respect to persons of higher authority into the game of leisure.

Transgressions of rules in certain landscape structures, like riding a BMX bike through a Victorian garden or vociferously protesting an umpire's decision on the cricket field, are met with stern disapproval from the ruling class and can bring about punishment and social exclusion within that landscape. But here the concept of "front" and "back" areas of society is helpful in determining how alternative cultures are able to express themselves through such rigid structures. The truth of the matter in the West Indian case is that the actors in the "back" areas were not exposed to the pure form of the game which featured numerous components of the ruling structure. Watching and playing beach cricket possessed its own set of social customs which were largely local productions that differed immensely from the imported structure of the game seen in the elite clubs of the West Indies. Structural differentiation can also be seen in the actions of cricket crowds from the 19th century onward. In the Victorian era the game was viewed by many as the epitome of structured morality and propriety. Fine plays on the field were greeted with polite applause, as spectators made conscious efforts to cheer within the

structural boundaries that defined proper crowd behavior. This practice dominated in England, but in the Caribbean far different actions were witnessed.

West Indian cricket spectators utilized the cricket ground as a location for emotional expression, expressions which frequently were far less inhibited and noisier than those seen in England, mirroring the more ambitious West Indian style of game play in opposition to the Brits as well. This style of crowd support is indicative of the permeable boundary cricket has within West Indian society, and crowd influence and interaction with the game itself is far more evident in the West Indies than in the game's country of origin. The West Indian crowd is far more connected to the events unfolding on the pitch, and as a result can influence the game in a far more direct manner than their English counterparts, namely by breaking social and structural restrictions introduced from Britain. This interactive spirit can be seen in other aspects of Caribbean life as well, such as Christian services where both preacher and congregation engage in highly vocal interactions, where spectators can express themselves and in effect, become performers in the ceremony. While for English crowds the boundary rope functions as an impassable social barrier not to be crossed, West Indian fans see the rope as a permeable element that possesses functionality for both game play and spectator expressions. West Indian supporters will commonly cross the boundary to retrieve a ball or congratulate a player, which is rarely seen in England unless the West Indies are visiting; here such incursions by Caribbean-born fans are labeled "pitch invasions" and generally frowned upon.[67] This mode of support seen at Caribbean cricket grounds illustrates the influence local structure has in the creation of practices which can be utilized for expressive purposes within larger structures of control, such as the colonial empire.

[67] Richard Burton, "Cricket, Carnival, and Street Culture in the Caribbean," in *Liberation Cricket: West Indies Cricket Culture* ed. Hilary Beckles and Brian Stoddart (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1995), 91

The study of cricket's development as a sport and institution in the West Indies is strongly aided by interpretation through the academic lenses of structure and landscape. But another pressing issue related to the sport deals with its role in the formation of a distinct West Indian identity that extended beyond the cricket field itself into the social and political realms of Caribbean life.

III. CRICKET AND WEST INDIAN IDENTITY

Orientalist viewpoints on the part of English colonizers largely shaped the debate over issues relating to the West Indian cricket team. A particular issue that had important ramifications for the cricket team itself, and for West Indian identity outside of cricket, was the issue of captaincy. Arthur Balfour epitomizes colonial British visions of leadership in his assessment of Lord Cromer's rule in Egypt, where he claims that Cromer's actions "have raised Egypt from the lowest pitch of social and moral degradation until it now stands among Oriental nations, I believe, absolutely alone in it's prosperity, financial and moral."[68] This clearly reinforces the notion of British superiority and colonial inferiority which colored the debate over leadership of the West Indian cricket team. There was a strong historical tradition of British views on superiority over subjects in the West Indies, stretching back to the Morant Bay revolt in Jamaica during the late 1860's. During this conflict, white Jamaican settlers wrote to London newspapers in order to "educate" the elite of the metropole on Orientalist matters. An editorial sent to the Pall Mall Gazette regarding the revolt claimed that "securing civil rights to a people is one thing, and conferring on them political privileges is another; that all races and classes are entitled to

[68] Said, 35

justice, but that all are not fit or ready for self government; that to many (…), giving them to themselves, as we have done, is simply the cruelest and laziest neglect."[69]

The notion that local Blacks were incapable of directing their own affairs, created in part by a misplaced trust in "genetic type derivation," saw English authorities place the largely Black West Indian team under the leadership of increasingly unskilled White players all the way through the 1950's.[70] Demands for more representative Black leadership were made both on and off the cricket field, and a campaign by CLR James in 1960 saw Frank Worrell become the first permanent Black captain of the West Indies. Worrell's leadership was influential in that it mirrored the political developments ongoing in Caribbean society at the time, where greater freedom was given to individuals to pursue their own plan of action.[71] West Indian players seemed to identify with a Black captain much more strongly than with any White predecessors, a development that served to produce a more cohesive and successful side from the 1960's onward. With fewer restrictions on their play, the West Indies team emerged as a world power from this point on, and the brilliant cricketers of this new era provided Caribbean society with a set of heroes that were widely recognized from island to island and who served to enhance regional recognition and identity through their superior play.[72]

The local organic creations seen in West Indian play propelled them as a team until they hit their peak from the late 1970's through the 1980's. While the side may have been competitive before this period, the stretch of brilliance in the 1980's was unlike anything seen in the game previously. Of their one-hundred and twelve test matches played between 1976 and 1990, the

[69] Christine Bolt, *Victorian Attitudes to Race* (Toronto: Routledge & Kegan Paul Books, 1971), 87, quoted in Lester 38-39

[70] Said, 119-120

[71] Hector, 119

[72] Manley, 150

West Indies won fifty-five and lost only thirteen, with all other games ending in a draw, representing an unprecedented victory percentage for a cricket team. In twenty-two test series over this stretch, the West Indies won eighteen. Their success against England in particular during this era is notable. Over the course of seven test series versus the English, the West Indians won twenty-two test matches as opposed to England's one, and managed to accomplish a so-called “black-wash” in the 1984 and 1985-6 series, defeating England five tests to none in both instances.[73]

These West Indian teams were anchored by the four world class fast bowlers who comprised the bowling attack, a unique innovation that neglected spin bowling completely. During the early 1970's when the team was underachieving in relation to their talent, many in the English press reverted to Orientalist and racist themes to explain the West Indian under-performance. In 1970, journalist Henry Blofield cited “temperament” as the main West Indian failing, saying that they were not able to “regroup mentally and take stock of the situations and problems in front of them when things start going wrong.”[74] Although the team was celebrated for its carefree and exuberant playing style, or “calypso cricket,” during this period; by the 1980's the racial discourse had shifted to a more overtly disparaging one. At the turn of the decade, the devastating success of the four pronged bowling attack became impossible to ignore, and many commentators quickly abandoned their belief in a West Indian lack of “fortitude” to instead dismiss the “violent” and “menacing” nature of the successful bowlers. In 1984 Robin Marlar called bowler Malcolm Marshall “a cold blooded assassin,” and in 1986 Christopher Martin Jenkins alluded to the bowling quartet when he claimed that “all who

[73] Williams, 117

[74] Williams, 117

cherish the game which once had beauty, variety, and subtlety as well as thunder and blood should deplore the increasing violence of professional cricket."[75]

This belief in violence and a reliance on the bowlers as the root cause of West Indian success dismissed the actual skill that the team possessed, which was immense. The West Indian bowlers made frequent use of "bouncers," or short pitched deliveries aimed at the batsman (comparable in intent to a "brush-back" pitch in baseball). Although a legal delivery, the West Indian bowlers commonly bowled it with enough speed and movement to injure batsman, which caused an outcry from other nations (England in particular), who demanded that it's use be curtailed. In fact, the use of bouncers had been regulated since England's infamous "Bodyline" tour to Australia in the 1930's, but West Indian bowlers were achieving their extraordinary success within the rule parameters that the International Cricket Council had outlined.[76] The fast bowlers were also vilified for slowing the game, since they needed longer run-ups and more time to recuperate between spells, and for causing a decline in spin bowling, which "was seen as one of the more subtle art forms of cricket in contrast to the aggression of fast bowling."[77] West Indian Captain Clive Lloyd, who would retire as, statistically, the most successful captain in the history of the game, refused to bow to the pressure, insisting on playing his best players, a seemingly logical decision, but one which fell outside the traditional view that a bowling attack should be made up of two spinners and two quicks.

The West Indians responded to these criticisms by highlighting their aggressive, yet methodical and controlled approach to win matches, essentially taking full advantage of the rules that the structure of the game allowed them, and using them to tremendous success. Lloyd stated that "because a wicket is quick, and batsman get into difficulty, you can't bowl half

[75] Williams, 117-118

[76] Williams, 121-122

[77] Williams, 122

volleys," [an easy delivery to hit], "you still do your best to get them out. That's the game. If you can't play fast bowling you shouldn't be in the game at international level."[78] Statements like these flip the Orientalist argument of English "moral fortitude" on its head, not by citing racial differences as the cause of success, but rather skill differences; a claim that could serve as a point of pride for West Indian natives who had been forced to live under the misplaced notion of their inferiority during centuries of British control.

Later attempts by the International Cricket Council, headquartered in London, to set limits on the maximum number of bouncers that could be bowled per over and the minimum number of overs to be bowled per day (to penalize fast bowlers and their long recovery time) aroused suspicions of neo-colonialism from the Caribbean. The ICC's attempts to alter the structure of the sport struck many as an attempt to reformulate the game in order to produce a sport that corresponded with English notions of how it should be played, and as such, increase the likelihood of English success. Journalist Nigel Carter wrote in the Caribbean Times that "as in the days of empire, some in the ICC are attempting to ride roughshod over darker skinned peoples." [By this point Pakistan had also developed a lethal innovative form of fast swing bowling.] "They hope to force the decline of West Indies so they can take up the white man's burden and lord it over international cricket."[79]

The criticism of West Indian bowling practices from England reveals a double standard relating to bowlers, since England had seen success historically with fast bowlers like Harold Larwood, who made effective use of bouncers as well. Orientalist and racist discourses from the English are also apparent when viewing the relatively mild descriptions of White fast bowlers who played at the same time as the West Indian greats, like Australia's Dennis Lillee. While

[78] Williams, 123

[79] Williams, 125-127

England was deploring the playing style emphasized by the West Indies in the 1980's, they were at the same time attempting to emulate this success by establishing cricket academies with an emphasis on teaching fast bowling. The fact that the English never produced a bowler of comparable quality to those from the West Indies strengthens the argument favoring skill as opposed to illegality of method or race.[80] The Orientalist arguments highlighting the contributions of the fast bowlers served to diminish the accomplishments of captain Clive Lloyd, who managed to instill a greater amount of discipline in his team, which had been a major Orientalist focus in the early 1970's before Lloyd took over.[81] Lloyd's ability to develop a collective team spirit of unity that overcame the competing identities players brought from different Caribbean islands is indicative of his skill as a captain, and parallels the unifying effect the cricket team had, and continues to have, throughout the West Indies as a whole.

The interactions at West Indian cricket grounds were formative events which assisted in the production of an eventual "West Indian" identity. Segregated seating on the basis of race and class at Sabina Park in Kingston, Jamaica provides a picture of the fractured structure imposed by the British in the colonial period, but through cricket a collective identity can be identified, as members of all classes can rise to cheer the conclusion of a good West Indian batting performance. As the batsman walks the steps to the changing rooms, he is congratulated by the masses of poor supporters in the bottom bleachers, and then is cheered by the members of the elite as he ascends into the members' pavilion, illustrating the influential unity begat by cricket in the West Indies.[82]

Historically, differentiation occurred once blacks were introduced into the West Indian touring side in the early 1900's. At this moment, the entire team became "black" in the minds of

[80] Williams, 130-131

[81] Williams, 120

[82] St. Pierre, 131

the English observers, as seen in cartoons depicting the England team against a team entirely comprised of dark skinned cricketers, even though these West Indian teams still featured many white players. This "othering" was perhaps intended to demonstrate the oneness of different peoples under the British flag, but in actuality it may have spurred stronger local identification among the masses of West Indian observers, who could now support a side that stood in opposition to the colonial power.[83] According to Williams, in the 1920's and 30's the skilled Black cricketer George Headly was, for "the black masses (…), the focus for the longing of an entire people for proof; proof of their own self worth, their own capacity. Furthermore, they wanted proof to be laid at the door of the white man who owned the world which in turn defined their circumstances. What better place to advance this proof than in cricket?"[84] This form of oppositional identity had evolved by the time that the West Indies visited England in 1950, and although still under the leadership of a white captain, the team's victory in this series can be identified as a defining moment in the creation of a stronger West Indian identity. In defeating the mother country at her own game and on her own soil, the West Indian team became a beacon of unity across a divided chain of islands, allowing residents to define themselves in a non-colonial fashion. Michael Manley illustrates the importance of the 1950 victory, claiming that "When the Lord's test happened, it was not just about victory, it was about the self realization of a people."[85] This event contributed to greater feelings of West Indian self confidence, and resulted in the emergence of a generation of brilliant and innovative cricketers, as well as a number of nationalist leaders who would confront the ruling political elite.[86]

[83] Beckles, 45-46

[84] Williams, 49

[85] Manley, 145

[86] Beckles, 52

Nationalist sentiments in the West Indies were boosted by shared displays of pride in the feats of cricketers such as Gary Sobers, whose play served to both confront English notions of superiority as well as forge a national "West Indian" identity. A 1958 test match versus Pakistan at Sabina Park allowed Sobers to demonstrate his brilliance to the world, as he scored a (then) world record 365 unbeaten runs,[87] and did so in three fewer hours than Leonard Hutton, the Englishman who had previously held the top mark with 364 runs in an innings.[88] Sobers achieved this record mark by utilizing the characteristic Caribbean batting style that residents across the islands could recognize, fostering a realization of the benefits of a distinct West Indian form and enhancing regional identity through said style. Unifying factors such as this prompt Tim Hector to claim that through cricket, West Indians began to identify themselves as a national entity, with the game combating the historical sense of racial inferiority left over from centuries of British rule.[89] But complicated realities of social and ethnic structure in the West Indies can also be highlighted through cricket, and these insights can assist with explanations as to why this unity failed to produce an inter-island cohesion outside the realm of cricket.

The development of an identity across the multi-ethnic West Indies has been an extremely complex process, and the political and cultural aspects of these developments can be seen through cricket. The case of identity in Guyana or Trinidad, where the two dominant ethnic groups are split between African and Indian descent, can illustrate how fragile the creation of a common identity across the islands is. During a 1953 match in Guyana versus India, the lion's share of Indo-Caribbean supporters cheered for the Indian side, which represented a connection

[87] Sobers had not been dismissed at the time the West Indies declared their innings finished, and hence was "unbeaten." A team will declare an innings closed even if they have not used all remaining batsmen to try for a victory, since ten wickets must be taken from the other side before five days is up, or else the match ends a draw.

[88] Hector, 121-122

[89] Hector, 113

to their lost "homeland." Through cricket, the Indo-Caribbean crowd expressed their dominant group identification.[90] Yet many of the Indo-Caribbean members who tried to return to India realized that they were outcasts in the society of their "homeland" as well, losing their caste position on the journey to the Caribbean and speaking a West Indian influenced dialect of Hindi that was unintelligible to most natives. This led many to return to the West Indies for a second time, and firmly establish their identification within the Caribbean. When the last ship returning Indo-Caribbeans to Calcutta departed in 1955, it marked a distinct break for the remaining Indo-Caribbean's whose allegiance was now mainly to the West Indian team. This transformation of identity was also fostered by a group of Indo-Caribbean cricketers, such as Rohan Kanhai and Sonny Ramadhin, who utilized their own interpretation of the West Indian style of play to succeed on the field and represent a point of recognition for their ethnic community under the umbrella of a unified West Indian team.[91]

This recognition proved to be fragile whenever elections or protests highlighted the internal political and ethnic divisions of the society. A 1976 match in Trinidad signifies this connection between cricket, politics, and identity. The match took place as elections between an African party and an Indian party were about to take place. In this charged environment, the Indo-Caribbeans supported the side from India, in order to differentiate themselves from the blacks and their party, who supported the West Indies. An example that shows the interconnectedness of politics and cricket can be seen among the Muslim fans at the ground during this match; whose support for the West Indian team signaled their intention to support the African party in the elections, with cricket foreshadowing political events.[92]

[90] Thompson, 180-181

[91] Thompson, 184

[92] Beckles, 50-51

Thus it is clear that cricket played a vital role as a medium for expressions of identity across the West Indies, but the forms of these identities were varied and hinged upon not only colonial matters but also on matters of race and class. The complex identification rituals carried out were all on display at the cricket ground however, proving that cricket's role for expression in West Indian society transcended ethnic differences and served as a unifier in itself. In the face of many neo-colonial and Orientalist discourses coming from England, cricket assisted the development of West Indian identities in opposition to the British by providing an arena for expression. In addition, the highly successful West Indian teams of the era offered citizens an inter-island example of strength and dominance, one that was their own and not imposed upon them as the British model had been. These factors help illustrate cricket's historical importance in West Indian society, an importance that continues to this day.

IV. CONCLUSION

The multi-cultural society that is the modern West Indies has undergone vast change over centuries of colonization, and more recently, decades of independence. Under the imposing colonial structure of the British Empire, West Indian actors were able to reconstruct elements of colonial rule, such as cricket, to fit their local environment and facilitate local emotional expressions. Cricket's prominent position in West Indian society can be traced to the capacity for expression within the suffocating structure of imperial leadership, expressions seen not only

on the playing field, but also in the stands, helping explain the close relationship between communities and their cricket stadia. The detrimental effect of Orientalist statements from Britain attempting to delegitimize native West Indians and their actions, both during the colonial era and occasionally in present times, has been lessened by the success of the West Indian cricket team. By offering an aggressive example of West Indian achievement and innovation, cricket has served to undermine negative racial discourses, and strengthen a communal, inter-island identity. The creation of a unique West Indian style of play, executed by some of the most brilliant players the sport has known, has had an immense effect on the sporting world, bringing the Caribbean to prominence and shaping foreign perceptions of the West Indies. But within the West Indies, the game of cricket transcends mere sport; it is at once a series of political, social, and athletic displays simultaneously manifesting themselves in relation to one another, helping to define and signify a Caribbean way of life which is inherently their own.

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Appendix I:

An Introduction to the Sport of Cricket:

Game Structure: There are two forms of cricket, Test matches and One Day Internationals. A test match takes place over five days, with each day consisting of three two-hour sessions of play interspersed with two breaks, one for lunch, and a later break for tea. A One Day International takes place over one day and, in my personal opinion, lacks the subtleties, plot, and narrative which make the longer form of the game so intriguing. For this simple reason of

personal preference, I am choosing to analyze West Indian cricket through the Test form of the game.

In cricket there are 11 players to a side, and the premise of the game is simple, in that the team that scores the most runs wins the match. In test cricket, there are two "innings," which are somewhat similar to American baseball innings but fundamentally different in some respects. Prior to a match, the captains of the respective teams will meet and engage in a coin toss, with the winning captain deciding whether to bat or bowl first. If a West Indian captain won the toss and decided to bat first in a match vs. England, the innings would proceed as such:

- West Indies batting 1st Innings (*Innings* serves as both singular and plural term in cricket, and is always spelled with the *s*.)
- England batting 1st Innings
- West Indies batting 2nd Innings
- England batting 2nd Innings

In this scenario, the West Indies would bat first and attempt to score as many runs as possible, while the England team would take the field and try to "bowl" them out, thus ending their innings and giving the English team the opportunity to bat sooner. The structure of the game of cricket allows far more runs to be scored than in baseball, and scores of 400 runs or more for a team in a single innings are not uncommon. For an innings to be completed, 10 out of the 11 batsmen must be given out, since two batsmen need to be on the field at one time in order to score runs (In fact, there is another complicated mechanism for ending an innings, but this will not be mentioned in the thesis). Thus, in order to win a match outright, a team has to take all 20 of the other teams "wickets" (the same as getting them out), while scoring more runs than the opposition when they have a chance to bat. Since there are only five days of play, if a team can't get all 20 wickets and score more runs in that period, the game is declared a draw.

Game play: The team who is fielding first has an objective to get batsman out. This can occur in many ways, but is most commonly seen when a bowler (comparable to a pitcher in baseball) hits a set of three stumps behind a batsman, an umpire judges that a bowled ball would have hit the three stumps had a part of the batsman's body not gotten in the way, or a fielder catches a hit ball before it touches the ground. When batting, there are two batsman on the field at once, one who faces the oncoming bowler (the striker), and one who is on the opposite end of the pitch (the non striker) When the striker hits the ball, the pair of batsmen can decide to run back and forth "between the wickets," but are not obligated to do so. If they do decide to change places after a hit, a run is scored, and the non-striker is now "on strike" to face the bowler's deliveries. When a ball is hit, the pair can decide to run between the wickets more than once and thus score more runs, but this is dangerous since the fielding side can get a batsman out by hitting the stumps with the ball when the runner has not yet crossed the bowling crease. When an even number of runs are recorded, the striker remains on strike, and when an odd number of runs are taken, the non-striker then faces the bowler, becoming the striker. The boundaries of a cricket field are marked by a rope which serves as a boundary line. If a batter hits a ball with enough strength and places his shot out of the reach of the fielders, he can score more runs at a faster clip by shooting for the boundary. If the batsman hits a ball to the rope that has bounced off the ground one or more times, he is awarded four runs and does not need to run between the wickets. If he hits the ball over the rope without having the ball touch the ground, he is awarded six runs.

Very good cricket players score a higher percentage of their runs in boundaries than others, and the ability to score runs at a fast pace while still remaining composed enough to stay at the crease for a long period of time is highly prized, since it allows the team to reach a higher number of runs in a shorter time, which allows the bowlers of that team more "runs to work

with," taking pressure off them and giving them more time to take ten wickets and thus win the match. After one bowler has bowled a series of six balls (each series is called an "over"), a different bowler from the same team is directed to bowl from the other end of the pitch, thus changing the striker/non-striker situation that existed from the last ball of the previous over. Since a team's batting lineup usually places the best batsmen in earlier slots (ex. Batting 3rd or 4th), and less talented batsman, most commonly bowling specialists, are placed in the lower slots (usually from numbers 8-11), experienced batsman who have stayed in the game for a long period of time while their batting partners have gotten out may be matched with less talented teammates. In these situations, the specialist batsman may "protect" the poor batter from the strike by taking single runs off the last ball of an over, thus becoming the striker for the start of the new over. This is important since good batsmen score more runs at a faster rate than inexperienced ones, and protecting the poor batsman prevents him from facing deliveries where he has a higher chance of getting out than the strong hitter does. For even if the strong batter is never out, if all other batsman in the lineup are dismissed, the innings is finished since he has no batting partner.

One of the most important symbolic achievements for a batsman in cricket is to reach a century, or make 100 runs in an innings. Since it is common for other specialist batsman, even the best ones, to get out early in an innings on occasion, a team usually depends on one or two of their specialists to stay at the crease and make large totals of 100 runs or more. The very best batsman will occasionally make a double-century (200 runs), and on rare occasions, extremely gifted batsman will make a triple century (300 runs), one of the most hallowed achievements in all of cricket. To be recognized as a great batsman, a cricketer must amass a large number of centuries over his career, and accomplish this using strong, beautiful, and fast scoring methods.

Great batsman must also play crucial innings when the team is attempting to win a close match or trying to survive a defeat and hang on for a draw.