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Narratives of Creole islandness: Exploring the relational practices of public servants and community leaders in Jamaica

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ABSTRACT

Understanding islands as spaces that amplify relational phenomena, Creole as produced by the experience of plantation colonialism; and narratives as sense-making tools which sustain cultural repertoires, this thesis uses a case study of public servants and community leaders involved in local development planning in Jamaica to explore the extent to which relational practices of islanders are explainable through narratives of Creole islandness.

Assuming relations as the building blocks of institutions, the thesis proposes that examining relations and their cultural context is instrumental to understanding institutional change (and maintenance). The research uses Jamaica as an example of a Creole island, with the local sustainable development planning process and the participatory governance framework as the institutional context. Three subnational jurisdictions in Jamaica provided the basis for identifying a network of public servants and community leaders to produce the conversation data used for analysis. Members of the diaspora involved in related development initiatives were also included. Conversations produced two sets of research data: 1) identity narratives of Creole islanders, and 2) relational practices in the design and implementation of the local development planning and participatory governance processes.

Analysis of the data set revealed patterns among public servants and community leaders in their emphasis on different elements of shared narratives of Creole island identity and conceptions of development, as well as patterns of relational practices between public servants and community leaders in their roles in the local development planning and participatory governance processes. The findings provide insight into how cultural narratives and repertoires support actors in their navigation of governance processes on a Creole island and suggest the importance of planning for relational practices when designing and managing development and institutional change processes.

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ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CBO	Community Based Organisation
CDC	Community Development Committee
DAC	Development Area Committee
JLP	Jamaica Labour Party
LSDP	Local Sustainable Development Planning
MP	Member of Parliament
PDC	Parish Development Committee
PNP	People's National Party
SDC	Social Development Commission

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In this thesis, I use Jamaica as a case study to understand how socio-cultural relational schemas in a postcolonial postslavery island reproduce relationships among island citizens operating as state and nonstate development actors. To do this, I explore islandness as a relational historical situatedness (Vannini & Taggart, 2013) that produces ways of being and knowing reflected in the relational practices of actors involved in local development planning processes.

Vannini and Taggart (2013, p. 236) propose that islandness is "the multiple ways through which relations among inhabitants, and between islands and their dwellers, are practiced" and use Gabriola Island in British Columbia, Canada, to illustrate islandness as relational practices, not only on the island, but with the island. As, through this dwelling lens, islands and inhabitants become "one and the same" (Vannini & Taggart, 2013, p. 235). They make the point that the "practices, perceptions, relationships and skills" that islanders use to shape their island space will be different (Vannini & Taggart, 2013, p. 236), as islandness emerges from the specific connections made between islanders in keeping with the affordances of the island. For that reason, "[i]slandness on Gabriola … is distinct from islandness on Vancouver Island, and both are quite different than islandness in Jamaica or Hokkaido" (Vannini & Taggart, 2013, p. 236). The identification of islandness as distinctly place-based and practice-based led me to question the likely type of islandness that a postcolonial postslavery island space would produce.

The notion of islandness as place-based practice can be aligned with an understanding of the state and its institutions as produced by repertoires of relations and interactions informed by culture and history (Bevir & Rhodes, 2010). The state and the island can therefore be understood as constituted by the iterative practices and cultural resources accumulated by generations of islanders negotiating relations on the island. With this in mind, I use Jamaica as an example of a postslavery postcolonial island space to explore how the practices and relations of islanders, in their capacities as state and nonstate development actors, are reproduced "by the structural and cultural relationships in which they are embedded and by the stories that constitute their identities" (Somers, 1994, p. 624).

The cultural narratives that emerge from the experiences on the Creole island are available to islanders, implicitly and explicitly, to interpret the actions, practices, and relations that take place there (Somers, 1994; Swidler, 1986, 2001). It is this appreciation of the structuring nature of narratives that frames this research. Narratives, from meta-theories to small stories (de Fina & Georgakopoulou,

2015; Somers, 1994), bring together experiences of islandness, coloniality, and relationships, and translate these into cultural resources available for negotiating interactions in the world.

The research places a focus on public servants and community leaders and understands their management of local development planning processes as their participation in networks of relations informed by intergenerational narrative resources and relational schema reflecting the history of the island. The research aim is to understand the specific ways in which these narratives and relational schema become manifest in relational practices. This chapter introduces the research context and further outlines the thinking that underpins this thesis. Section 1.1 provides the rationale for the research. Section 1.2 introduces key concepts around which I structure the arguments in the thesis. Section 1.3 elaborates the research aim, questions, and data used to inform the study, and section 1.4 provides an outline of the remainder of the thesis.

1.1 Research Rationale

My research explores Creole islandness and its implications for the ways public servants and community leaders, as state and nonstate development actors, negotiate their interactions in governance processes. My goal is to obtain insight into the specific relational practices that emerge to understand how their performance creates implications for institutional change processes.

In addition to my identity as a researcher, I am also a public servant and an islander. All facets of my identity are brought to bear on this research (Jacobson & Mustafa, 2019), making this topic not only academically relevant, but also personally meaningful. In starting my PhD journey, my identity as a public servant motivated me to explore the latest good practices in development. I wanted to contribute to the ongoing development project with which I had been involved as part of the Jamaican public sector. I wanted to understand why the development project had not been more successful given the resources that had been invested. We had the best consultants from across the Commonwealth, international funding, and motivated leaders and stakeholders, but that was not enough. After 20 years in the public service, I was still finding myself in conversations, from the highest to the lowest levels of government, discussing why Jamaica had not yet achieved what Singapore had achieved: Why was Jamaica still developing and had not yet *developed*? The public service, in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean, operate a development public administration (Walker, 2002), where the purpose of the bureaucracy is to facilitate national development, as is the case in most small island countries (Bertram & Poirine, 2018). Therefore, the public sector is not considered simply a

contributor to national development but is seen as the reason development had not been achieved. In such discussions, the diagnosis is often the colonial legacy and organisational culture of the public service (E. Jones et al., 2015; Soverall, 2015).

In my role as a public servant, I had never consciously acknowledged my identity as an islander. I did not become conscious of my identity as an islander until I started my PhD journey and, as part of the process of defining my research, began thinking with the concept of islandness. Questions of islandness, identity, belonging, and coloniality began to emerge alongside notions of development good practice. Although I had always known, in those many conversations with colleagues, that Singapore and Jamaica were not the same, it was only after thinking about it through the lens of islandness that I began to understand the potential implications of that distinction for development trajectories. This was not about historical determinism, but an understanding of the distinct experiences that had produced both islands, as places, and an appreciation of the likely impact that the ensuing islandness would have on political and civic practices in each island.

Islandness matters when thinking about development, not simply because history matters, but because relations matter. Interactions within networks of relations constantly produce change, and such change is "the constitutive characteristic of reality" (Hertz et al., 2020, p. 329). If reality is experienced through our networks of relations (Goodchild, 2021), it is the relations, with each other and with the spaces in which we exist, that must be centred in trying to understand the direction and nature of change. Therefore, rather than exploring development good practice among islands with distinct islandness characteristics, this research focusses on understanding what islandness means in the context of Jamaica, as a Creole island, and the specific ways in which this islandness becomes manifest in the relational practices of islanders involved in development planning processes.

This research is framed as a case study, on the premise that aligning the lenses of islandness and coloniality reveals a pattern of relational networks across islands and between islands and the rest of the world. Gabriola Island and Jamaica are not only different because their islanders have distinct practices for navigating their lives on the island. These distinct practices emerge from their particular colonial histories. In the context of Vannini and Taggart's (2013) example of islandness, Indigenous islanders are likely to experience Gabriola Island differently from islanders descended from settler-colonials (C. A. Hilton, 2021). Therefore, because the colonial history of an island is also a history of relations between people on the island and between people and the island, Jamaica is used in this thesis as a case study to explore Creole islandness and its implications for relational practices.

1.2 CREOLE ISLANDNESS AS RELATIONAL FRAME

Islandness

Islandness is a phenomenon produced by, and productive of, island and islander mutual existence (Baldacchino, 2018a; Vannini & Taggart, 2013). Islandness, according to Baldacchino (2018a, p. xxiv) is "all that constitutes an island … [including] a specific form of political organisation, political mobilisation and political thought", particular to the island experience. This would mean that there can be no universal islandness. As Cohen and Sheringham (2013, p. 10) point out, with "5,675 islands larger than 10 square kilometres" it would be specious to attempt to subscribe to all of them some singular "social and normative order".

It is in this context that Vannini and Taggart (2013) and Baldacchino (2018a) encourage single island case studies, to better understand the islandness of any given island. However, this does not mean that general islandness characteristics cannot be defined. Islandness means something different in different spatiotemporal contexts, dependent on the specific island biogeography and the meanings that different groups of people attach to it (Stratford, 2008; Vannini & Taggart, 2013). The important thing is understanding how these characteristics come together to produce a particular experience of islandness within a given island space, or among a given group of island inhabitants. The heterogenous nature of islands and islandness therefore requires a type of enquiry that focusses not on differences and similarities between islands and non-islands, or even across islands, but instead, as Vannini and Taggart (2013) propose, a focus on how forms of islandness come into being and are manifested.

Creole

This thesis uses the concept of Creole and its variations to describe the dynamics driving the processes of cultural evolution in formerly colonised spaces of Caribbean and Indian Ocean islands (Boswell, 2005; Bryan, 2004; R. Cohen & Sheringham, 2013; Eriksen, 2019; Sheller, 2003). The term is used in its capitalised and non-capitalised forms to distinguish references to products and processes, or beings and non-beings. In the thesis, therefore, I refer to the concepts of creolity and creolisation, but to the Creole island and Creole islanders.

Creole, as an adjective, describes societies which emerged from intergenerational cultural and genetic inheritances based on a history (some as long as 500 years) of exploitation, violence, and racialised disempowerment. These are inheritances of identities and worldviews from multiple origins, adapted to, and synthesised within, the context of the Creole island space. In most ways, this adaptation and synthesis is cultural and mutable, creating new knowledges, identities, and worldviews. In other ways, it is biological, embodied as miscegenation. The biological and cultural

aspects of ancestry and inheritance are therefore primary in the concept of Creole and become interrelated and contextualised through power dynamics, social relations, and stories of identity connected to personal family history, rather than a collective myth of island origin.

Creole islanders can be conceived differently from Indigenous islanders in their connections to the island(s). The relationship of most Indigenous islanders with their island is understood to emerge from an originating ancestral cosmology that connects the islander to the island(s) through a continuous genealogy (Sather & Fox, 2006; Treadwell, 2017; K. L. N. Wilson, 2005). Instead of the sense of continuous history of Indigenous islanders, Creole islanders experience the recency and discontinuity of what Glissant (1989, p. 62) terms "non-history", that establishes the Creole island as a site of multiple intersections and convergences, rather than a site of collective origination. These convergences do not produce the rooted sense of connection to place that Indigenous islanders may articulate, but as Glissant proposes, they nevertheless produce roots, but ones that are "submarine … floating free, not fixed … but extending in all directions in our world" (Glissant, 1989, p. 67).

The term Creole originally referred to the European subject born or "created" in the colonies of the New World, Southern and Western Africa and the Indian Ocean (Lionnet, 2015; Newitt, 2017). The term then eventually became applied to all colonial natives with an allochthonous genealogy, whether human, animal, or vegetable. There is significant scholarship on the Creole concept, its relevance to understanding linguistic and cultural developments in multi-diasporic and globalised spaces (Bakker, 2017; Chaudenson, 2002; Eriksen, 2020; Hannerz, 1987; Mufwene, 2015), and as postcolonial philosophy and lived identity (Bernabé et al., 1990; Brathwaite, 1971; Crichlow & Northover, 2009; Glissant, 2011).

As an analytical tool, the term Creole is widely contested (Boswell, 2013; Chivallon, 2008; Malouf, 2007; Palmié, 2006). The term is used as an ethnic reference in Mauritius and islands of West Africa (Boswell, 2006; Kohl, 2012), as a cultural reference in Réunion and the Seychelles (Choppy, 2020; Tibère, 2016), and across the anglophone Caribbean as a symbol of a false nationalism that makes invisible the injustices maintained against people of African descent (Cooper, 2010; Thame, 2017). Creole is therefore a slippery term, with slightly different shades of meaning in linguistics, anthropology, and cultural studies and varying levels of analytical coherence (Cope & Schafer, 2017). The concept has been contested as a racialised holdover of the colonial era, considered more reflective of the internalised colonial gaze (Boswell, 2013; Chivallon, 2008; Kamugisha, 2019; Malouf, 2007; Palmié, 2006) than concepts reflecting stronger sentiments anticolonial self-determination such as Négritude (Césaire, 2000; Vété-Congolo, 2014) and blackness (Thame, 2017).

Despite its slipperiness and potential colonial complicity, I use the term Creole in this thesis for its descriptive quality — the word tells a story. The term encapsulates the relations, human and spatial, which produce particular island communities. In this application, the focus of the term is on the experience resulting from cultural displacement and entanglement under conditions of oppression and inequality (Brathwaite, 1971; Trouillot, 2002; Vaughan, 2005). Specifically, Creole, in keeping with Hall's (2015) conceptualisation, is inherently experiential, and is an entanglement of elements that produces different results based on how those elements are combined. This experientially contingent quality of Creole means that there is no single Creole. Creole becomes the living experience of pluriversality — of multiple realities.

Creole islands represent a place in which the majority of the population, at the time of colonisation, was imported as labour from locations across the world, and now their descendants call those islands home. The nativisation of those people of multiple, non-indigenous origin within a system of coloniality means that they share memories, traditions, and beliefs that produce intergenerational narratives of being, knowing, and relating within the Creole island. For this thesis, I use the term *narratives of Creole islandness* to refer to this historically contextualised set of traditions and stories of identity among the various communities narratively emplaced within the postcolonial island state. These narratives of Creole islandness are understood to reflect the socio-cultural relational schemas that emerge from the dwelling practices of islanders on the postcolonial postslavery island.

1.3 Colonial and Decolonial Entanglements

Coloniality can be understood as ways of relating which produce Settler, Indigenous, and Creole identities (Waite, 2022). In addressing the relationship between those identified as Settlers and those identified as Indigenous, the decoloniality discourse makes visible and legitimises political and material claims (Tuck & Yang, 2012). The discourse explicitly establishes the need to address the disruptions caused by the ongoing experience of colonialism to Indigenous people's relations with their land, their history, and their communities. Alongside material and political claims, there are also ontological and epistemological claims that the discourse on decoloniality is able to address by establishing the Settler and the Indigenous as products of the process of colonialism with distinct identities and relational orientations (L. T. Smith, 2012). In the context of development, the decoloniality discourse places the politics of power distribution alongside discussions on Settler and

Indigenous knowledges and worldviews. There is an acknowledgement that each identity represents different experiences of coloniality and of being in and understanding the world.

However, the process of colonialism did not only produce Indigenous and Settler identities, but it also produced Creole identities. This is not Creole as used by Anderson (2006) to define Settler-colonial independence from the metropole, but Creole as used by Brathwaite (1971) and Glissant (1997, 2011), which describes, using the Caribbean as the primary point of reference, the process of native emergence that took place alongside the contentious process of plantation colonialism. Using this latter understanding, Creole is not only about an identity produced through the process of colonisation, but the Creole being as a material product of colonisation. This can be distinguished from the understanding of the Settler and the Indigenous as colonial identities. The experience of colonisation transformed existing/precolonial groups of people into the Settler and the Indigenous, as identities assigned to signify their relative positions in the process of colonialism. On the other hand, the Creole, as people, do not exist prior to colonialism. There are no existing or precolonial Creole people, they are a creation of colonialism, a by-product of colonial actions, practices, and relations.

As a nativised experience of colonisation, Creole has had multiple interpretations. Creole experiences of coloniality are often positioned as an African diasporic experience (Gilroy, 1993), or as American phenomena (Price, 2001). At other times the Creole identity is appropriated to provide a metaphor for multiculturality and human connection across space and time — as cultural complexity (Glissant, 2011), cosmopolitanism (Vergès, 2001), archipelagraphy (J. Pugh, 2013a) and conviviality (Eriksen, 2020).

However, as Pyndiah (2020, pp. 424–431) warns, there is a danger in separating creolisation and the Creole experience from the specific history and politics of plantation colonialism, as it has the potential to "render invisible the human geography and histories of coloniality". Conceptualising the Creole experience as only an African diasporic existence imagines a connection to a location, culture, and way of being that has its genesis outside of the island. Although this is a conceptualisation expressed by many Creole people, it is insufficient, as the centring of off-island connections focuses on a single dimension of Creole identity, biological ancestry traced through the history of African enslavement. It is a conceptualisation that discounts the centuries of cultural distinctiveness created through the production of lives and lifeways within the colonised islands and reflects the lived experiences of the island as secondary or less authentic to the more expansive continental history. Understanding Creole existence as African diasporic existence elevates a singular, though important, dimension of racialisation to represent a multidimensional experience of coloniality.

Understanding the Creole experience as primarily an African diasporic experience racialises what is a transracial concept. The concepts of Indigenous, Settler, and Creole, are not primarily ethnic nor racial, though each experience is racialised within its geographic setting (Waite, 2022). The concepts describe relational positions within the colonial space regardless of specific ethnic or racial categorisations. This provides a basis for understanding the experience of Indigenous communities in Taiwan as the result of Chinese Settler-colonialism (Hirano et al., 2018), and identifying the stories of *children of sugar slaves*, the descendants of Australian South Sea Islanders (E. M. Davis, 2020), as reflecting an experience of Creole lived identity. The concepts of Indigenous, Settler and Creole are therefore used in this thesis to reference experiences of coloniality. Therefore, although Creole as theorised by early Caribbean scholars centred the intersection of Indigenous, African, and European experiences of colonialism (Brathwaite, 1971; Glissant, 2011; S. Hall, 2015), as a concept describing relational processes of coloniality, it is able to travel outside of geopolitical, racialised, and ethnicised boundaries, to describe a people produced by a specific lived experience of colonial actions, practices, and relations.

Therefore, I understand the Creole island identity as a political and ontological claim-making colonial identity, reflecting a particular way of being and experiencing the world, and relevant to discourses on decoloniality in the context of development. In using Jamaica as a case study to explore relational practices and Creole island development as a function of cultural narratives, the local development planning processes are given focus. The local development planning processes in Jamaica are designed to integrate local and national levels of development planning and encourage a wide network of relationships in the process. Therefore, it provides an opportunity to examine experiences and relations of a variety of actors operating across different domains.

1.4 Governance and Planning as Processes of Relations

Island nations are expected to use participatory policy and planning processes to transform problems, possibilities, and proposals into sustainable livelihood pathways (S. Graham & Graham, 2019; Jicha et al., 2011). That is, develop appropriate policies to address the wicked problems posed by climate change and the exploitative global financial system. Participation in the public policymaking process becomes a form of active citizenship (Tandon, 2008) that exists along a continuum, from advocacy and lobbying to participating in formal planning and decision-making fora (Gaventa, 2004). Participating in the policy process, however, is more often than not dependent on the available political opportunity

structures which encourage and support nonstate actors to mobilise or become mobilised (Berclaz & Giugni, 2005; Vráblíková, 2014). As Vráblíková (2014) indicates, citizen participation in nonelectoral political activities is directly related to citizen perception of the availability and efficacy of such mechanisms. Participation in the political decision-making process is often accessed as formalised local governance processes where "multiple layers of decision making" allow spaces for citizens to potentially have influence (Vráblíková, 2014, pp. 206–207). However, the extent to which such mechanisms are made available, and where available are considered worthwhile engaging by citizens, is a function of the history and culture of the people (Dalton, 2008; Vráblíková, 2017).

Small islands would appear to be ideally suited for democratic practice, and some scholars have noted the relative persistence of democracy (Anckar, 2008; Ott, 2000), even as others qualify the tendency of those democracies to be far from the liberal ideal (Baldacchino, 2012; Veenendaal, 2020a). There is, however, relative consensus around the idea of islands as spaces of cohesiveness and inter-reliance (Anckar, 2008; Burholt et al., 2013; Corbett, 2015; Veenendaal, 2013). However, this cohesiveness and inter-reliance tends to be based on personalistic and clientelist relations (Corbett, 2015; Corbett & Veenendaal, 2017; Rodrigues Sanches et al., 2022; Veenendaal, 2020a), generally considered contrary to the democratic ideal (Bächtiger et al., 2018). As Veenendaal (2020a, p. 6) notes, it is the "informal, personal relations rather than ideological dimensions" that preserve political systems in these small island democracies.

While several studies note the role of personalism in sustaining small island democracies in the Caribbean, the Pacific (Veenendaal & Corbett, 2020) and Africa (Rodrigues Sanches et al., 2022), others question its effect on citizenship practice (Cox, 2009). Cox (2009), specifically discussing the Solomon Islands, raises the issue of the extent to which patron-clientelism displaces citizenship entitlements and undermines the development of active citizens able to demand improved levels of governance. A possible take away would be that the dynamics of small islands cultivate patron-clientelism which in turn encourages passive citizenship. In the rhetoric of ideal democratic practice, the active citizen makes demands, thereby "shaping [their] rights and obligations through their participation in society", while the passive citizen accepts whatever is given to them by the state (Onyx et al., 2011, p. 56).

However, Rodrigues Sanches et al. (2022) contend that while formal systems of political accountability among the five African small island states they studied may be weak, informal systems existed that were sufficiently capable of ensuring citizen inclusion and constraining political abuse. For small island inhabitants, the apparent weakness of formal institutions did not prevent them from creating informal patronage institutions through which to make their demands known to the state. From this perspective, informal patronage networks operate as political opportunity structures.

As Vráblíková (2014, p. 204) points out, active citizens need "access points to influence politics and [increase their] opportunities … to have an impact on decision-making". These access points, referred to in the literature as political opportunity structures, are "formal and informal features of the state and politics", outside of elections, which facilitate and incentivise citizens to participate in the political process (2014, p. 205). Political opportunity structures are the mechanisms that enable citizenship practice. This is what informal patronage networks do in small island states. This reinforces the proposition that most citizens are more interested in their ability to influence political outcomes than they are in the form of the mechanism (Vráblíková, 2014). Therefore, the discussion of active and passive citizenship will need to be taken into consideration the extent to which small island polities are able to make personalistic political practices work as informal political opportunity structures.

Narrative resources are a key cultural mechanism and a fundamental element of Creole islandness, with implications for the local development planning processes in the study site. Understanding relations among governance actors in the Creole island context benefits from this postcolonial perspective, as the contemporary Creole island society is a product of coloniality (Gordon, 2014; Newton, 2013). Creole island cultures, as a reflection of historical norms and practices, are therefore defined by the colonial experience. Therefore, culture, and by extension the individual's participation in it, becomes a reflection of the ways (and extent to which) coloniality is expressed within the society and manifested in shared narrative resources.

As Pugh's (2013b, p. 1278) research identified, there are a number of factors affecting participatory planning in the Caribbean, including "hegemonic and counterhegemonic discourses of development…lack of political alternatives…the way civil servants act…and perceptions of…communities". Therefore, despite the apparent robustness of democracies in the Caribbean (Corbett & Veenendaal, 2016; Veenendaal, 2020a), and the strong claims to citizenship, the practices are based on models of domination previously used for the oppression of people (Sheller, 2014). The nature of Creole island politics, the institutions of the states and the performance of citizenship are learned, modified and passed down through generations, maintaining remnants of historical understandings of relations and expectations (Sheller, 2014).

Therefore, by exploring the relational practices of state and nonstate actors involved in local planning processes designed to promote citizen participation in development, my interest in Creole islandness is focussed on how it informs relations of power. Political participation is fundamental to democracy and provides citizens with a way to exert their people power (Scholte, 2019). From a Foucauldian perspective, "power is relational" and is the product of people's relationships with each other and their environment (Bærenholdt, 2013, p. 23). The understanding of the institutions of society as emerging from networks of relations (Crossley, 2018), is aligned with an understanding of

society as the product of power relations which "unfold through people's own participation" (Bærenholdt, 2013, p. 23).

Participatory development planning also represents a democratic ideal, based on the notion that, in addition to the politician, the public sector technocrat, the civil society activist, and the private sector lobbyist, the man (or woman) on the street, can similarly operate as a political actor. This is the equalising value of democracy as "the democratic state offers the ordinary man the opportunity to take part in the political decision-making process as an influential citizen" (Almond & Verba, 1972) capable of influencing the design and implementation of development policies and plans. In the postcolonial democracy promotion rhetoric, active civic participation in the political process was positioned as a significant achievement for the postcolonial citizen, evidence of their membership in the civilised world (Almond & Verba, 1972; Robins et al., 2008).

In the context of the Creole island, providing opportunities for citizens to participate in development policy and planning is theoretically aimed at sharing power and allowing those traditionally without a voice to have a role in the decision-making process (Arnstein, 2019; Crocker, 2007; Wampler, 2008). However, such processes are also used by state leaders to gain legitimacy and generate popular support, often without having to share much power, as the state determines the parameters of participation (Arnstein, 2019; J. Pugh, 2003b, 2013b). In such cases, nonelectoral citizenship practice, though promoted as a mechanism for collective self-determination and the expression of public agency (Sen, 2019; Wampler, 2012), becomes a means of reinforcing existing power relations (Hoppe, 2011b; Robins et al., 2008).

Local development planning processes designed to empower marginalised citizens are often based on misguided assumptions about community-level participation, and so the distribution of values, interests, priorities, and resources is often not factored into the community engagement strategy (Lundy, 1999). Even when the marginalised are included, there is insufficient effort placed on giving *linguistic authority* to their voice (J. Pugh, 2013b). As J. Pugh (2013b, p. 1268) explains, there is a difference between having an opportunity to speak and having a voice. There is the additional issue that community participation is often judged by international development entities on levels of administrative effectiveness rather than on representativeness and inclusiveness of the organisations (Blackburn, 2014). Lundy (1999) found that in Jamaica, the membership of environmental nongovernmental organisations, through which international development agencies promoted participatory development planning, tended to not reflect the larger Jamaican population in terms of academic and social status, and were generally "out of touch" with the realities of the majority of communities that were threatened by the environmental risks of development (Lundy, 1999, p. 127). The spaces created for grassroots organisations became dominated by local elites using the

mechanism to articulate their own concerns and interests (Lundy, 1999, p. 127). Under the banner of participatory planning, Spaces purportedly designed to represent the voices of citizens become spaces of "voicelessness" for the marginalised (J. Pugh, 2013b). The nationalist mottos of "all of us are one" (Brereton, 2010), and "out of many, one" (Thame, 2017), promoted by a minority elite, deny the existence of differences in capacities to practice citizenship, and discount the lived experiences and subjectivities of particular citizen identities (J. Pugh, 2013b)

While Lundy (1999) highlights the role of non-governmental organisations in sabotaging citizen participation in development planning in Jamaica, J. Pugh notes how government actors reinforcing Eurocentric notions of development undermined the "linguistic authority" (2013b, p. 1268) of those unable to conform to the expectations of formal participatory processes. J. Pugh's (2013b) observations reinforce the widely accepted relationship between Creole island history and the operation of political institutions. Across the Caribbean, hierarchical, exclusive, and inflexible approaches to decision-making have been generalised as evidence of the continued influence of a colonial culture, implicating Creole island politics and public administration as a major challenge to achieving any conception of social and economic development (E. Jones, 1996; D. Marshall, 2015; Minto-Coy, 2015).

There is an alternative argument which posits that the political institutions of Caribbean islands have been constrained by the structural adjustment policies of the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, and those policies are the real reason these islands have faced development challenges (Beckford, 2021; Bernal, 1984; C. Clarke & Nelson, 2020; Levitt, 1992). And there are those who argue that, despite the damage done by international financial institutions, the effect of colonial history supersedes the effect of structural adjustment and its related market liberalisation policies (Patterson, 2019). That is, the level of development experienced by Caribbean islands is not primarily determined by good or bad policies, but by the ways in which the political and bureaucratic classes operate the inherited political institutions (Patterson, 2019).

Patterson (2019) argues that differences between islands such as Barbados and Jamaica on the basis of economic development can be understood as differences in the implicit cultural knowledge available to politicians and bureaucrats to operate democratic institutions. Patterson's (2019) thesis is that unlike their Barbadian counterparts, Jamaicans did not develop the implicit cultural knowledge necessary to effectively continue operating the democratic institutions of the state for the benefit of the wider society. From Patterson's (2019, p. 62) perspective, it was not that the institutions did not work, but that "they [the political and bureaucratic classes] received little or no practical training in their operation, much less the critical know-how or procedural knowledge of their management". That Jamaicans had not learnt "the institutional rules of the game", was to Patterson

(2019, p. 79) evident in "the way Jamaicans played the institutional game of parliamentary democracy" relative to the performance of Barbadians.

In understanding democratic and institutional practice in postslavery postcolonial island spaces, I propose an alternative perspective to Patterson's (2019). That the operation of institutions reflect cultural knowledge is agreed, however, institutions should be assessed on the implicit cultural knowledge *available* to state actors and other citizens and not on the cultural knowledge perceived as lacking.

Institutions, as networked systems of norms and power dynamics, emerge as a reflection of the relationships, knowledges and negotiations of actors operating across multiple networks within a socio-political environment (Barley, 2017; Crossley, 2018; Powell & Rerup, 2017). Institutions, like the socio-cultural systems from which they emerge, are therefore contingent on the relations, interactions and negotiations which produce them. This also means that reality is dynamic, and the potential for change is constantly being produced through interactions in, and across, networks of relations. This makes the nature of relations, interactions and negotiations, as opposed to the institution itself, a primary target for understanding the direction and nature of change.

This understanding of institutions, as emergent of actors in relation with each other and their environment, is in line with Bevir and Rhodes (2010) who propose an understanding of the state as cultural process. Institutions of the state and processes of governance emerge from the practices of actors interacting on the basis of their traditional beliefs, personal desires and their ideological conflicts (Bevir & Rhodes, 2010, 2016). The institutions of the state become "a series of contingent and unstable cultural practices, which in turn consist of political activity of specific human beings" (Bevir & Rhodes, 2010, p. 1). These cultural practices are contingent on history and traditions and are unstable because new experiences and information are able to challenge historical beliefs and ways of doing things (Bevir & Rhodes, 2010). This means that within a state, social and political practices are primarily constitutive of beliefs and traditional behaviours negotiated and enacted by individual actors (Bevir & Rhodes, 2010) operating within the "messy realities" produced by those interactions and relations (Crossley, 2018, p. 484).

The beliefs and traditions held and observed by individual actors obtain their meanings from the history of the collectives which constitute the state, and are accessible through (contestable) narratives, which makes those beliefs and practices susceptible to change (Bevir & Needham, 2017). While historical experiences provide an "ideational background against which individuals come to adopt an initial web of beliefs" (Bevir & Rhodes, 2010, p. 78), individual actors, as a complex union of traditional beliefs and personal desires, suffer *dilemmas* when they encounter "an experience or idea"

that conflicts with their inherited beliefs and practices (Bevir & Rhodes, 2010, p. 79). Though desires and dilemmas are capable of motivating contestation of traditional narratives, the prevailing dynamics of power within the network will determine the extent and level of success of such contestation. Therefore, while Bevir and Rhodes (2016) reinforce the importance of agency, in conceptualising the state, as individuals are able to act on desires and dilemmas despite beliefs and traditions, Crossley (2018, p. 485) notes that agency is itself relationally contingent, as the individual is "continually nourished and reproduced (or not) in ongoing relations and interactions". The individual as agent cannot be understood outside of the relational dynamics which govern the networks within which they operate. This reinforces the situatedness of agents.

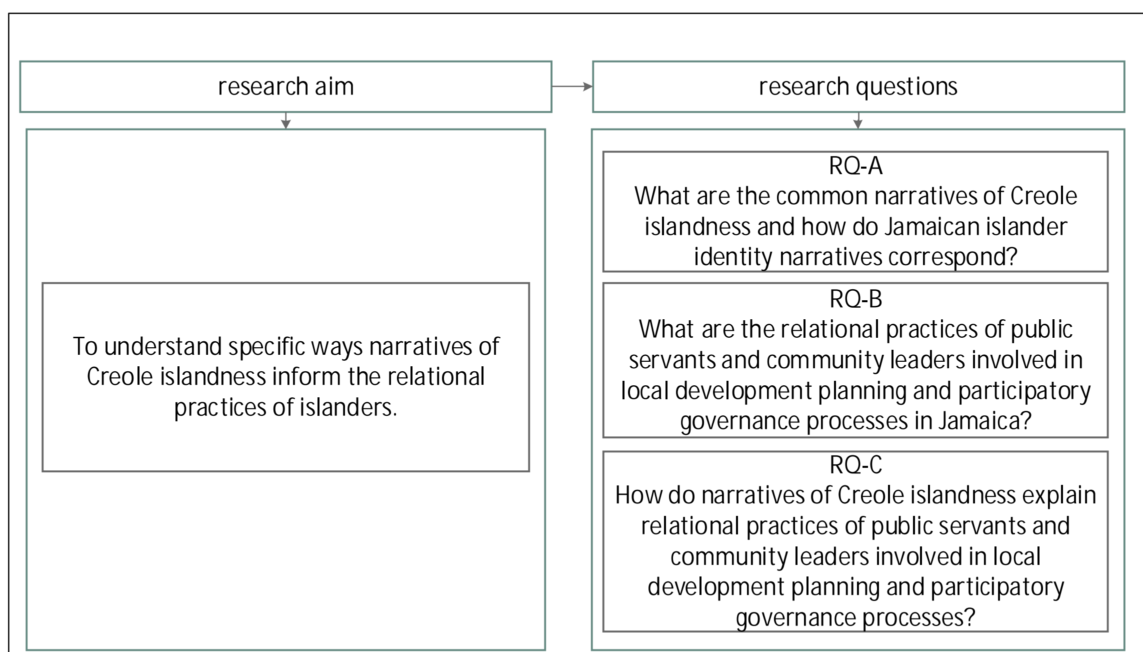
This situatedness of agency means that individuals rely on the cultural tools and repertoires accessible to them in order to negotiate and navigate interactions and their relations within and across social networks (Emirbayer & Mische, 1998; Fuhse, 2018; Swidler, 1986). Cultural tools and repertoires accumulated through social learning and reinforced by practice and experiences (Tappan, 2006; Wenger, 2010), reflect the range of strategies and actions available to individuals to understand and negotiate interactions and create and maintain relations (Swidler, 1986, 2001; Tappan, 2006). Individuals, as situated agents, operate in and across networks and are continually learning and mastering the cultural tools available and building their cultural repertoires as they appropriate knowledge from their environments, and experience the results of interactions and relations.

Therefore, institutions of the state and the trajectory of their development and change must be understood in relation to the cultural tools and repertoires available to individual actors, as opposed to the cultural knowledge *unavailable*. Cultural tools and repertoires are influenced by the historical narratives that are available within a community and will tend to reinforce the dynamics of power which govern interactions and relations across networks. The state and its institutions are not a vague and impersonal set of rules and processes, but a web of practices and processes constructed and actioned through the beliefs, desires, and dilemmas of situated agents tasked with performing various roles (Bevir & Rhodes, 2010, 2016) within networks of relations (Crossley, 2018), using the cultural tools and repertoires (Swidler, 1986; Tappan, 2006) available to them. Understanding the institutions of the state as they are, as opposed to how the ideal of democracy determines they should be, will therefore require an identification and understanding of the cultural tools and repertoires that individuals use, and how and when they use them to navigate their interactions and relations. This requires a focus on meanings as much as on actions (Bevir & Needham, 2017).

1.5 RESEARCH AIM AND QUESTIONS

The research concepts underscore the situatedness of agents, and the importance of understanding relations and their outcomes as a function of the historical and cultural contingency of space and place in. The specific aim of the research as indicated in Figure 1-1, is to explore how relational practices in local development planning processes on a postcolonial island are implicated by narratives of Creole islandness. The expectation is that such exploration will make visible the deeper structures of the social systems (Goodchild, 2021, p. 94), so that opportunities for shifting these may be identified, as necessary.

Figure 1-1: Research Aim and Questions



Though the specific location of the research (Jamaica) was significantly informed by my own personal and professional history, the research also makes use of the islandness concept (Baldacchino, 2018a; Vannini & Taggart, 2013) as an appropriate mechanism for understanding relations. One of the reasons islands are a fertile research subject is their characteristic of amplification by compression (ABC) (Percy et al., 2018, p. 117) wherein "patterns are more clearly evident and processes that may be subtle on continents tend to be more clearly exposed". Cohen (2018, pp. 53–54) further makes the point that global social phenomena in particular are magnified in the Caribbean, as it has emerged from "the intersection and contradictions of an early form of global capitalism…. [and] in a relatively small space, with a relatedly small population, all the key complexities that underlie social identities are visible". The research is therefore designed on the basis that within the postcolonial island space,

the logic of relationality, state institutions as cultural practice, and modernity/coloniality as dominant epistemology, though not particular to islands, is likely to become readily visible due to the islandness characteristic of ABC.

The specific scope of this research involves identifying a) the general and specific narratives of Creole islandness, b) the manifestation of Creole islandness narratives in the relational practices among a sample of public sector employees and community leaders managing local development planning processes, and c) the identification of opportunities for practices of decoloniality based on the relational practices among the sample of actors. The findings from the first two questions are therefore expected to provide the basis for addressing the third question.

To capture the general and specific narratives of Creole islandness prior research is reviewed based on a systematic search to establish the general Creole identity and Creole island themes. This prior research captures data on Creole experiences globally and provides general/universal narrative themes related to Creole islandness. Then, a purposive sample of public servants and community leaders were invited to participate in conversations and their responses to questions related to island identity analysed to extract narrative themes. From those data sets, narratives of Creole islandness are identified and used to analyse the relational practices among the sample of public servants and community leaders involved in local development planning processes.

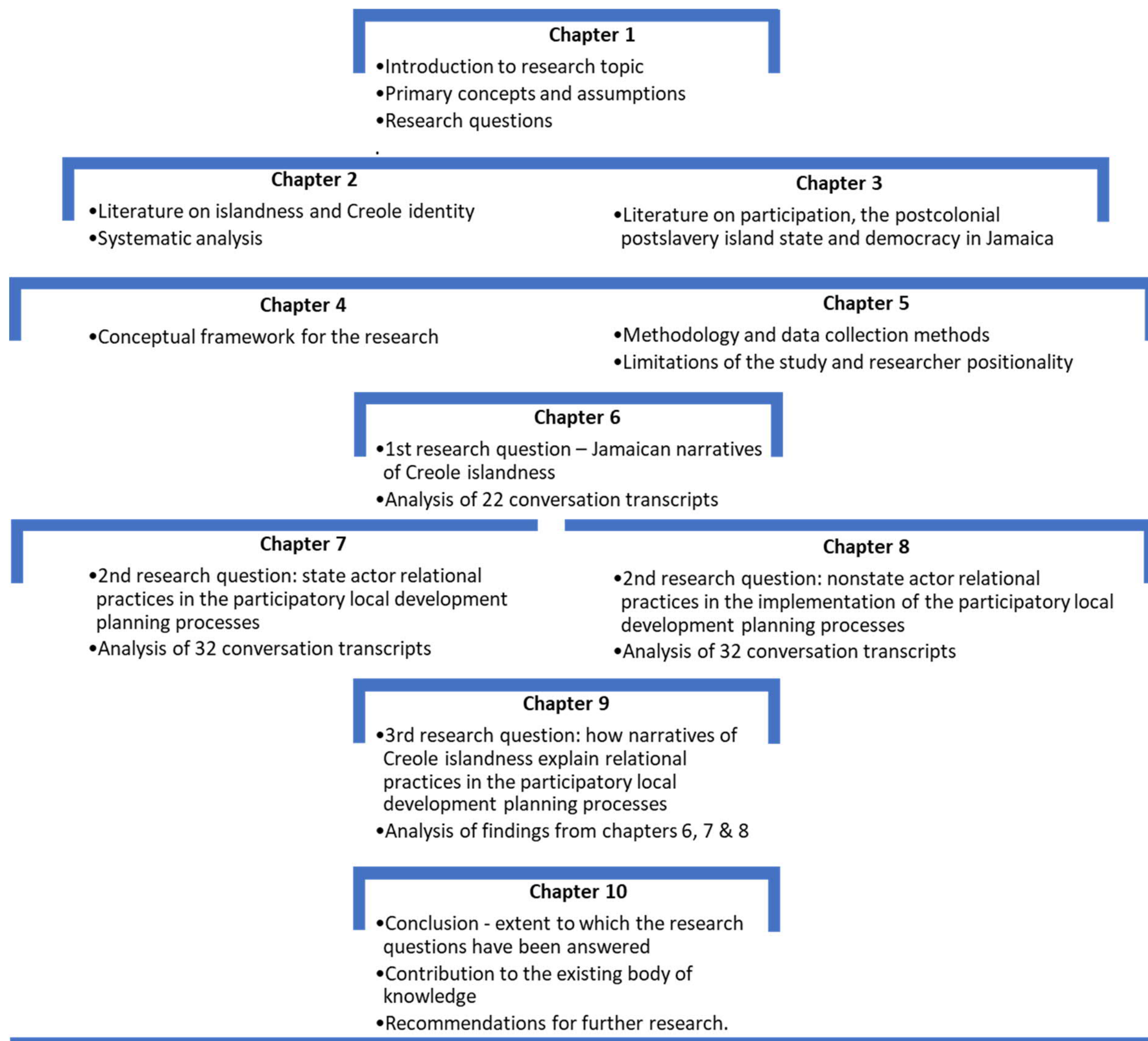
Individuals were selected to participate in the study based on their role in the local development planning process and online conversations were used as the primary method of data collection. This online method of data collection was not originally planned but was the best method available during the Covid-19 pandemic. For the majority of participants, the discussions were guided by a set of ten topic questions (See Appendix D). Five topics were related to identity and the other five were related to experiences in the local development planning process. For a subset of conversants, discussions focussed solely on their knowledge and experience of the planning processes. Chapter five elaborates on the research design and the rationale for the methods used.

1.6 Thesis Outline

Figure 1-2 provides the outline of the thesis. To provide a basis for analysing the data generated by the research, the academic literature is used to conceptualise narratives of Creole islandness in chapter two and the local political environment in chapter three. Chapter two explores the concept of Creole islandness, using the existing literature to develop an understanding of Creole ontology and themes animating lived experience. Chapter three uses the academic literature to map a history of

political practice and relations among citizens as political actors in the postslavery post-colonial island context. By positioning local development planning as a mechanism for participatory governance, the chapter explores the basis for participatory democracy in Jamaica and the institutional context within which actors identified to participate in the research are understood to be situated. Chapters four and five detail the conceptual framework and research process used. Chapter four elaborates the concepts introduced in this chapter and outlines the ways in which narratives of Creole islandness are understood to emerge and operate. Chapter five outlines the research methodology and design, detailing the data targeted and collection and analysis processes used. The chapter also expands on the researcher positionality and the limitations of the study. Chapter six, chapter seven and chapter eight are the findings chapters addressing the first two research questions. Chapter six presents the findings on narratives of Creole islandness specific to Jamaica through the perceptions of Jamaicans on elements of Jamaican identity. Chapters seven and eight address the second research question by outlining the experiences of public servants and community leaders in the local development planning process. Chapter nine integrates the findings of the previous chapters to answer the third research question. Chapter ten concludes the thesis by discussing the extent to which the research questions were answered, how the findings contribute to the existing body of knowledge and makes proposals for further research.

Figure 1-2: Thesis Outline



1.7 Summary

This chapter introduced the subject and outlined concepts addressed by this thesis. The thesis uses Jamaica as a case study to understand how narratives of Creole islandness reproduce relationships among island citizens operating as state and nonstate development actors. In so doing, the thesis presents Creole islandness as a type of islandness based on the experience of plantation colonialism and the history of enslavement. It makes the point that while every island's islandness will be unique, as proposed by Vannini and Taggart (2013) and Baldacchino (2018a) the patterns of island relations created by different colonial strategies create a foundation for the different types of islandnesses.

The main argument of the thesis is that cultural resources and repertoires help to maintain state institutions by providing the basis for the relational practices of state actors. These cultural resources and repertoires that form the implicit cultural knowledge of the society are maintained and negotiated as narratives and are amassed over generations of relational practices of islanders with each other and with the island. The thesis therefore focusses on understanding the specific content of these narratives and the ways in which they manifest to influence how state and non-state actors participate in local development planning processes at the study site.

The next chapter begins the exploration, through the literature, of the narratives of Creole islandness.

CHAPTER TWO

CREOLE ISLANDNESS AS RELATING IN AND WITH THE ISLAND

2.1 INTRODUCTION

To provide a basis for the exploration of the case study, this chapter uses the literature to explicate Creole islandness and Creole island identity. The literature on islandness, Creole cultural emergence, and lived experience are brought together to generalise a description of the phenomenon of Creole islandness. To do this, section 2.2 explores what it means to be Creole: as a relationship with histories, a relationship with the land, and a relationship with reality. Section 2.3 then uses a systematic review of the literature, which, through identified themes, provides insight into the defining characteristics of the lived experience of the Creole island identity. Section 2.4 concludes and section 2.5. summarises the chapter.

2.2 EMERGENCE OF CREOLE ISLANDNESS

Creole islandness reflects the historical reality of the Creole island experience, distinct from other postcolonial experiences of islandness. The phenomenon of Creole is often appropriated and synthesised to reflect the convivial intersection of cultures, syncretisation and cultural innovation (Eriksen, 2020). The use of the term in this thesis however attempts to capture the reality of relations in islands steeped in a history of "cultural, social and linguistic *mixing* … [a] 'grappling' process … [a] struggle … [that] *always* … entails inequality, hierarchization, issues of domination and subalternity, mastery and servitude, control, and resistance … [where] [q]uestions of power, as well as issues of entanglement are always at stake" (S. Hall, 2015, pp. 15–16 ,emphasis in original).

In this section, I explore three ways in which Creole identity is understood to emerge, and in so doing, relates to ancestral culture, the island and the world. An examination of the literature shows a relational emergence, where the variations of Creole experience are presented as contingent on relations, with others and the land. There is the contingent entanglement between the European, African (and Asian) and the indigenous third space where the variable relations of domination produce the Creole reality (S. Hall, 2015). Then there are the contingent relations with the island itself and the extent to which, and the ways in which, the land facilitates the desires of the coloniser and the needs of the enslaved (H. M. Beckles & Watson, 1987). Lastly, there is the Creole as emerging as product and subject of global racial capitalism (J. S. Lewis, 2022). The three perspectives on emergence are not mutually exclusive, but rather present the multidimensionality of the Creole experience.

Creole as Varieties of Entangled Histories

Cohen and Sheringham (2013) propose that there is an affinity between islands and creolisation. Although, as they point out, with the thousands of islands in existence in the oceans of the world, it is difficult to propose any kind of normativity to islands as a group (R. Cohen & Sheringham, 2013). However, the authors pursue this observed affinity between islands and creolisation by elaborating the example of the Caribbean and identifying similarities with Mauritius. At the same time, the authors propose a subset of certain islands that they believe reflect this affinity, listing what they perceive to be their shared elements:

> relative smallness, relative remoteness, a subdued or absent Indigenous population, settlement by mercantile powers, the establishment of dominant plantation economies, the importation of laborers from distant places, the imposition of a colonial government, and the emergence of free workers/settlers from slavery or coercion. (R. Cohen & Sheringham, 2013, pp. 14–15)

What becomes clear from the definition provided by Cohen and Sheringham (2013) is not so much that there is an affinity between islandness and Creoleness but that Creole islandness is the product of a specific geo-historical reality based on a particular socio-political power dynamic. The authors also did not highlight the many examples of Creoleness that exist in non-island spaces[1]. Although Cohen and Sheringham (2013) propose an affinity between islandness and Creole, what becomes clear, even from their own work, is that the affinity lies rather with plantation colonies and islands, many, if not most of these having been located in the Americas, South Asia and Africa (Beckford, 1972). The argument being made here is that the affinity between islands and Creoleness lies in the specific historical circumstances of plantation colonialism that was only practiced in specific island spaces. It is the reality of plantation colonialism that has led to Creole sociocultural emergence within those specific island spaces.

As Sweet (2014, p. 153) clarifies, "creolization is not ... exceptionally American or Atlantic; it is a process born out of social rupture, alienation, and the constant striving for new communities of belonging". However, Sweet's (2014) argument conceptualises creolisation as an African cultural genesis that survives in non-African spaces after physical and cultural displacement. Although much of the literature on Creole genesis and Creole emergence has focused on African cultural remnants in the New World (Mintz, 1996; Price, 2007), much of that focus has been related to the specific locations

[1] There are examples of the emergence of the Creole experience in continental spaces such Belize, Guyana, Suriname, Nicaragua, Brazil and the Southern United States.

of study and not to the more general theorisation of creolisation. S. Hall (2015) provides a theorisation of creolisation that does not rest on African syncretism, but on the relations of domination, hierarchisation, and cultural entanglement. It is the nature of the relations and not the continental origins of the groups in relation *per se that create* the Creole ontology. Cultural emergence in a situation of cultural displacement and oppression is not only unexceptional to the American or Atlantic experience, as Sweet (2014) points out, but it is also not particular to the African experience. Similar narratives of displacement and sentiments of liminality and in-betweenness have been described by Australian South Sea Islanders descended from exploited labourers who were transported from Pacific islands to work on plantations in Australia (E. M. Davis, 2020). This example should not be interpreted as a conflation of experiences of oppression, but as an attempt to identify the ways in which experiences of colonisation have produced narratives of being and relation across communities independent of ancestral origin.

S. Hall (2015) builds on Glissant's (1997) notion of Creole as a set of relations and entanglements by proposing two contingent characteristics of creolised societies, interpreted in Figure 2-1. The first characteristic is the society's possession of an entanglement of at least three elements, or what S. Hall (2015, pp. 16–17) refers to as "*présences"*. It is the entanglement of these présences that is foundational to Creole cultural emergence. The following list summarises S. Hall's (S. Hall, 2015, pp. 16–17) description of the three présences:

1. The "'primal scene' of encounter", the "'scene' of violent expropriation and conquest". The new "native ground", the scene of indigeneity.
2. "The voice that speaks all the time … the colonising voice [which] confidently assumes its own ascendancy". It is also a nativised presence "not simply an external noise beamed … from outside".
3. A "submerged element … rarely allowed to speak in its own voice", belonging to the "pole of 'the below'", "the excluded ethnicities" — the labouring ethnicities.

Figure 2-1: Elements of Creole Variation

Source: Author's interpretation of S. Hall (2015)

S. Hall (2015), in the identification of the first présence, does not explicitly make reference to Autochthonous communities and life forms. However, his description of the third space references the scene of indigenisation, in which indigenisation is interpreted to mean the marginalisation and expropriation of those beings (human and non-human) originally inhabiting the space, in addition to indigenisation meaning the creation of a new native. This means that islands like the Seychelles and Mauritius, identified as uninhabited at the time of colonisation, are still understood as Creole. The definition of these islands as uninhabited at the time of colonisation, is interpreted, through a posthumanist lens, as a reflection of speciesism, in which the decimation of Indigenous nonhuman life, like those mythologised in Mauritius, reflects the colonial devaluation of nonhuman life at the heart of anthropocene studies (Adelman, 2015; Guasco, 2021).

The second characteristic of creolised societies according to S. Hall (2015) is the logic of the combination of elements. It is not simply the presence of the entanglement that creates the Creole phenomenon, though that is essential; it is also about the ways in which each présence is manifested and relates to the others in combination. This is the historical contingency of Creole emergence, as it is a process emerging from a set of relations within a spatio-temporal context. Variations in any of the elements have the potential to create a different type of Creole experience. The specific dimensions of each présence, the geomorphology and geopolitical status of the island, as well as the agentic element of individuals in relation, provide differing levels of variability to the entanglement of the présences, producing different Creole cultural variants. As S. Hall (2015) proposes:

> Run the combination one way ... you get Cuba. Inflect the elements differently and you see Martinique, Jamaica, Dominica, Grenada. All three elements are always present in each; but they are never actively combined or dynamic within the culture in the same proportions. It is a question of accentuation. Cultural change is thus a matter of de- and re-accentuation within the combinatory ... differently combined under the pressure of colonization ... at the deep level of the culture ... Everything is a variant. Everything is still in trans-formation. (S. Hall, 2015, p. 19)

The inherent experientially contingent quality of Creoleness means that there is no single Creole. Creole, as a process, produces the experience of pluriversality, of multiple reals, a multiplicity that emerges from translation, not from invention. A translation that cannot bear equivalence to the original, because it is inflected with other ways of being, meanings and knowings, and as such "creolisation ... prevents any of the constitutive elements ... from preserving their purity or authenticity" (S. Hall, 2015). What is produced is a new set of meanings and knowings, the

"consequence of multiple *translations* … and *reshapings* … [in] *continuum*" (S. Hall, 2015, emphasis in original).

S. Hall (2015), and Braithwaite (1971) before him, conceptualises the process of creolisation as a phenomenon that affects actors on the island, all entangled in relations. However, it is also arguable that each présence reflects a distinct experience of the entanglement. What S. Hall (2015) describes is one of several narratives of the space. The non-Creole version of the story would be rather different if told from the perspective of the colonising voice, or of those Indigenous to the primal scene: the expropriated. The Creole narrative of the entanglement which focuses on the cultural displacement and racialised exploitation of labour can be distinguished from the narratives of the Indigenous and the settler. The plantation island as a "regime of labor-based production" (J. S. Lewis, 2022b, p. 248), produced different realities for groups on the island based on their relational position within the regime based on whether they were the original occupants dispossessed of their land, the dominating force, or those whose intrinsic human value was displaced by their redefinition as labour. The plantation island not only created new realities but produced multiple realities in the same island space.

Islander and Island Relationship

The specific physical geography of the island helped determine how the elements were combined to produce a distinct Creole island society. The patterns of island colonisation reflect a clear relationship between the island and the people, with topography and size determining the island's capacity to sustain plantation agriculture, the nature of settlement, and the types of exploitation possible. For islands that were heavily forested and mountainous, the availability of inland spaces provided safety for some Indigenous groups[2] and refuge for enslaved Africans able to escape the plantations[3]. After emancipation, land availability and access determined the relationships between the new peasantry and the landowners and the extent to which the newly freed had alternatives to continued labour on the plantation (Besson & Momsen, 2007; Weis, 2006).

The relationship of islander to island can be seen in settler relations to island geography, from the perspective of the white settler or the black settler, and whether success is understood as

[2] Though the majority of the Indigenous societies in the Caribbean were destroyed following the arrival of Europeans, they were not eliminated. Societies of Kalinago and Carib survived in Dominica and St. Vincent and the Grenadines (H. Beckles, 1985; H. M. Beckles, 1992).

[3] In Jamaica such inland spaces created a virtually impenetrable home for the island's pseudo-Indigenous people, the Maroons. In 1655 with the arrival of the English, the Spanish settlers on the island "freed" their African and Indigenous slaves, estimated at approximately 500, to support the resistance against the English. It was to the inland spaces that these newly freed persons retreated and established settlements that they defended against the English. The English were forced to accept the independence of this group and established treaties which allowed the Maroons to lay claim to much of the mountainous inland regions of the island.

agricultural productivity or a viable livelihood. As Burnard (2012) noted, while Bermuda started as one of the first colonies, with their focus on tobacco, they never achieved success as a plantation colony due to their small size. This, in turn, influenced the relationship of master/slave relationships that emerged and the manner in which their society evolved (Burnard, 2012). From a postslavery perspective, the island's inability to sustain a plantation economy created relative success for black settlers. Similarly, Barbuda was never able to evolve into a true plantation island due to the shallow and infertile soil and instead became a livestock pen that provided meat and draught animals to Antiguan plantations of the island's lessees. (Berleant-Schiller, 1978; Lowenthal & Clarke, 2007; Tweedy, 1981).

In her thesis that captured the history of Barbuda between 1738 and 1833, Tweedy (1981) highlights the peculiarity of the island's development compared to other islands in the region, including Antigua. Unlike many plantation islands across the Caribbean, the population of enslaved on the island of Barbuda experienced natural growth leading to the establishment of family and intergenerational kinship relationships (Tweedy, 1981). Over time, this community developed a mutually sustaining relationship with the land that they were able to take into the post-emancipation period. As Lowenthal and Clarke (2007, p. 148) observe, without the rigorous demands of plantation agriculture, generations of enslaved Barbudans inhabiting the island were able to develop a relatively autonomous existence. In the post-emancipation period, the Barbudans maintained their customary/Creole practices developed during the period of enslavement, which reinforced communal living on the island, and provided them with the basis for petitioning the Government to allow them to continue living on the land as their ancestors had (Berleant-Schiller, 1978; Lowenthal & Clarke, 2007).

The realities of the island geography played an important role in the trajectory of the Barbudan islanders' own relationship with the island, the relationships they were able to create among themselves and ultimately their post-emancipation relationship with Antigua.

> Continuity of family, of community, of persistently claimed rights helped maintain traditional modes of livelihood, prudently restricted environmental exploitation, and generally sustainable resource use … Although Barbudan slaves legally owned nothing, they regularly took forest products for their own use; from their allotted provision grounds they fed themselves and sold produce to Antigua … From the eighteenth century to the present, usage has progressively confirmed persistent Barbudan claims to the entire island and its resources. And nonalienable land underpins the

enduring basis of the islanders' community. (Lowenthal & Clarke, 2007, pp. 152–153)

A relatively comparable situation occurred on the island of Great Exuma in the Bahamas. The islands of Bahamas, having had their Indigenous population of Lucayans removed by the Spanish in the 15th century, became one of the places to which Loyalist planters escaping the American War of Independence were relocated (Craton, 1983). Displaced planters on the island of Great Exuma unsuccessfully attempted to recreate large agricultural plantations in climates that were too dry and on soils too thin for sugar cane, leading to the emergence of a stable community of enslaved people, who, though more or less left to fend for themselves, were able to create a communal self-sufficient existence that they maintained into the post-emancipation period (Craton, 1983; Craton & Saunders, 2011).

While the islands were primarily economic interests for the Europeans (Burnard, 2010; Mill, 1965), they became homes for displaced and enslaved Africans. Where the land was unkind to economic interests, it better served the interests of the enslaved and provided them with a space for creating strong bonds of kinship and attachment to each other as islanders and to the land that supported them (Burnard, 2015; Dunn, 2014; Lowenthal & Clarke, 2007). Fertile soil and conducive climates supported large plantations, which unfortunately for the enslaved meant a life that was nasty, brutish, and short (Craton, 1978; Dunn, 2014). The enslaved had the best options to establish positive relationships with and within the island space, where agricultural estates could not thrive (Craton, 1978; Lowenthal & Clarke, 2007).

This means that soil fertility could indicate the likely quality and length of life available to an enslaved person (Craton, 1978; Dunn, 2014). Good soil and climate meant a suitable environment for factory farming, with sugarcane being the preferred crop when fertile land was available, despite being the most physically taxing and responsible for the highest rates of mortality among the enslaved (Craton, 1978; Dunn, 2014). This also affected fertility rates, as the physical stress under which women were placed made it difficult for them to reproduce (Benedict, 1980; Craton, 1978; Dunn, 2014). Reproduction was also managed in those environments by women who used knowledge of their own bodies to limit the possibility of bringing more enslaved persons into the world (Benedict, 1980).

The size and topography of an island also determined historical outcomes for the enslaved, depending on the extent to which it was large enough or hilly enough to provide the enslaved with places to which they could escape and seek refuge from the plantations (Handler, 1997). Some small islands had hills and dense forests, such as Dominica (Hulme, 2019) and St. Lucia (Breen, 1844), which provided opportunities for marronage. However, many small islands, such as Barbados, were relatively

flat. In those cases, marronage[4] meant finding a way off the plantation to nearby islands that had inland areas and, until the late 18th century, significant Indigenous populations (H. Beckles, 1985; H. M. Beckles, 1992; Handler, 1997).Opportunities for marronage were not only about escaping the plantation, but were significantly about reclaiming sovereignty, where possible, through the possession of their own territory on the island (Besson, 2014, p. 75).

In larger islands, legal emancipation facilitated movements away from the plantations, although this did not always mean severing relationships, as an ability to earn wages was important and many wanted to remain close to the place of familial heritage (Besson, 2014). Moving away from the plantation allowed the formerly enslaved to displace the control of the plantation over their existence (Higman, 2005). In the post-emancipation period, access to land determined the continued relationship between the plantocracy and the labouring class and the extent to which the new status of the relationships from master/slave to employer/employee challenged a change in the relations between the groups (Craton, 1992, 1994). In islands like the Bahamas, in which land use differed from the more fertile islands, ex-slaves were able to acquire land without having to compete with large plantation owners (Craton & Saunders, 2011). In the smaller islands, whether Bahamas, Barbuda or Barbados, the island size ensured the continuity of the relationships between the new peasantry and the planter class, because the limited land space provided few options (H. M. Beckles & Watson, 1987). Among the British controlled islands, this demographic impact was noticeable in Trinidad and Tobago, Jamaica, St. Lucia, Grenada, St. Vincent and Dominica — islands with hilly interiors, which provided the option for the previously enslaved to move away from the plantation (Engerman, 1984). In small flat islands where almost all available land was already being used for plantation agriculture, legal emancipation did not change the dependence on plantation as a source of survival (Craton, 1992, 1994).

The nature of the island itself, its size, and fertility produced particular experiences, which in turn produced particular narratives of Creole islandness. However, while there are multiple narratives of Creole islandness, they all have a shared ontology.

Racial Capitalism and Creole Emergence

Referring to the Caribbean as a space of Creole emergence, Lewis (2022, pp. 249–251) argues that unlike Indigenous cosmologies which tend to be based on "notions of common origin and identity founded in ideologies of previous generations … linked to geography", Caribbean cosmology is based

[4] This is referred to in the literature as maritime marronage and was also recorded in Seychelles. Many slaves lost their lives at sea attempting to escape, and many also regained their freedom in this way.

on "an ontological framework" structured by racial capitalism, the plantation, and the archipelago. From this perspective the reality of Caribbean Creole emergence is the racialised exploitation of human beings as labour, enslaved and indentured.

The identification of racialised labour as the basis for Creole emergence could be contested on the basis that Europeans and Indigenous people were among the first exploited as plantation labourers (Rugemer, 2013). Prisoners and other involuntary emigrants from Ireland, Scotland, and Wales were some of the first labourers sent to Barbados in the 17th century (H. M. Beckles, 1990, 1994). However, the fact that plantation labour was not initially racialised (Donoghue, 2017), is actually the argument behind racial capitalism (Bonnett, 1998; C. J. Robinson, 2001). Slavery existed before imperial expansions into the New World, however, racialised chattel slavery was invented (Patterson, 1982; E. E. Williams, 1944) to address the labour supply problem created by the harsh environment of sugarcane plantations which operated as agricultural factories (Burnard, 1999). It was the profitability of racialised exploitation of labour as part of the growth of capitalism that led to the emergence of Creole societies. There is much debate in the literature on whether there is equivalence between slavery and indenture (Donoghue, 2017; Hogan et al., 2016; C. Moore, 2015), an argument raised in relation to the exploitation of indentured Irish in the Americas, black birded South Sea Islanders in Australia, and millions of East Asians transported to British colonies following the abolition of slavery (Malouf, 2007). In reading the narratives of labour exploitation, it becomes clear that the issue of Creole identity is less about having been exploited as labour than it is about having been defined as worth nothing more than one's labour (E. M. Davis, 2020). This point is elucidated by surviving European labourers (Burnard, 1996, 2015) and convicts (Veracini, 2007) having the ability to be transformed into settlers, with the same not being the case for non-European indentured and enslaved. Catherine Hall (2014) writes that three histories were produced by the plantation: dispossession, slavery, and settlement. These three histories could just as easily be interpreted as the Autochthonous (Indigenous), Creole, and Settler (Waite, 2022). Each of these histories has a clear racialised narrative, with Creole reality reflecting racialised social stratification (J. S. Lewis, 2022).

The abolition of slavery on plantation islands did not end the primary identification of the majority of the population as labour. The plantation became a pivotal point of societal formation, as all groups are defined in relation to the plantation, either in relation to their roles in it or their ability to flee it. The plantation and labour are not simply descriptors of a place and a role, but as Lewis (2022b, p. 250) points out, converge to produce "a sense of being". The relationship to the plantation becomes a point of orientation, whether in accepting one's identification as labour or in pursuing a self-identification that allows one to become more than labour. And while such relationships and orientations existed on continents as much as on islands, the prevalence of its occurrence on islands,

the ability of islands to contain and intensify these relationships, and the variability of island geographies which allowed for the multiplicity in Creole variation, make it a particularly resonant aspect of the Creole island experience.

2.3 CREOLE ISLAND IDENTITY THEMES

This section identifies narratives of Creole island identity based on a review of the literature, as set out in the Methodology chapter. The review of the articles provided insight into the ways in which Creole identities are constructed and manifested as lived experience. Based on their frequency in the two sets of articles, three thematic categories emerged as indicated in Table 2-1. The remainder of this section highlights the ways in which each category emerged in the literature.

Table 2-1: Creole Island Identity Themes

Theme	Articles in which the theme was identified.		Articles for which the theme was central	
	#	%	#	%
embodying and expressing difference	31	56	19	35
strategising material and psychological survival	21	36	12	22
finding belonging in the in-between	21	36	11	20
	N=55			

Embodying and Expressing Difference

Expressing identity and difference through cultural forms (Esposito, 2017; Nolasco, 2018; Sallabank, 2011; Tibère, 2016), allowed individuals to situate themselves within a shared historical experience. This is exemplified in Esposito's (2017) exploration of the political use of the expressive Creole culture in Trinidad and Tobago, and the manner in which language performance was used by an Indo-Trinidadian politician to present herself as an insider Creole, and her opponent as outsider aligned with the colonial elite. However, the valuation of Creole language expression is complicated in its entanglement with status and power (Carter & Aulette, 2009; Oakes, 2013; St. Hilaire, 2009). Native languages lack the status, power, and facility for upward mobility relative to the colonial language, yet there is a desire to maintain respect for the cultural heritage represented by the Creole language, and its symbolism of national identity and nativisation (Carter & Aulette, 2009; Pardue, 2012; St. Hilaire, 2009; Welsh, 2015)

The Creole identity is the embodiment and expression of difference. Not only the difference in relation to racial and ethnic admixture, but also the difference in relation to an exterior standard.

Difference and its valuation were dominant Creole identity themes, with Creole represented as alterity, or "departures from a norm...perceived as deficient in both form and content" (Mohammed, 1998, p. 19), relative to the colonial standard. Creole identity attempts to create a whole from fragmented parts (Matsha, 2015)—mixing ethnic and geographic memories of identities (Kohl, 2012). It is this multiplicity (Jeffery, 2010; Nafafé, 2013; Tibère, 2016) and mixing that create impurity (Boswell, 2005), and thereby alterity. Creole identity as the embodied expression of difference, is also about establishing belonging and laying claim to nativisation, as Creole identification is understood as "mak[ing] native that which is not native" or "creat[ing] a home where one is not at home" (Stoddard & Cornwell, 1999, p. 349). This embodied expression of difference is multi-contextual and enables the emergence of a national identity of entangled differences (C. B. Cohen, 1998, p. 190). This expressed difference becomes a unifier by establishing "boundaries of belonging" (Mohammed, 1998, p. 7). Language, food, music, fashion all become boundary signals within a society of different ethnic origination, allowing notions of impurity and appropriation to be countered and valued as uniqueness and distinction (Jeffery, 2010; Mohammed, 1998; Sebba & Tate, 2002).

Outside of cultural expressions, the body itself becomes a site of difference relative to the colonial standard. Africanity becomes a marker of the history of enslavement, establishing the Africanised body as a living expression of difference, and a memorial to the "resilience and resistance" (Vété-Congolo, 2014, p. 770) of islanders to the physical and psychological violence of enslavement and colonialism. However, while Africanity is presented as the physical expression of identity, a number of articles identified the body as being symbolic of *dis-expression* related to the silencing and disavowal of the African identity in the colonised New World (R. L. Adams, 2012; Feliciano-Santos, 2019; Vété-Congolo, 2014), the stigmatisation of cultural expressions derived from Africa (St. Hilaire, 2009), and the identification of the Africanised body as aesthetically subversive (Cooper, 2010).

The marginalisation of African expression is a source of tension for a Creole identity that is identified as originating in *multiplicity*. As Vété-Congolo (2014, p. 788) points out, in reference to Martinique, while the society is considered to be constituted of "multiple original identities, one of these origins is overtly subjected to racial and cultural marginalization". Sheringham (2016, p. 255) echoes this sentiment, pointing to the feeling among some Martinicans that the "celebration of Creoleness ignore[s] the violent history of the term's past and the deeply entrenched class and racial hierarchies that still exist". Creole expressivity must therefore be understood in relation to the racialisation of power and value. Within this context, the focal point of expression is the evaluation of the impure Africanised Creole identity relative to what would be considered *pure* European identities. Islanders are presented as negotiating within two options. One may proudly express their nativised Creole heritage and revolt against expectations of shame in relation to their being (Sheringham, 2016;

K. Smith, 2013; Vété-Congolo, 2014). Alternatively, one may accept a "silenced and subordinated position" (Nafafé, 2013, p. 62), which disavows the African element of the Creole identity as backward, unenlightened, and savage, in favour of an association with that which is European, modern, enlightened, and civilised (2013, p. 64). This binarized contextualisation interprets Creole expressivity which is ambiguous about its African derivations as rejecting African identification (Melhuish, 2019), while the embrace and proud expression of Africanised Creole identity is interpreted as the unlearning of colonial discursive identity practices, and an act of decoloniality (Maan, 2007; Pyndiah, 2016).

The claim of difference through cultural expression is reaffirmed through commodification of those cultural expressions, which has the added benefit of invigorating the local economy. Market-based cultural valuation becomes a tool to confirm the worth of a previously undervalued or devalued Creole identity (Nolasco, 2018; Pooser, 2011; Sallabank, 2011). The commodification of culture helps to ease the tension between stigmatised Africanity and pride in native cultural expression. Cultural commodification means that brand distinction, mostly promoted through tourism, helps to revalue native Creole cultural expressions, not as inferior to European standards but as niche island products. This reclamation of value transforms language and other cultural expressions into symbols of island distinctiveness to differentiate the tourist product within the island market. Pooser (2011, p. 301) identifies the commercialisation of culture in Guadeloupe, pointing to its dual purpose–the language is "used superficially to offer a unique flavour to tourists" and to "communicate notions of shared experience and solidarity ... remind[ing] citizens of the importance of their heritage in shaping identity and pride".

Nolasco (2018) raises the potential of the commodification of expressions of cultural identity to cheapen cultural value through the mass production of inauthentic Creole cultural artefacts. Paradoxically, she proposes that this cultural commodification can enhance the value of Creole identity, as the sense of loss of authenticity generates "a fetishized longing for ... a lost paradise, accompanied by the production of commercially interesting substitutes" (Nolasco, 2018, p. 15). Therefore, even as the potential for inauthentic production of cultural artefacts grows, so too can the market for more authentic representations of the "national identity turned registered brand" (Nolasco, 2018, p. 16). Therefore, as Creole island identity expressions become part of the national brand, the potential for commodification and mass production is seen as potentially positive, through its effect of driving the market for more authentic expressions of the culture, while at the same time, promoting local entrepreneurialism.

Strategising Material and Psychological Survival

Across the articles reviewed, creolisation was reflected as a site-specific natural adaptation, based on a need to survive (Boswell, 2019; Carter & Aulette, 2009; Challinor, 2013; Checinska, 2017; Degia, 2018; Philpot et al., 2015; Seetah, 2010). Individuals and groups adapted to site-specific experiences, becoming, in a real sense, products of the environment. Boswell (2019, p. 37) in analysing the Creole experience in the Indian Ocean Region reinforced Creole identity as a product of the interaction between the individual and the environment, pointing to the "sensory adaptation" that takes place in these "complex societies".

There is a clear distinction made between adaptation and assimilation. Assimilation is understood as a weakness and assumes a relinquishing of original identity through imitation of practices and behaviours of the dominant group (Degia, 2018). Adaptation, meanwhile, is interpreted as a strength (Philpot et al., 2015), and is about using an originary cultural knowledge to survive in an unfamiliar environment, even though this may ultimately result in the loss of ancestral cultural traits and the transforming of identity (H. Dawson, 2010).

The Creole identity emerges from survival of the originally displaced in a new environment and is characterised by "loss, compromise and oppression" (Boswell, 2013). However, once emerged it evolves ways of expressing power in a non-dominant manner (Carter & Aulette, 2009). As an example, the Creole language becomes an adaptation that resists conformity to the dominant language by retaining elements of the African grammar and syntax and providing its speakers with the means to "express, cope with and resist the power structures…in which they are the have-nots" (Carter & Aulette, 2009, p. 233). Creolisation becomes a strategy in which adaptation and resistance reinforce each other to support survival. All articles refer to resistance and struggle as fundamental to the formation of the Creole identity. The Creole identity is an adaptation, produced from contention (Boswell, 2017; Carter & Aulette, 2009; Pooser, 2011; Pyndiah, 2016; Sebba & Tate, 2002; Welsh, 2015) and expressed as a means of resistance against the residues of colonialism (Pyndiah, 2016).

Creole identity construction as adaptation to the environment is as much a sensory process as it is a rational one (Boswell, 2019). The Creole identity reflects psychological and emotional adaptation to human relations on the island, as much as it reflects an adjustment to the physical and material environment. The primary environment that produces the Creole identity is psychological, based on racialised hierarchical relations. Survival therefore requires psychological resistance and emotional resilience, in addition to physical and rational adaptations. The postcolonial Creole islander inherits these cultural adaptations and uses them to navigate contemporary environments. This allows Creole expression to be both a cultural adaptation and an act of resistance. In response to oppression,

identity repression and inferiorisation, rather than assimilation, there was resistance that galvanised the expression of language and culture (Welsh, 2015, p. 60). As Welsh noted in relation to the Cocos Malay language, spoken by few people, rather than experiencing language death under the oppression of Australian inferiorisation, it has become "a defining identity marker to resist the assimilative forces of English" (2015, p. 60) and "the forces of globalisation" (2015, p. 64).

The cultural expression of Creole was presented as evidence of adaptation, and as a resistance strategy, producing counter-narratives sensorially, affectively, and bodily as lived experience (Boswell, 2017, 2019; Cooper, 2013; Pyndiah, 2016). Pyndiah (2016, pp. 494–495) notes the "decolonial aesthetics" of Mauritian Afro-Creole musicians who use the erotic rhythm and vulgar lyrics of their ancestral music to resist dominant narratives. Traditional music, associated with enslavement and coloniality, was used to communicate "active militancy" against modernity and a society that "remains nested in colonial symbols, representations, geographies, historiographies and epistemologies" (Pyndiah, 2016, p. 490).

Sheringham (2016, p. 248), in reference to Martinique, noted that, "behind the overarching veil of Frenchness, there exist several other counter-narratives of identity and resistance 'from below'". Sheringham pointed to a history of resistance in Martinique as part of the effort of Martinican thinkers and writers to resist the "dominant — white-power" and define "local particularity and social and cultural position in the world" (2016, p. 248). In this way Martinican cultural practices become a source of "resistance through creativity" allowing "dancing and creativity [to become] a political act, an expression through the body of the complexities of Martinican history and identity" (Sheringham, 2016, p. 258).

Cooper (2010, p. 390) highlights the "'bling' aesthetics" of dancehall culture that allows marginalised Jamaicans to use their bodies as a site of resistance. "The dressed body becomes a metonym for the re-aestheticization of blackness itself. The surfaces of the skin, no longer bearing the stripes of corporal punishment, are now dressed to impress" (Cooper, 2010, p. 389). Cooper identifies Jamaican dancehall culture as resisting systemic marginalisation and "vigorously undermin[ing] elitist representations of Jamaican identity" (2010, p. 390). In so doing, Cooper (2010) raises the tension between adaptation and resistance. As the elitist representations of the Creole island are themselves a survivalist adaptation that responds to the inferiorisation of Africanity by the colonial hegemon, dancehall expression emerges as a response of psychological survival to the cultural disavowal of Creole elitists.

Creole adaptations as symbols of identity are interpreted as symbols of resistance <u>because</u> they are evidence of non-assimilation. Nolasco (2018) reinforces this idea with reference to the use of

pánu di téra[5] by the Cape Verdean government as part of their "re-Africanization process" for the archipelago, identifying the cloth as "a symbol of Cape Verdean resistance in the face of colonialism" (Nolasco, 2018, p. 13). The Creole identity, while a product of adaptation also has the potential for disruption and resistance, as the identity, in being constituted of "its own difference", always contains "the possibility of counter-hegemonic resistance" (Stoddard & Cornwell, 1999, p. 333). This also means that the Creole identity, produced from an ongoing process of adaptation, exchange, contamination, and variation, is itself open to resistance in defence of difference and Africanity (Sheringham, 2016).

Finding Belonging in the In-Between

Creole exists in multiples (Jeffery, 2010), between the here and there, the past and present. Articles underscored the importance of understanding specific Creole identities as processual, emerging in relation to specific spaces and historicities, reflecting the "numerous transformations and reconfigurations" that took place (Wilkie & Farnsworth, 1999, p. 284) and which continue to change over time (Boswell, 2005; Jeffery, 2010). The nature and quality of relationships reflect an unfolding history that affects the individuals and cultures of those of African descent but also transforms the "plantation owners" (Cubero, 2011, p. 12) and the "European culture" (Melhuish, 2019, p. 280).

In this context of historically inscribed processes and relationships, archipelagraphy and insularity emerge in relation to Creole identity. Archipelagraphy and insularity become diverse ways in which Creole relationships emerge based on the historical context. Archipelagraphy captures those instances of "denaturaliz[ing]" of space, with an emphasis on fluidity, "assemblages … mobilities and multiplicities" (Pugh, 2013a, p. 20). The Creole identity as archipelagraphic resists singularity, isolation, and peripherality. The identity of the archipelagraphic Creole island emphasises movement, adaptation, and transformation, becoming a deterritorialised place of relations and (real and mythologised) intergenerational and transnational diasporic connectivities (Challinor, 2013; Cubero, 2011; Lam, 2020; Nafafé, 2013; J. Pugh, 2013a).

On the other hand, insularity reflected geographic constraints and political peripherality (Lamy-Giner, 2011; Wergin, 2012). Such geopolitical insularity had the potential to reproduce Creole distinctiveness as isolationism, as opposed to archipelagraphic-connectivity. This also meant that the two were not mutually exclusive, as the Creole identity could manifest itself as insular and archipelagraphic depending on the context. This was most clearly articulated by Cubero (2011) who

[5] Pánu di téra is a Cape Verdean traditional woven cotton fabric originating in the 15th century with the first enslaved Guinean people taken to the island by the Portuguese. The cloth became prized and was used to negotiate the trade in enslaved people on the African continent.

posited a paradoxical relationship in the Caribbean between mobility and insularity. The Caribbean is produced from mobility, connectivity, and fluid identities, but each island reproduces insularity through the maintenance of transnational relationships with metropolitan locations, as opposed to relationships across the archipelago (Cubero, 2011). This allows for relations of insularity within the region and relations of archipelagraphy with the wider world. According to Dawson (2010), this insularity, reflects the islanders' networks of contacts and range of experiences produced during the process of cultural adaptation and identity construction. Insularity as the privileging of long-established networks of contacts becomes a strategy of resistance against real or perceived threats of cultural and physical displacement (H. Dawson, 2010), a defensive insularity.

This concept of defensive insularity can be read in Boswell's (2005) representation of a Mauritian society in which globality and insularity exist side by side, with insularity invoked as a means of maintaining internal power dynamics, and globality exploited for economic gain. Insularity, as parochialism is also a political strategy to maintain control over resources (C. B. Cohen, 1998), and provides a mechanism to protect difference and identity for islanders with a recent history of colonial control and latent anxieties in relation to their expression of self-determination.

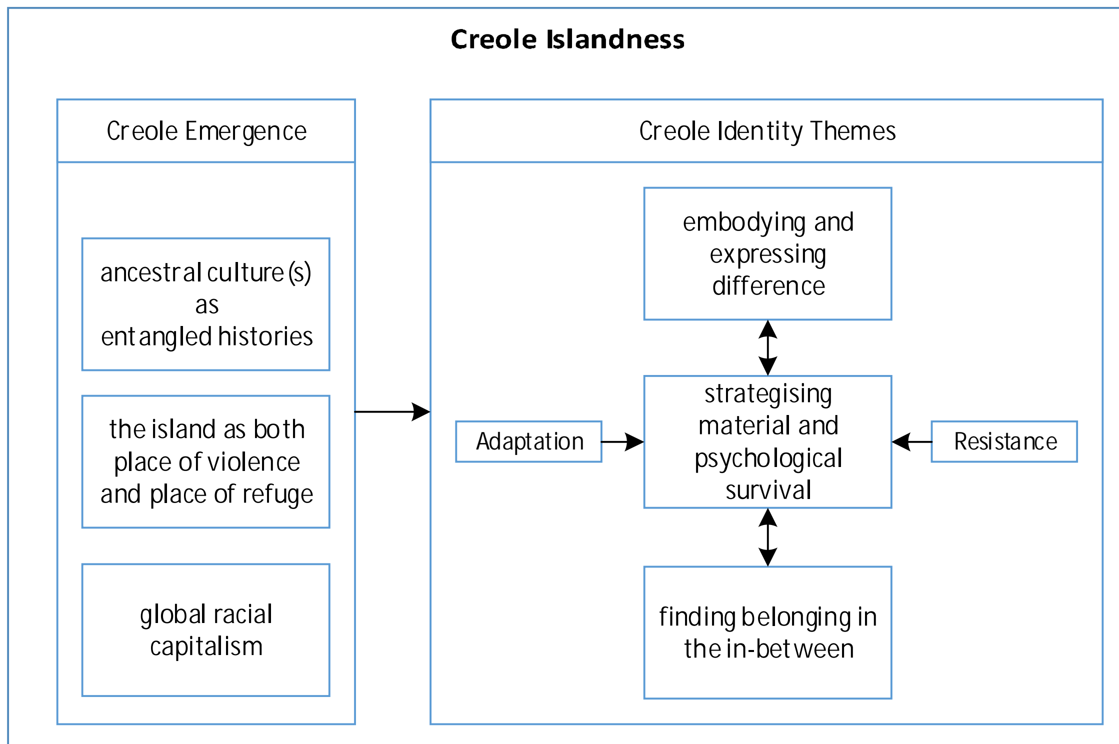
Insularity can therefore reflect cultural defensiveness or political peripherality reinforced by collective memories of colonialism, while archipelagraphy is about connectivity between real and imagined histories and geographically plural spaces of belonging. Tibère (2016) provides an example of this through a presentation of Reunionese cuisine culture. Tibère (2016) noted that the stories that her research participants told to establish culinary affiliations with Africa, allowed them to "draw on the available cultural resources to create bridges between the past and the present, and reinvent a memory" (2016, p. 91). Welsh (2015) also reflected this theme when referring to Cocos Islanders who lived in other parts of the world but still regarded Home Island as home, even as they identified with their Indonesian ancestry and other Malay speech communities. The belonging, understood through the prism of multiplicity of connections and transnational networks, was indicative of an archipelagic as opposed to an insular way of being in the world. Archipelagic belonging reflected complexity in relations that allowed people to establish distinctiveness in identity while being part of and belonging to multiple communities simultaneously. Challinor (2013, p. 101) referred to this as Janus-faced, "a collective looking forward toward other geographical locations … and a collective looking backward … characterized by the interpenetration of the past, present, and future – here and there".

2.4 DEFINING NARRATIVES OF CREOLE ISLANDNESS

This chapter reviewed the literature to understand Creole island identity and synthesise themes of Creole islandness to answer, in part, RQ-A, what are the common narratives of Creole islandness? The literature revealed the Creole islander as emerging from a colonial third space, potentially a space of refuge or violence, and a space that determines human value in relation to the rest of the world on the basis of a global racial capitalism. The Creole experience emerges from entangled histories and relationships that define the island atmosphere and the islandness of the island. Displacement, adaptation, domination, exploitation, and physical and psychological violence are the foundational themes of the Creole experience narrative, which in turn reproduces the island environment and the societal contexts that define intergenerational identities.

The Creole subject exists as paradox, attempting to subvert the processes and effects of coloniality, while engaging with the systems of coloniality — not to dismantle the master's house (Lorde, 2021), but to obtain residence there. This paradox is produced by the tensions of adaptation and resistance which support material and psychological survival, producing the themes discussed in this chapter and which are summarised in Figure 2-2. As emerged from the review of the literature, the tensions of adaptation and resistance produce seemingly paradoxical relationships with the social and political status quo at local and global levels. Whether in the embrace of commercialism as a form of expressivity or cultural commodification in the affirmation of cultural value. Strategising survival requires the balancing of adaptation and resistance to assimilation, in response to material and psychological oppression within colonially inscribed social and political systems. These tensions of adaptation and resistance create the need to find belonging in the in-between. The Creole islander exists in a world of constant tension, or as Glissant (1997, p. 34) articulates, a world of constant diffraction, a constant entanglement and re-entanglement of different ways of being and relating, and of understanding the present and the past (Barad, 2014; C. Hall, 2018). The Creole identity exists in the intersection, inhabiting as Sheller (2011, p. 567) indicates, not simply a space between black and white but a space created by "shades of grey".

Figure 2-2: Themes of Creole Emergence and Identity



Narratives do not depend on historical accuracy but are significantly based on power relationships (Hernández, 2019). The dynamics of power are embedded in the concept of Creole emergence and, therefore, in the concept of Creole islandness itself. Issues of power are embedded in the conceptualisation of the Creole identity whether in the processes of de-Africanisation to create the Creole relationship with the African identity or as the historical context of the colonial matrix of power (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2009) within which the Creole identity is formed. If Creole historical context reflects the manner in which colonial power is deployed within the plantation environment, then resistant adaptation becomes the form through which the Creole way of being asserts control. Narratives reinterpret the interplay of power relations within the society and reflect the locus of control over identity representation through socially constructed and intergenerationally curated narratives.

Somers (1994) writes that it is "through narrative and narrativity that we constitute our social identities", that we locate ourselves and are located " (1994, p. 606). As she further points out, these social narratives are “rarely of our own making”, as everything we know, and everything that we are is "in part a result of numerous cross-cutting relational story-lines" (Somers, 1994, pp. 606–607).

Looking at the multiple ways that islandness and Creole identity can impact the relationship of islanders with and within their community, chapters six, seven and eight explore the narratives of Jamaican islanders in relation to their specific Creole island experience, both in terms of their identity and their participation in and management of, local development planning processes.

2.5 SUMMARY

This chapter presented the literature on islandness and Creole island experiences to reflect narratives of Creole islandness. In so doing the chapter answered the first part of RQ-A: *What are the common narratives of Creole islandness?* Chapter six answers the second part of that question: *How do Jamaican islander identity narratives correspond [to the common narratives]?*

This chapter identified Creole islandness as the result of the historical experience of plantation colonialism and the stratification of human value in the postcolonial island space, which produce narratives of relations and being that reflect the tensions of adaptation and resistance. The Creole islander and island as place were identified as produced from the admixture of three présences — the Indigenous, the colonising and the labouring — in combination with contextual forces of geography, demography, and politics. This made Creole identities multiple and unique based on the specific combinations from which they were produced. In this way, Creole identities are the embodiment and expression of difference, of adaptation and resistance as strategies of survival, and of tensions and paradoxes produced from the entanglement of history, geography, and politics. Narratives of Creole islandness emerge from these experiences of the island.

As local development planning processes will be used to understand the ways in which narratives of islandness (and the associated paradoxes and emancipatory tensions) become manifest in relations, the next chapter uses the literature to explore the history and context of participatory political practice within the Creole island study site of Jamaica.

CHAPTER THREE

HISTORICISING CREOLE ISLAND POLITICAL PRACTICE IN JAMAICA

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The thesis, in understanding the Creole island as a space of relations (Vannini & Taggart, 2013), explores the ways these relations manifest and inform relational practices in local development planning and participatory governance processes. Chapter two identified the experiences that produce the Creole island identity and the ways in which tensions of adaptation and resistance reproduce themes of being and relating. This chapter places those experiences, tensions and adaptations in the context of political practice. This is done to obtain understanding and insight into the context informing the meta-, public- and ontological narratives in which public servants and community leaders are understood to be situated.

Since the 17th century, with the arrival of the British, Jamaica has had a form of representational government, with the exception of 18 years between 1866 and 1884 when it was governed directly by the colonial metropole (Brathwaite, 1971; Hart, 1972; Jamaica Houses of Parliament, 2008). The current Jamaican Parliament identifies as a continuation of that long legislative tradition (Jamaica Houses of Parliament, 2008). Despite the fact that for 280 of the 358 years of a representative legislature being on the island, the majority of the population were not represented in the Assembly, and for 170 years the legislature was motivated to maintain the majority population as chattel. This means that while a form of democracy has nominally been the norm on the island, for the majority of the population and for a significant portion of the island's history, their political activity and expression had to respond to an oligarchic legislature.

A society's culture and its institutions develop iteratively within a wider socio-historical context (Alesina & Giuliano, 2015). Understanding the historical context is therefore important for obtaining insight into the contemporary functioning of those institutions and the political practices that maintain them (Paine, 2019). As this thesis aims to understand how historical experiences inform contemporary relational practices, this chapter uses the academic literature from historical, sociological and political science disciplines to explore the evolution of political culture in Jamaica. This provides insight into the cultural and institutional context for contemporary participatory governance and planning practices.

This chapter is organised as follows: section 3.2 outlines the history of post-emancipation Jamaica and identifies patterns of political practice which commence with resistance to enslavement

and evolve between emancipation and independence, section 3.3 explores the contemporary practices of democracy on the island; identifying clientelism, conceptualised as a web of clientelist interdependencies, as a rational adaptation to the realties of political and economic relations on the island , and section 3.4 concludes and summarises the chapter.

3.2 Participation in a Postslavery Island Democracy

In the post-emancipation period, the plantation was not simply a social or economic artefact, it was the society's "organizing principle" (Green, 1986, p. 153). Reference to the plantation is also about the schematisation of power relations "in which marginalized (and more often than not racialized) subjects labor for the benefit of others" (Clukey & Wells, 2016, p. 2). As an organising principle and system of power, the plantation connotes a political space which defines institutions, roles, and relationships of power, as well as targets for contention and change.

For the purposes of the current analysis, the practices of two sets of political identities operating within the organising system of the plantation are given focus. The first is approximately 80% of the population who obtained rights as British subjects on 1 August 1838, approximately three hundred years after the first enslaved Africans were brought to the island and referred to as the freed people or the Afro-Creole. The second is the set that prior to emancipation were considered the island's middle class, a socio-racial more than economic use of the term to refer to Jewish people and the free mixed-race population[6] (W. A. Green, 1993). This middle class aligns with Burton's (1997) description of the meso-Creole, which is positioned between the Euro-Creole and Afro-Creole in a socio-cultural continuum, and with Alleyne's (2002, p. 112) description of the buffering mulatto group. The following section highlights the ways these political identities responded to the oligarchic legislature to effect political change.

Freed People's Negotiations for Self-Reliance

The political practice of the majority of the Jamaican population in the post-emancipation period can be understood as a politics of self-reliant interdependence. Jamaica, unlike smaller islands, provided

[6] Mixed-race denotes those persons identified as phenotypically neither pure White (European or Euro-Creole) nor pure Black (African or Afro-Creole). The pre-emancipation free non-White category included persons identified as free mixed-race, Jewish, and free Afro-Creole. The identification of a free mixed race also assumes an enslaved mixed-race. Therefore, references made to meso-Creole and Afro-Creole in the post-emancipation period connote social position and cultural orientation rather than racial description.

the option to leave the plantation when such movement was no longer criminalised. In smaller islands, emancipation was a legal rather than social reality, as all useable land was operated by plantations (Bolland, 1981). However, in Jamaica, while the best agricultural lands were owned by the planter class, the existence of marginal lands and interior forests (Weis, 2006) provided options for those with the means to move away from the plantations.

During the period of enslavement, the majority population had few rights with limited redress available through the courts (Dunkley, 2013). Other options for political self-determination such as: voice (Hirschman, 1970, 1980) through rebellion, riot, and small acts of resistance (P. M. Brown, 2014), or exit (Hirschman, 1970, 1980) by way of marronage (Roberts, 2015) were punishable, including by death. In the post-emancipation period, while the legislative framework was designed to reduce their options and maintain the freed people as labour in the service of the plantation (Craton, 1992; Higman, 2005), exit was no longer criminalised and became a legitimate form of expressing personal power. I reference here, Hirschman's (Hirschman, 1970, 1980) exit, voice and loyalty (EVL) framework as a way of thinking about the different responses of members of the population to the political environment. Loyalty is a modulator of exit and voice (Hirschman, 1970, 1980), determining if, when and how exit and voice are ever used in response to the political environment. In section 3.3 I use the EVL framework as a lens to understand the evolution of patterns of political practice.

In the post-emancipation period, a considerable number of the formerly enslaved worked together to establish self-sufficient communities (Besson, 1984; Paget, 1964), or negotiated the use of unused plantation land (Stevenson, 2001), as strategies to protect individual and family welfare, and reduce dependence on the plantation as their primary basis of survival. While available land was often marginal or located in interior forests, as planters monopolised the best agricultural lands (Weis, 2006), the newly freed acquired land by purchase or squatting (Higman, 2005), allowing them the means to reduce, if not sever, dependence on the plantation as their source of livelihood (Gardner, 1873; Reid, 1995).

There was a tension of interdependence that existed between the newly free and the plantation managers. The plantations needed labour to sustain the operation of the plantations, and the majority of freed people needed a source of income. However, freed people also wanted autonomy. While the local political leadership in the post-emancipation period worked to control the labour supply and maintain the viability of the plantation (Higman, 2005), freed people worked to create communities and livelihoods separate from the plantation. Within two years of full

emancipation[7] there was an almost 300% growth in village settlements, despite the efforts by planters and the local legislature to maintain planters' access to labour by blocking land settlement away from the plantation (Higman, 2005; Paget, 1964).

The local political leadership was dominated by plantation owners and their interests, and though the majority of the population were no longer enslaved, they were still conceptualised as labour, not as contributing members of society (Bolland, 1981). For this reason, Bolland (1981) makes the distinction between the "event" of emancipation and "emancipation as a human, social condition" (1981, p. 592). Therefore, while the legal event of emancipation occurred in 1838, obtaining the human, social condition of emancipation — the transformation from sub-human labour into human person (C. W. Mills, 1994) — would be a much longer process.

In the absence of a state invested in protecting their welfare, post-emancipation islanders used strategies of self-reliance, working cooperatively and with the support of missionaries to provide themselves with the basis for independence from the plantations (C. Hall, 1993; Paget, 1964). They created mutual aid societies and cooperatives to support each other in land purchase and cultivation, home building and community development, including the establishment of their own schools, churches and markets (W. K. Marshall, 1972). However, while free villages established with the help of missionaries can be considered sites of political self-determination, they were also sites of coloniality aimed at civilising the natives, and within which narratives of racialised hierarchies and the superiority of European ideologies (C. Hall, 1993; B. L. Moore & Johnson, 2004, 2011; Zacek & Brown, 2014) fuelled the emergence of an "Afro-European Jamaicanness" which reified "hybridity" (Crichlow, 2003, p. 143).

The emergence of a model of self-reliant community development across the island must also be placed in the context of necessity. The event of legal emancipation and the strategies employed to deny them access to land (Higman, 2005), transformed the majority of the enslaved into landless proletariats. While not discounting the value of personal freedom facilitated by the event of emancipation, at its most basic level, emancipation as an event also meant that those whose ancestors had been displaced and exploited, and who themselves had only known lives of exploitation, became "legal persons who had to fend for themselves" (Olwig, 1995, p. 4). Without any of the supports accorded to the European settlers on their arrival to the island, the majority of the population went from enslaved, to rural villagers and farm labourers with the passing of the emancipation legislation.

[7] The distinction is made between emancipation in 1834 which triggered the beginning of what would have been an additional six years of apprenticeship for agricultural enslaved persons and four years for non-agricultural enslaved persons, and full emancipation, achieved at the end of the apprenticeship period. Based on the reactions of the enslaved, the length of the period of apprenticeship was modified in different islands. In Jamaica, the period of apprenticeship was ended for all enslaved persons in 1838.

The systems of structural injustice under which the newly freed people existed prior to emancipation were only slightly modified rather than transformed, as the formal and informal rules continued to be used for controlling the "labouring population" (Paget, 1964, pp. 39–40) by limiting their mobility and livelihood options (D. G. Hall, 1953).

Freed people made use of the formal political opportunities that became available with their status as colonial subjects. Though standing for office as a member of the Assembly required a level of income and property not ordinarily accessible to the descendants of the formerly enslaved, they supported those among them with the means to take up positions in local government, electing two Afro-Creole members to the Assembly before it was disbanded in 1866 and Crown Colony rule was introduced (Wilmot, 1990, 2006). However, they were not dependent on the government. Rural communities pooled intellectual and material resources to support each other in community building, political education and advocacy, through mutual aid, informal cooperative associations and literary societies, (Bolland, 1981; Francis, 1969; Hutton, 2015; Sammons, 2014). It was less about choosing exit or voice (Hirschman, 1970), and more about making use of all available mechanisms, formal and informal, to build lives in the post-emancipation period that did not create dependence on the plantation.

For freed people, political activity was engaged as a matter of survival, in contrast to the engagement in political activity by the planter class for the purposes of domination and accumulation. Freed people used church missionaries and the local political leadership to advocate for them in the negotiation of wages (Wilmot, 1986) or defending their right to cultural expression (Wilmot, 1990). When voice in the form of advocacy through formal political structures was unsuccessful, as in the case of letters and meetings that precipitated the Morant Bay uprising (Heuman, 1991; Hutton, 2015), freed people were quite capable of employing the voice of violence (Heuman, 2000; Wilmot, 1990). As political voice, the 1865 Morant Bay uprising, was an "expression of a deep-seated cry against poverty and injustice" (Eaton, 1962, p. 45). So too were the 1938 riots a violent cry for change in response to the oppressive political and economic environment that continued to exist 100 years after legal emancipation (Palmer, 2014; Post, 1978).

Middle Class Negotiations for Integration

In 1820 Jamaica, 14 years before emancipation, European and Euro-Creole colonial subjects made up only 10% of the Jamaican population (Brathwaite, 1971), the free non-White population accounted for another 12% (W. A. Green, 1993), with the enslaved masses comprising the remainder of the population. This demographic profile changed in most Caribbean islands in the post-emancipation

period, where "White flight" led to a reduction in the number of the landed class (K. Watson, 2009, p. 180). The 1844 post-emancipation census in Jamaica identified the White population as approximately 4% of the population (Gardner, 1873), a 6% reduction within 6 years of full legal emancipation. This reduction in the number of White subjects, created opportunities for the previously categorised free non-White, who were identified by the colonial leadership as an intermediary between Europeans and the formerly enslaved, and were co-opted by the colonial administration in the post-emancipation period (W. A. Green, 1993). This group developed a political identity as the mediating middle class.

The free non-White population was heterogenous, including, free Black, free mixed race and Jewish people, all of whom, prior to legal emancipation of the enslaved, did not enjoy the same political rights as the White population. Before emancipation, the free non-White population petitioned both the local and the colonial legislature in London to have their political status changed (W. A. Green, 1993; Sio, 1976; Wesley, 1934). In the 1820s, the Jewish community in Jamaica, among the wealthiest of the free non-White group, successfully petitioned for full citizenship, but other free non-White groups were not as successful until the early 1830s (Hart, 1972; Wesley, 1934). However, as Wesley (1934) points out, the struggle to obtain political rights, created an alliance between the free mixed-race and free Black population with the process of contention with the political leadership pulling the sympathies of the mixed-race population away from the White and towards the free Black who had even less legal privileges than they. As Wesley (1934), quotes from a newspaper of the time:

> the policy of the whites has occasioned a union between the blacks and browns which never before existed; and there is now as good an understanding and so complete a community of interest existing between them as nothing will ever dissolve or injure. (Wesley, 1934, p. 164)

While the opinion of the newspaper was exaggerated, it does indicate the extent to which there was some level of shared political sentiment between the middle class and those representing the mass of the population. However, the political power of the middle class was still limited. In 1864, the year before the Morant Bay uprising and 27 years after emancipation, less than 0.5% of the population had the right to vote (Gardner, 1873). The power imbalance was so grave that even the colonial government viewed it as problematic that most of the power on the island was in the hands of those least psychologically invested in the island (House of Lords, 1853).

Despite the challenges of the post-emancipation period, characterised by precarity in land tenancy for squatters, and low wage rates for labourers (Craton, 1992, 1994), over time some rural farmers were able to increase their landholdings (Wilmot, 1998) which provided the means for family members to enter the clergy and elementary education system. The definition of middle class evolved

from a pre-emancipation racial identity signifying neither pure-White nor pure-Black, to a post-emancipation cultural identity as meso-Creole — "culturally 'coloured'" even if, "genealogically and phenotypically 'black' … owing to social mobility through education, migration and economic and occupational success" (Besson, 2003, p. 182). Afro-Creoles ascended into the mixed-raced dominated middle class, increasing its size and political position (Fernández Montes de Oca, 2021; R. T. Smith, 1982). This allowed the growing and more racially heterogenous middle class, by the turn of the 20th century, to influence local politics and advocate for policies to benefit small farmers and labourers (Fernández Montes de Oca, 2021; Wilmot, 1998).

The agricultural and professional middle class leveraged their economic position to gain entry into the wider political arena as voters and representatives, and used cooperative mechanisms, such as the Agricultural Society and participation on local government councils, to advocate for policies to benefit the masses (Fernández Montes de Oca, 2021). However, the approach to the implementation of such policies were often mired in bureaucracy and prone to the capture of special interests, and therefore made no meaningful change to the balance of power or the circumstances of the masses (le Franc, 1978; Weis, 2006). Therefore, "though a black and brown element had entered the capitalist ranks, and there were black members of the middle class, an underdeveloped agrarian capitalist Jamaica resembled its slave-based predecessor's structure" (Post, 1978, pp. 59–60).

From the late 1880s up until the 1930s the middle class grew, as small farmers increased their landholdings with the help of the banana industry (Bakan, 1990; Bernal, 2020). However, the 1930s saw a downturn in the banana sector, a reversal in the growth of the middle class and an increase in the poor peasant population, as landholdings decreased and small farmers became increasingly forced into wage-labour (Bakan, 1990; Weis, 2004b, 2006). Despite the political advocacy of the middle class (Fernández Montes de Oca, 2021), the land policies introduced did not disrupt the established systems of power but helped to consolidate elite power as land ownership became concentrated among a relatively small number of large corporations and families (Bakan, 1990). Social welfare policies and programmes were equally unsuccessful in disrupting the status quo, as they were focussed on peasant integration into the dominant economic system, supplemented with training intended to socialise the rural poor to better function in a social system designed around colonial values and capitalist ideologies (C. Johnson, 1982; le Franc, 1978; Levy, 1995).

The period of the 1920s and 1930s saw the creation of citizen-led associations across the island, as part of a wave of popular organisation, involving anticolonial, trade union and local political movements (Levy, 1995; Post, 1969), with returning migrants and members of the diaspora playing a particularly significant role (Post, 1969). Notable among these diaspora-led and returning migrant-led associations was the Jamaica League, which was a self-government movement with its leadership in

the United States; the Marcus Garvey-headed United Negro Improvement Association (UNIA); and what would become the two leading political parties, the Peoples National Party and the Jamaica Labour Party. The latter two were urban and middle class in leadership and used the labouring masses as the basis for their political platform (Post, 1969, 1978).

The 1938 labour riots brought the labouring classes and the middle classes together. Trade unions and political parties were established to advocate the welfare of the labouring class and represent the masses in negotiations with the colonial powers by those who would become the island's most prominent political leaders. The riots set in motion a chain of events that led to the introduction of universal adult suffrage in 1944 and set the foundation for the political system that would lead the island to Independence (Palmer, 2014). This period solidified the ascendance of the middle class into the realms of political leadership (Lindsay, 1975). However, the positioning of the aspiring meso-Creole as political mediator did not disrupt the "historically ingrained disparities" (Weis, 2004a, p. 90) that existed between the diminishing Euro-Creole planter class, and the masses of the Afro-Creole.

The meso-Creole political class negotiated constitutional decolonisation (Girvan, 2015; Lindsay, 1975) ensuring radical and revolutionary efforts were repressed (Bogues, 2009) and a relatively smooth transition of power was facilitated that allowed the island to claim its place with the West, alongside its former imperial power (Bell, 1977; Girvan, 2015; Lindsay, 1975). Accordingly, the pre-independence middle class rose from the ranks of the lower-level clerical administrators to the became the post-Independence senior civil service (E. Jones, 1981; Lodge & Stirton, 2009). With the local small tight economy dominated by the colonial elite, those within, and aspiring to, the middle class had few professional options, making the public sector internally competitive, and a mark of social achievement (E. Jones, 1981).

Public servants were "dependent on public sector employment, and fearful for their positions", which led to the development of an institutional culture of strict adherence to colonial rules with an "emphasis on administrative detail and obedience to pre-established procedure" that continued into the post-Independence period (Lodge & Stirton, 2009, p. 48). This culture has also defined the relationship between the political leadership and the civil service, creating antagonism and suspicion as political leaders interpret such adherence to rules as incompetence or political sabotage (R. M. Brown, 2014; E. Jones, 1981) driving a reliance on private advisers and foreign consultants (Stone, 1985). Neither was the culture oriented to meeting the needs of the majority population (Klak, 1992; Nunes, 1976), with "anti-poor, bureaucratic obstacles separating low-income programs from their target population" (Klak, 1992, p. 105). Reforms of the public sector have therefore been ongoing since Independence to produce a public sector that can support economic

growth, and simultaneously respond to the needs of the public and the political class (Osei, 2007). And while the post-independence public sector is considered to have lost much of its pre-independence status (Nunes, 1974), it has retained its ability to facilitate middle-class aspirations (Soverall, 2015).

Creole Nationalism and Independence

Any discussion on democratic participation in the Creole island context must take into account differentiated subjectification based on race during the period of enslavement, which is reinforced in social, economic and political relations of the post-emancipation period (Hutton, 2015; Vaughan, 2005). These racialised subjectivities, emerging from the process of postslavery socialisation, are not only based on phenotypic differences, but on the perceived characteristics of Blackness and Whiteness as representing opposite poles of human value and social status (B. L. Moore & Johnson, 2004). The racialisation of characteristics such as civility, intelligence, industriousness, honesty, and emotionality (Austin-Broos, 1994; B. L. Moore & Johnson, 2004; Thame, 2014) allows racial identification to become modular and provides a basis for Blackness and Whiteness to become categories in relation to which one might gain distance or proximity. As Bouchard (2020) has observed in relation to São Tomé Island, the association of Whiteness and Blackness with ways of being and knowing that are differentially valued, allows coloniality to become so sedimented within a society that the privileging of Whiteness is able to continue without the presence of an ethnically White powerbase.

Describing the phenomenon as it emerged in Jamaica, Austin-Broos (1983, 1994, 1996) refers to the discourse of heritable identity based on rank difference and reinforced by an *ideology of education*. The ideology of education establishes the requirements for entry into the ranks of the middle class, based on educational merit and manners (Austin-Broos, 1983). At the same time, the discourse of heritable identity naturalises a social hierarchy that defines persons by the circumstances and location of their birth, thereby reinforcing traditional racialised class privileges under the guise of merit (Austin-Broos, 1994), transforming racialised beliefs into meritocratic characteristics and deservingness qualifications. Educational achievement therefore bore a racialised subtext, as "being uneducated involved … an enduring sense of kinds of being that was related to Jamaican notions of race and rooted in Jamaica's colonial past" (Austin-Broos, 1996, p. 60). In the Jamaican context, progress and development, individually and societally, become a project of education. The attainment of education opened the possibility for social mobility and was proof of deservingness that could be passed on to one's heirs, while the inability to attain such education reinforced one's position in the social hierarchy, which was also inherited by one's offspring.

In the period leading to independence, the power imbalance in the Jamaican society was no longer between the planter and the small farmer or rural villager, but between a largely rural electorate and a meso-Creole middle-class political leadership who obtained their positions of power advocating on behalf of the majority of the populace. However, this advocacy was rooted in what Jordan, Lawler & Bosson (2021, p. 48) refer to as ambivalent classism, produced through the combination of paternalism, classism and the acknowledgement of status interdependence, reflecting benevolent and hostile attitudes towards the poor. The promotion of community development and cooperative initiatives became expressions of ambivalent classism in their design to address the essential qualities the so-called uneducated poor were considered to *lack* (Levy, 1995; Sherlock, 1950). The poor were positioned as being under the influence of "race-feeling", "hidden antagonisms", "resentments", and "a perverted work-standard"; with the "educated" responsible for "lifting the standards of life and thought in the community" (Sherlock, 1949, p. 10). By positioning poverty as a matter of educational status and personal character, instead of based in the norms of the society which created the circumstances of poverty, the educated beneficent middle class perpetuated the systems that maintained their status and privilege. In this way, ambivalent classism has the appearance of *benevolence*, while being consequentially similar to its hostile counterpart (Jordan et al., 2021, p. 49).

In Jamaica, ambivalent classism was evident in the middle-class takeover of the mutual aid approach to development. In the period following universal adult suffrage there was a growth of councils and cooperatives across rural Jamaica, but they were unable to address the underlying causes of the felt needs of the rural communities (C. Johnson, 1982; le Franc, 1978). The various councils, co-operatives, community management groups were almost always dominated by the middle class (Fernández Montes de Oca, 2021; C. Johnson, 1982; le Franc, 1978). The mutual aid model emerging from the experience of the local populace became displaced by a highly bureaucratised community council model (Levy, 1995). The model though based on socialist rhetoric, was executed in line with the geopolitical realities of the island's location relative to North America in the midst of the Cold War, and the economy's reliance on international capitalist markets (Boxill & Unnithan, 1995). This resulted in farm and factory cooperatives purportedly established to support the labouring communities, mostly leaving the farmers and workers out of the executive decision-making processes and primarily benefitting the foreign multinational companies retained under large management fees (Feuer, 1984; le Franc, 1978; Stone, 1978a).

The relationship between the middle class and the masses of the island population did not replicate master/slave plantation relationships, but instead reproduced a stratified system of human value inherent in plantation relational dynamics, which superiorises Whiteness (education) and

inferiorises Blackness (uneducation). This dynamic reproduces unequal plantation-type relations and human valuations (Clukey & Wells, 2016) but does not attribute the realities of the poor to the experience of slavery. Instead, the condition of the poor is diagnosed as ignorance or a deficit of a desire for self-improvement (Francis, 1969; Hutton, 2017; R. Lewis, 1987). While both the pre-Independence middle class and the economically marginalised mass of the population were ideologically anticolonial, the middle-class political leadership reflected an Afro-Saxon anticoloniality that sought to displace the colonial elite, not dismantle their institutions (Girvan, 2015; Lindsay, 1975). The political middle class therefore maintained adherence to the principles and institutions of coloniality, despite advocating on behalf of the poor and labouring masses with apparent support for the Rastafarian and Garveyite movements (Bogues, 2010; C. G. Clarke, 2016; Mawby, 2012; Waters, 1985, 1999).

As the island embarked on Independence, new nationhood was heralded with a narrative of harmony reflected in the national motto *Out of Many, One People.* This simultaneously countered the emerging Black Power movement of the 1960s and gave credence to the balance of power which favoured the educated, and therefore Whiteness-adjacent middle class (Bogues, 2009; C. G. Clarke, 2016; Judy, 2022). This narrative legitimised the imagined Creole nation (Nettleford, 1965), while appearing to idealise miscegenation and "brownness" (Thame, 2017). It associated new nationhood with multicultural harmony, and reinforced what Austin-Broos (1983, 1994) refers to as "heritable identity" and the "ideology of education". By equating "brownness" (Thame, 2017, p. 119) with "social mobility ... [and] somebodiness" (Thame, 2017, p. 122), this hegemonic ideology legitimised as representatively "Jamaican" those who had benefited from the inequalities which existed prior to Independence. Through the narrative of colour-blindness, common culture and history, the middle-class leadership, employed a political project to diffuse historic race-based tensions, the effect of which is observable in the embrace of the philosophy of "ethnic oneness" by the majority of the population (Kelly & Bailey, 2018), in the midst of the continued stratification of the society by skin colour (Kelly, 2019).

The nationalist effort in creating the "imagined community" (Anderson, 2006) of the Caribbean Creole nation devised cultural narratives that defined the aspirational *respectable* Creole islander, as the bearer of multiracial harmony. As Anderson (2006) argues, it is the bourgeois imagination with its imperial genealogy, and not the popular imagination, that makes the nation-state official. The Creole nationalist narrative was therefore the bourgeois opposition to the Black nationalist imagination. Black nationalism provided an anti-colonial image presented by Garveyism and Rastafarianism concerned with the continued disenfranchisement of the Blackman and the inferiorising of Africanised identities (Rodney, 1969). Black nationalist narratives required a break with

the systems and institutions of coloniality, and an uncertain future (G. A. Graham, 2017) while Creole narratives of belonging and self-determination claimed an independence based on a European political heritage, with a future alongside "the West" (Bell, 1977; Lindsay, 1975). Creole independence was the achievement of a "moral and historical right" (Brereton, 2010, p. 221) which provided a break with the pain of the past and an opportunity to forge a new identity based on the promise of modernity.

Hirschman's (1970) framework of voice, exit and loyalty can be used to articulate the political culture of the masses, which was well developed before the introduction of universal adult suffrage. The first strategy was exit: the disengagement with the colonial system, or elements thereof, that do not support the needs of the group, and the creation of self-sufficient communities. This strategy was first practiced as marronage (Roberts, 2015; Sivapragasam, 2018), then as the development of free villages (Paget, 1964). It is a political response to coloniality that is still alive today among the Rastafarian community (School of Vision, 2013), despite the abuse such communities have suffered (Clarke, 2016; Maxwell & Planno, 2021), representing a Creole delinking strategy (Mignolo, 2007b) or "culture of decolonization" (McPherson, 2015, p. 365) based on the creation of "alternative systems of sociocultural symbolic practices and meanings" (Bogues, 2003, p. 153).

The second successful strategy of voice was in the form of protest, rebellion, or rioting, with the potential for violence. This strategy, while it produced results, directly and indirectly (Hart, 1972) also produced significantly greater levels of violent response from the State (Reckord, 1968). Protest violence produced by the 1938 labour uprising, was also co-opted by the nascent political leadership and transformed into a practice of partisan political violence that became characteristic of the political culture (A. Dawson, 2016). However, despite partisan co-optation, civil disobedience against the state remains an active element in the repertoire of political expression for Jamaican islanders (H. N. Johnson, 2005).

Hirschman's (1980) revisit of his exit, voice and loyalty (EVL) framework, assuming a starting relationship of mutuality between the citizen and state, identifies the options of exit and voice as possible responses of the citizen to undesired changes in their relationship with the state. In the EVL framework loyalty regulates how and when voice or exit is exercised, as it increases the cost for exit (Hirschman, 1970). In the revised EVL framework, with a political rather than economic focus, voice is advocated as the potentially more valuable option, as "the use of voice can suddenly become a most sought-after, fulfilling activity ... the ultimate justification of human existence" (Hirschman, 1980, p. 431). However, when the *de jure* status quo environment is based on control and exploitation, and continues to evolve from that genesis, exit may emerge as the default citizen response, with voice engaged only when exit is not an accessible option (Clark et al., 2017). In such contexts, loyalty to the

state cannot be inferred by the extent to which voice (protest) or exit (withdrawal from the formal systems of society or migration) are employed. Maintaining the status quo (loyalty for the purposes of the framework) may simply reflect the level of powerlessness of citizens without access to exit and no confidence in the ability of their voice to create positive change (Clark et al., 2017). It may also reflect their awareness of traditional uses of voice being potentially more costly than they are able to bear. When citizens are not simply displeased with the decisions of the state but question the legitimacy of the institutions that bring the state into being, as did the Rastafarians at the time of Jamaica's independence (Rodney, 1969), surviving the status quo should not be read as loyalty, but possibly an even more subversive combination of voice and exit that uses the system to promote an alternative, as evidenced in the international popularity of Rastafarianism based on the commodification of its symbols.

It is also arguable that those with the ability to ascend into the middle class, had a justification to maintain loyalty to the colonial institutional status quo. Not, as Rodney (1969, p. 45) proposes, because they were "white-hearted black men" produced by the colonial hegemonic power to "administer the system and perpetuate the white values", but because as beneficiaries of the meritocracy they had a reason to believe in the legitimacy of the system. Though even if they did not, they still needed to maintain the system to ensure their continued privileges ga. However, as prominent Jamaican academic Girvan noted reflecting on Jamaica's 50 years of Independence:

> If the ruling elites in this country are to have a chance of rescuing the national project … A fundamental step is self-recognition that we ourselves are amongst the principal beneficiaries of the current order, and that we will need to be prepared to give up many of our accumulated class privileges in order to dismantle the deeply entrenched structures of social and economic exclusion, to create a society based on equity and social justice, and to fully liberate the huge creative potential that evidently resides in the mass of the Jamaican population (Girvan, 2012, p. 14)

3.3 Democracy as Practice

Girvan (2012, p. 14), in identifying the need to tap into the "creative potential" of the Jamaican masses, references other calls for the need to move from a "politics of exclusion" to a "politics of participation" (Girvan, 2015, p. 95) — to change the political relationship between the middle class

and the masses, from one of exploitation to one of co-creation. However, this raises the question of how such a politics of participation would emerge and what it would look like in a Creole island context.

Across the academic literature, higher levels of civic participation in public policy deliberation are considered a necessary complement (and improvement) to traditional systems of representational democracy (Goodin & Dryzek, 2008; Saward, 2009; Wampler, 2012). More opportunities for public participation in political deliberation is expected to lead to stronger democratic institutions, and social justice and equality outcomes (Fung, 2015; Wampler, 2012; Whiteley, 2010). However, how democracy is actively practiced in a given polity and the level of participation will depend on the design of its institutions and the shared understandings of what democracy means. Democracy based on citizen participation does not emerge as the result of an imposed formula of technologies, institutions and structures (Parvin, 2018). As Parvin (2018, pp. 39–40) proposes, it emerges from the relational practices in a community whose members have access to and are immersed in norms "which nurture and strengthen" an identity "which support [s] and encourage[s] the … conception of oneself as the kind of person for whom political activity is meaningful".

While citizen participation in democratic decision-making is seen as important for the future of the world, citizen support for democracy as an ideal is reported to be experiencing a decline (Alizada et al., 2021). Despite the normative value of democracy expressed across the literature, researchers indicate increasing discontentment with democracy as a political system among ordinary citizens (Alizada et al., 2021; Foa & Mounk, 2016), in both the Global North and the Global South (Castorena et al., 2020; Pew Research Center, 2019).

Parvin (2018) proposes that the problem with democracy is not levels of citizen participation but rather inequality of participation, as participation is highest among those with power (Gallego, 2015; Lupu & Warner, 2022). While the overall decline in citizen participation has led many to increase the call for more deliberative forms of participation (Bächtiger et al., 2018), Parvin (2018) argues that there is a need to come to terms with the absence of the imagined communities in which participatory democracy thrives. Parvin (2018) instead calls for a refocus on creating forms of representation that address issues of participatory inequality and allow the needs of the poor and marginalised to be more effectively addressed.

Shin & Kim (2018) suggest that there is a need to address the difference between academic conceptualisations and citizen expectations of democracy. Rather than signalling a problem with democracy or citizens, the apparent unpopularity of democracy may be a reflection of the need to unpack meanings that sit between ideals and the everyday practices of citizens. That is, unless there

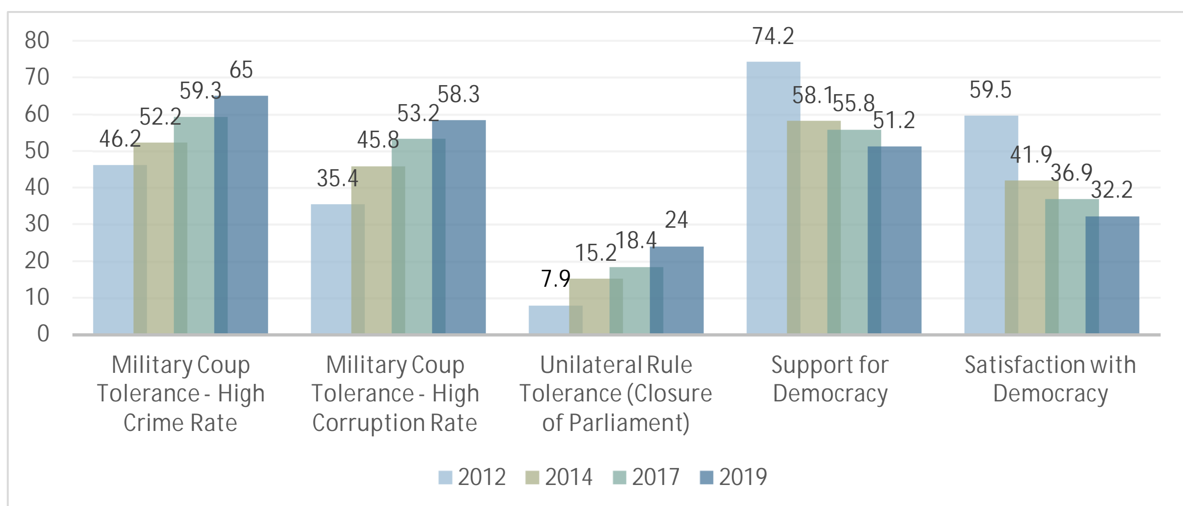
is a clear understanding of what people mean by democracy, claims of discontent, or even support where it is indicated, cannot be properly understood (Shin & Kim, 2018).

Shin & Kim (2018, p. 227) propose the need to distinguish between the formal processes and procedures, of democracy such as voting, and what democracy is expected to produce — responsive government. Research and scholarship tend to focus on democracy and participation as intrinsic values and formal processes. Even in development contexts, where instrumental values are usually prioritised, the promotion of democracy and participation as universal social goods, can often appear to override their value in being able to produce material outcomes (Gaventa & Barrett, 2010; Mansuri & Rao, 2013). However, when it comes to what matters to citizens, the materialities and mundanities of lived citizenship (Kallio et al., 2020) are what most ordinary people respond to — not the idealised aspirations, but the ability of political institutions to address the everyday quality of life issues that people face (Bromley, 2022). Where democracy does not provide the products that citizens value, people are often less likely to participate in its processes and procedures (Vráblíková, 2017; Vráblíková & van Deth, 2017). This does not necessarily mean that citizens do not value democracy, simply that they are dissatisfied with the delivery of its products (Norris, 2011).

Formal and Informal Practices of Democracy

AmericasBarometer captures citizen evaluations of democratic governance in Latin America and the Caribbean. In Jamaica, as indicated in Figure 3-1, the 2019 survey shows a consistent reduction in support for and satisfaction with democracy since 2012. At the same time tolerance for unilateral rule has consistently risen.

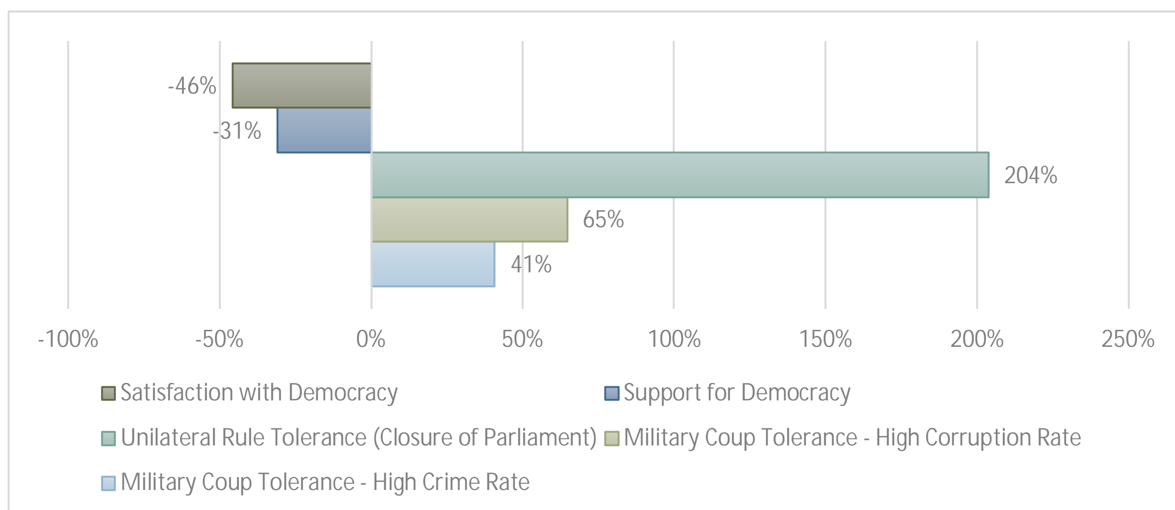
Figure 3-1: Democracy in Jamaica 2012-2019



Source: Based on data from Harriott et al. (2020)

When looked at as a trend, as presented in Figure 3-2, the increase in tolerance for unilateral rule over time becomes more telling, increasing over 200% between 2012 and 2019. Though Jamaica's 2019 level of tolerance for unilateral rule is in keeping with the median range for the region (A. A. Harriott et al., 2020), the level of support for unilateral rule or military coup in response to a poorly functioning democracy is revealing and underscores the relative value of democracy in practice in relation to democracy as an ideal — the majority of citizens are more concerned about outcomes than procedures. As Figure 3-2 also shows the level of dissatisfaction with democracy in practice (-46%), is greater than the reduction in support for democracy in principle (-31%). The interpretation being that the greater problem is with what democracy has delivered not with democracy as an ideal.

Figure 3-2: Democracy in Jamaica 2012-2019 – Percentage Change



Source: Based on data from Harriott et al (2020)

Parvin (2018) argues that the decline in democracy makes an expectation of participatory democracy unrealistic, as it places an undue burden on citizens. However, there is also the argument that citizens will participate if formal and informal mechanisms outside of elections provide them with an effective means of impacting political decision-making (Vráblíková, 2014). Citizens are more likely to participate in political activities if they believe that those activities provide credible opportunities to influence decisions. This would mean that it is not having to "act and think in ways they cannot and know things they do not know" (Parvin, 2018, p. 49) that determines the levels of citizen participation, but how the state *facilitates* citizens to influence decision-making (Vráblíková, 2017). However, as Parvin (2018) would likely agree, and Vráblíková (2017) has found, what citizens perceive as credible opportunities for influencing decision-making also depend on the cultural and political context of the society and the status and relationships of the communities therein.

H. N. Johnson (2005, pp. 588–589) argues, in the case of Jamaica, that the culture and political context of the society and the incivility of citizens with the collusion of the media, encourages "civil disorder" as opposed to "civic engagement", to influence political decision-making. What H. N. Johnson (2005) refers to as civil disorder, disruptive demonstrating and protesting, is however able to operate as an open political opportunity structure for citizens as it remains one of the most reliable means of obtaining action from the government, albeit potentially transforming the society into a "roadblock democracy" (H. N. Johnson, 2011, p. 15). The extent to which this roadblock democracy has become a way of communicating with the state can be understood in the context of its emergence alongside, "a fundamental revolution in the values, attitudes, and behavioral norms that guide the society … [which has] led to more crime and violence, greater civil disorder, and other manifestations of social deviance" (H. N. Johnson, 2019, p. 15).

The roadblock democracy that has emerged in Jamaica, as part of the hybrid governance framework (Jaffe, 2013), underscores Vráblíková's (2014) point. It is the effectiveness of political opportunity structures to obtain responsiveness from the state, not the capacity of citizens (Parvin, 2018) that influences the extent of citizen participation in the systems of democracy (Vráblíková, 2017). For democracy, citizen participation in civil processes matter less than the ability of those processes to generate meaningful results. This moves the focus from the appropriateness of citizen democratic practices to the responsiveness of the state.

Parvin (2021) proposes that elite spaces of political participation should be expanded to incorporate wider citizen representation. This would address the unrealistic expectation of widespread citizen participation, and the reality that states tend to be most responsive to formal political opportunity structures dominated by elites who, in the absence of representatives of the marginalised, use those structures to reinforce their power (Parvin, 2021). However, the appearance of global democratic decline has not been due to the inability of citizens to be represented in elite spaces, but to a distrust of the political elite and of their ability to provide such representation (Citrin & Stoker, 2018). For this reason, Dacombe & Parvin (2021, p. 155) concede that "democracy does not reside in its formal institutions". This underscores the proposal that researchers and citizens may have had different conceptualisations of democracy (Shin & Kim, 2018), and that measuring democracy by focussing on formal institutions does not accurately reflect the level of citizen participation in democratic practice. Political participation is more than voting (Dalton, 2008, 2022). While traditional forms of political engagement may have declined, citizens are finding other ways to make their voices heard (Bromley, 2022; Dalton, 2022; Norris, 2011). As Dalton (2022) finds, voting behaviour is a weak indicator of a vibrant democracy. The data indicates that rather than being characteristic of incivility, an openly contentious citizenry may indicate a strong democratic practice:

> governance is a customer service function: If the customers (citizens) do not raise their voices to make their demands heard, the service providers will not hear them and thus are not doing their best for the public interest even if well-intentioned … the empirical evidence suggests that democracies do better when the clientele is assertive. (Dalton, 2022, p. 546)

This does not undermine H.N. Johnson's (2005, 2011, 2019) concern regarding the rise of roadblock democracy in Jamaica but places it in context. As the literature indicates, democratic practice does not need to be civil to be considered effective, what is important is that citizens have the means to ensure that their government is responsive. However, simply because Jamaican political activism, as roadblock democracy (H. N. Johnson, 2011), does not conform to the democratic ideal, does not make it a viable decolonial alternative. Vráblíková (2014, p. 206) suggests that citizens gravitate to the forms of political activity that receive the best response from the state. The ability of roadblock democracy to obtain positive state response therefore underscores the idea that informal, contentious, forms of participation that provide citizens with influence over state decisions, can be engaged as effective democratic practice in place of more formal mechanisms for participation.

As this thesis looks at experiences of state and nonstate actors in the participatory processes at the local government level, where Vráblíková's (2014) indicates the best opportunities exist for active citizenship, the next section presents the status of participatory local governance in Jamaica.

History of the Participatory Local Governance and Planning Processes

Shortly after the establishment of the Jamaican Assembly in 1660, and until crown colony rule in 1866, vestries, with representatives elected annually, were responsible for the administration of each parish in Jamaica (Brathwaite, 1971). In post-emancipation Jamaica, freed people who met the property-holding criteria competed for political positions in the vestry. In one parish vestry, within 20 years of legal emancipation, 60% of the representatives had been formerly enslaved people (Wilmot, 2006). This was not to last, as the local Government system was disbanded following the Morant Bay uprising, and not reintroduced until 1887, at which time parish vestries became Parish Councils and their responsibilities for local government were expanded (K. L. Miller, 2017). However, with the exception of the introduction of universal adult suffrage, from 1887 until 2016 the local government system remained essentially the same, despite numerous calls for reform (K. L. Miller, 2017). 73 years after initial calls for reform, the Local Governance Act was passed in 2016 establishing the Parish Councils as Municipal Corporations, making them responsible for producing local sustainable development plans for their jurisdictions, with the use of appropriate participatory mechanisms.

The participatory mechanisms referenced by the Local Governance Act 2016, were not introduced into the society by that legislation. Instead, the legislation gives structure and legitimacy to practices which had been steadily evolving since the 1930s. The participatory governance framework and the government agency responsible for its management have their genesis in the colonially led community development ethos of the early 20th century British Empire. Policies and legislation for colonial development and welfare had a number of iterations and motivations, settling in the 1930s and 1940s with a focus on teaching non-European colonial subjects how to be good native villagers (Creech Jones, 1956; Francis, 1969). During that period, as preparation for self-government, colonial Assemblies were encouraged and funded by the British Parliament to adopt roles previously left up to churches and charities (Creech Jones, 1956).

In 1937, Jamaica Welfare Limited was established as a private entity to support the welfare of agricultural workers. The creation of the entity was the negotiated outcome following the forced folding of the farmers' cooperative after suffering the effects of the monopolistic business practices of the banana exporting firms (Fernández Montes de Oca, 2021). Norman Manley was the lawyer for the farmers' cooperative and is also credited with the founding of the welfare entity. By 1943 the Colonial Office took over the funding responsibility for the welfare entity, providing grants to meet the organisation's objective of village betterment (Burke, 1952; Francis, 1969). By 1949, the organisation became a statutory agency of the colonial Government of Jamaica, at which time Manley stepped down as Chairman and handed responsibility to the head of Social Services in the colonial government of Jamaica (Francis, 1969). In 1965, the organisation became legally known as the Social Development Commission (SDC), with an expanded scope of responsibility for youth, sport and craft development (Social Development Commission, 1974).

The work of the SDC significantly followed the path set by its predecessor entity, which had been informed by ideologies and social experiments in self-help and communitarianism circulating across the British colonial territories (Fernández Montes de Oca, 2021; Sherlock, 1950). The series of experiments adopted by the organisation evolved into a programme of work that encouraged the development of local cooperatives, clubs, and voluntary groups, with the Jamaica Welfare Limited (the earlier incarnation of the Social Development Commission) positioning itself as supporting "humble men and women seeking, with guidance, to meet their own needs"(Sherlock, 1950, p. 34). Before becoming a statutory entity, the establishment of community councils and cooperatives was a significant focus of the approach, reflecting the organisation's philosophy on community betterment thorough training in self-management (Burke, 1952; Francis, 1969; Levy, 1995).

In the 1970s, to address the decline in the activity of community councils (Patterson, 2019), the government introduced a policy to institutionalise community councils as a formal tool of mass

political participation to counter the growing political apathy (Boxill & Unnithan, 1995). This increased the number of community councils from 160 in 1975, to five hundred by 1979 (Boxill & Unnithan, 1995; Social Development Commission, 2015). The new community councils, were rooted in the ideology of participatory democracy and radical egalitarianism, referred to as Manleyism (Ledgister, 2014), associating it with the fourth post-Independence Prime Minister on the island, and son of Norman Manley. The establishment of community centres and building the capacity of village and community councils to oversee them and the operations that were undertaken therein, became an important aspect of the work of the SDC (Levy, 1995). The processes of community centre and community council development which were originally community determined and lead, even if by the community middle class, as a function of government policy, were rolled out as bureaucratic templates, with their operation dependent on the role of the SDC (Levy, 1995; Sammons, 2014).

A Bill was subsequently drafted in 1980 to give community councils full legitimacy under the law (Social Development Commission, 2015). However, that year, the political legitimacy of community councils was undermined when Michael Manley's People's National Party (PNP) lost control of Government, before the Bill could be debated to institutionalise the councils in the island's democratic process (Boxill & Unnithan, 1995). The new administration was not as convinced of the role of community councils in the process of governance (Boxill & Unnithan, 1995), and in addition to removing support for them, diminished the role of local government (K. L. Miller, 2017).

The community councils and the related governance framework was only revived on the PNP's return to power in the 1990s (Boxill & Unnithan, 1995; K. L. Miller, 2017). By 1992, with a PNP government returned to office, the popularity of Local Agenda 21, and the many international development partners willing to fund local governance capacity development, the policy framework for what would become the participatory governance framework emerged (Ministry of Local Government, 1993, 2003). While there were a number of policy position papers, and millions of dollars in grant funded projects (Miller, 2017; J. Mullings et al., 2018), by 2007, when the JLP Government returned to office, there was no legislation supporting participatory governance or the development role of local government.

The JLP in 2007 disbanded the Ministry of Local Government, placing the policy function under the Office of the Prime Minster. Between 2007 and 2016, the central government administration shifted between the two political parties, one that had an explicit policy agenda of centralisation, the JLP, and the other that had an explicit policy agenda of decentralisation, the PNP. The Local Governance Act, 2016 was passed in Parliament three months before the JLP was elected in 2016. The JLP has continued to control Parliament up until the time of writing and the role of the Ministry of Local Government and the Municipal Corporations have not been formally diminished.

The Local Governance Act, 2016 can therefore be understood as a means of providing legislative cover to the operation of the community-based governance bodies which the government in 1980 had committed to giving legal status. The participatory governance framework rebrands and reconceptualises community councils into a tiered system of community and parish governance. This bureaucratising of the original concept potentially undermines the ability of leaders to employ the emancipatory tactics required to navigate the socio-political environment (M. A. Thomas, 2015) and removes the bottom-up grassroots characteristic from what should be grassroots organisations able to challenge the status quo (Dodman, 2004). If that continues to be an expectation, it will require the participatory governance framework to overcome the shortcomings of its previous iterations (C. Johnson, 1982; le Franc, 1978).

Clientelism as Rational Adaptation and Strategic Dependence

Edie (1984) proposes that the political system which evolved in Jamaica is best understood when viewed through a lens which blends dependency theory, clientelism and charismatic leadership. This is a position which appears to be supported by Reno (2020) who sees dependency, as used by Caribbean islands, as a strategy embedded in an epistemology of modernity, which extends patron-clientelism to foreign policy, to create a multi-level dependency. This multi-level dependency extends from the international political realm to the average citizen, with the island's political class in the middle, producing "interdependencies … without fundamentally challenging inequalities" (Reno, 2020, p. 22). As an "institutionalized political symbiosis " (M. G. Smith, 1974, pp. 233–234) the multi-level dependency, produces "dynamic interrelationships" (Edie, 1984, p. 265) that transform patron clientelist relations into relations of "strategic dependence" (Reno, 2020, p. 3). Informed by a history of colonial oligarchy, strategic negotiating competences evolved to replace revolutionary tendencies, providing citizens and elites with their respective political resources to maintain the Creole island democracy (Reno, 2020).

Island spaces amplify the experience of relational entanglements (Nolasco, 2018; Percy et al., 2018). Cohen (2018b) underscores this by identifying the islands of the Caribbean as spaces where all the social complexities are evident "in a relatively small space, with a relatively small population" (2018b, p. 54). Personalistic and clientelist democratic practice, while not particular to islands (Kopecký et al., 2016) is therefore amplified within the island space. As a specific island context, the Creole island democracy, with a cosmo-ontology of racialised labour and narratives of difference, survival and relational reproduction can therefore be expected to produce an amplified clientelism entangled in a racialised colonial history.

Jaffe (2013) describes the governance and citizenship emerging from the urban Jamaican political culture as not simply clientelist but *hybrid*. Communities become pseudo-states within the state, forming islands of marginalised urban areas, where there is political homogeneity governed by state sanctioned criminal elites, in turn producing a hybrid governance with hybrid citizens who acknowledge the legitimacy of both the formal state and the criminal leadership (Harbers et al., 2016; Jaffe, 2013). A hybrid citizenship emerges, with "multiple practices and narratives related to rule and belonging … allowing residents … to negotiate, rights, responsibilities and participation within the resulting political order"(Jaffe, 2013, p. 735). These bounded political spaces, referred to in Jamaica as garrisons are the result of personalistic clientelist politics. These garrisons are communities constructed by the respective party in power during the 1960s and 1970s to distribute housing, effectively creating islands of party supporters whose loyalties were reinforced through the provision of guns, jobs, and money (Sives, 2002).

The construction of the earliest of these islands of clientelism was used to demolish vibrant political spaces of resistance occupied by Rastafarian-inspired self-sufficient communities (C. G. Clarke, 2016; B. Mullings, 2019). The politically and socially subversive communities were destroyed, and their inhabitants rendered homeless under the banner of urban renewal which provided secure garrison-style protection for the new community of party affiliates (Hutton, 2017; B. Mullings, 2019). In garrison communities, gang leaders, or dons as they are referred to locally, became the distribution mechanism for party-affiliated largesse, and were effectively delegated leadership of the community by the state. When the politicians' ability to distribute largesse was affected by the fiscal crisis of the 1980s, the dons found alternative sources of revenue, changing the relationship with the politician, and establishing a stronger de facto leadership position for themselves, enhanced by their financial independence from the politicians (Robinson-Walcott, 2020). Where the state was unable to provide material benefits, due to structural adjustment restrictions on state provision of social services, dons were able to meet the needs of their citizen-clients through criminal activity, in some cases undermining the authority of the state (H. N. Johnson, 2011), and competing with the state for citizen loyalty (Bartilow, 2014).

The don is an established role within the garrison community's social and political hierarchy that must be respected not only by the politicians, but by state bureaucrats in the administration of their responsibilities (Jaffe, 2013). The dons effectively become the community representatives, providing access to the community and channelling resources to its citizens. Government and aid agencies work with dons both formally and informally, as part of a participatory approach to community development (Grove, 2014; Rao & Ibáñez, 2005), but there are often no democratic processes involved (Jaffe, 2013). Garrison communities account for approximately 15% of electoral

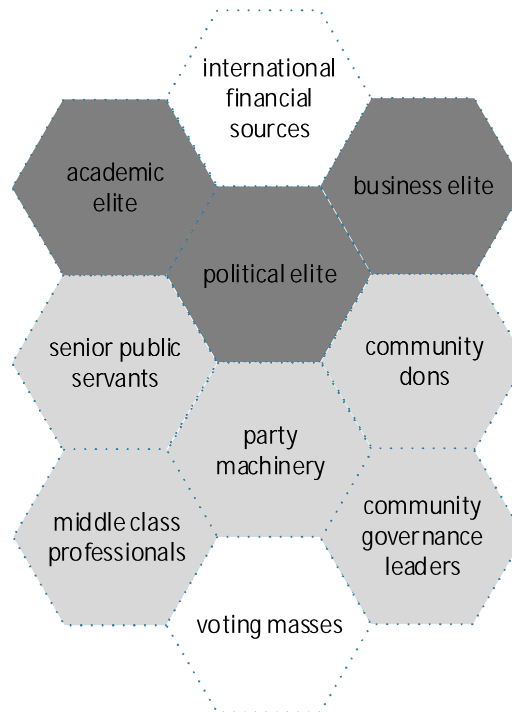
constituencies across four of fourteen parishes (Figueroa & Sives, 2002). But they dominate urban life through the level of insecurity created for their residents and the wider society, which becomes prey to the criminality that maintains the garrison (Campbell & Clarke, 2017; Figueroa & Sives, 2002; B. Mullings, 2019). The politics of garrisons form an important aspect of the political profile of the island, representing an adaptive effect of political repression (B. Mullings, 2019), benevolent despotism (Jaffe, 2013), communal clientelism (Figueroa & Sives, 2002), and neoliberal structural adjustment (C. Clarke & Nelson, 2020).

Building on the work of Carl Stone, Edie (1984) proposes that Jamaica's political culture is best understood as a relationship between communities, politicians and political financiers reflecting patron-clientelism at three levels — between: 1. the government and the international capitalist system; 2. the party and the economic elite; and 3. politicians and the voting masses. However, in keeping with Reno's (2020) multi-level dependency, this could also be represented as a web of interdependencies as illustrated in Figure 3-3. In the web of interdependencies there is no singular patron as patron-clientelism is about strategically negotiating relationships as a source of power. However, there are levels of dependency, and those at the top of the web, the *hegemonic elite* (Patterson, 2019) have access to significantly more power than those at the lower levels of the web. However, patrons need clients as much as clients need the patrons. The web of interdependencies reflects the relations of power within the Creole island socio-political ecosystem. As Reno (2020) proposes this relational status quo is strategically used by clients to maintain favourable access to sources of power, what he refers to as strategic dependence. The web of interdependencies is structured with the international political and financial actors at the top, operating as financial or financially legitimating sources[8], and the voting masses at the base. Interdependencies flow upward and downward and are relative to the role of actors in their operation as either patron or client, reinforcing the mutuality of relationships. Interdependencies are strengthened as actors compete along the web to secure or improve their position in the structure and are reinforced by "strong symbolic and non-material ties of loyalty, based on powerful forces of political socialisation" (Edie, 1984, p. 260). Though, as Reno (2020) indicates, such interpersonal affections do not preclude retaliatory actions by the voting masses. In the multi-level dependency democracy, the client is able to hold the patron accountable through the electoral machinery, which becomes a resource the masses are able to employ against a political elite unable to adequately fulfil their patron role (Edie, 1984; Reno, 2020). The politician is the patron of the don when largesse is available, and becomes

[8] As Reno (2020) makes the point, international actors may not provide actual funding, but may provide the international political legitimacy that facilitates the flow of financial resources.

the client when voters must be mobilised, election outcomes secured, and state largesse is not readily available (Edie, 1984).

Figure 3-3: Web of Patron-Client Interdependence.



Source: Author's Interpretation of Edie (1984) and Reno (2020)

The web of interdependencies undermines the concept of the unitary nation-state and identifies the Creole society as a system of status positions and power relations (Edie, 1984). It contrasts with the traditionally described pyramid of patronage that has the local political elite at the apex, separated from the voting masses by a network of brokers (Berenschot & Aspinall, 2020; Flap, 1990). By placing the international financial sources at the top, the web also undermines the notion of the political boundedness of the Creole island. Most patronage models of conceptualise a bounded political ecosystem in which the actors, resources and the related negotiations of patron-client relations are internal to the state (Berenschot & Aspinall, 2020; Flap, 1990). The Creole island though bounded by the sea is not politically and economically bounded. The Creole island from its initial political emergence is defined by its external political and economic relationships, whether to the colonial metropole, or to the continental homelands of the population (Reno, 2020). Political and economic resources are obtained from international relationships and are transmitted along the web of interdependencies. The quality of those international relationships is important for maintaining the structure of the web. Like most small islands, the Creole island must rely on externally mobilised sources to maintain local economies (Bertram & Poirine, 2018). This is magnified in the case of Creole

islands whose agriculture-based economies were never designed for sustaining local livelihoods (Mill, 1965).

Creole islands have historically been embedded in a system of global capitalism, reliant on the metropole and their financial markets to sustain local livelihoods (Edie, 1984; Reno, 2020). Local patron-client relationships cannot exist without the role played by global financial institutions (Rothe, 2010; Rothe & Friedrichs, 2014), nor the role of the business and academic elite in accessing international financial and political resources which support the maintenance of the clientelistic interdependencies. Political and party elites are dependent on the ability of the island to attract foreign investment, development loans and foreign aid. These financial sources enable the contracts and government largesse (which oftentimes take the form of preferential access to basic social goods and services) (Satchell, 2017) to maintain the patron-client web (Gray, 2003b). The ability to adapt local policy and governance priorities allows political elites to take advantage of the particular interests of financing patrons. For example, political elites are able to obtain financial and political resources that can be translated into patronage by: making sustainable development and climate change commitments to which there is no real accountability (S.-A. Robinson, 2019; Scobie, 2016), authorising multinational tourism investments with limited benefits to the population (Dodman, 2009) and committing to local government and planning reform without relinquishing the singular authority of the centre (J. Pugh, 2003b, 2005; Schoburgh, 2007).

Berenschot & Aspinall (2020, p. 10) concede the possibility of "multiple and competing clientelistic pyramids" where systems of devolved control over state resources exist. It is proposed, devolution notwithstanding, that the pyramid approach, particularly with the local political leadership at the apex, does not reflect the interdependencies and close relationships that exist between patrons, brokers and clients in a Creole island context. Nor does the hierarchy reflect the potential for these roles to become inverted based on context and environment. The Creole island context amplifies the blurred lines and potential for role transference created through strategic dependence (Reno, 2020).

The clientelist web of interdependencies can be understood, in Jamaica, as the result of a constellation of variables produced in a political environment to which citizens learned to adapt (Portes & Itzigsohn, 1994). It is an environment defined by instrumentality rather than by ideology, in which there is "rational adaptation to the existing structures of power rather than radical confrontation" with them (Portes & Itzigsohn, 1994, p. 506). While the notion of rational adaptation undermines the self-determining post-emancipation ethos or H.N. Johnson's (2011) roadblock democracy described in section 3.2, it is important to note that adaptation is not assimilation. In the same way that post-emancipation exit was about strategising material and psychological survival, roadblock democracy is about everyday survival, and what Portes & Itzigsohn (1994) describe as the

use of the dominant political structures in a manner that supports survival. It should also be noted that though roadblock democracy provided the voting masses with a powerful voice, it was also a political practice that became normalised in the political culture and according to Gray (2004) was not perceived by the political class as a potential source of political instability.

The clientelist web of interdependencies is reinforced by a logic of engaging the dominant political structures in the manner necessary to support survival. It is the logic that not only supports the relationship between the voting masses and the politicians but supports the politicians in their relationship with their own patrons. According to M.G. Smith (1958, pp. 66–67) political leaders in the 1930s were aware of the low tolerance the colonial government had for "revolutionary social reconstruction" and engaged a "rationalism" that "recognised the futility of revolution". As Gray (2017, p. 100) notes, the ability of early political leaders to advocate on behalf of the labouring masses relied on their ability to "reassure colonial officials" that the emerging political class would be a "useful ally in managing the pace and character of British withdrawal from the island". Therefore, in the process of constitutional decolonisation, violence was targeted against the radical elements of the society, not the colonial institutions, to preserve a national identity able to secure ongoing patronage and take its place alongside the rest of the West (Lindsay, 1975). Girvan (2015) refers to this as the Independence Pact. It was a pact embedded in the logic of Cold War capitalism which positioned the local political class as clients to the Anglo-American security apparatus and the multinational firms "entrenched in bauxite mining, sugar, banking and finance" (Girvan, 2015, p. 98). Garrison communities are the culmination of Jamaica's clientelist political culture, not the genesis. As Edie (1984) articulates, contemporary political clientelism is genealogically connected to postslavery plantocratic benevolence. The relationship between the island oligarchies and the colonial metropole evolved into the relationships between the postcolonial state and the international financial institutions (Edie, 1984; Reno, 2020).

From the establishment of the first legislature, the Jamaican society has practiced a politics of patron-clientelism, based on relationships of inequality, leading to a democracy designed around a web of interdependency (Edie, 1984, 1989; Reno, 2020). Whether it was operating during the period of enslavement with patron-clientelist relations between the colonial government, the local Assembly and the plantocracy; or in the pre-Independence democracy, with the colonial government, the local middle class and the largely African-descended economically marginalised population, the politics of the island has always maintained a deeply entrenched system of clientelism. Before independence, the competition natural to representative politics was established on a web of multi-dependency patron-clientelism that had the colonial metropole at the top as the ultimate patron, and the masses of poor and unemployed as the ultimate clients. However, clientelism is only one of three political

strategies engaged, and is supplemented by exit and voice (Hirschman, 1970, 1980), successfully used by relevant groups as and when needed.

The amplified clientelism represented by the web of interdependencies can be understood as the result of historical context and the hyper-personalism characteristic of small islands (Corbett & Veenendaal, 2019). Corbett & Veenendaal (2019), propose the concept of hyper-personalism as a feature of small island polities which produces a highly affective atmosphere and creates strong political polarities which compound the inability to separate the private and public, or the political and the communal. Hyper-personalism in the context of the Creole island can therefore be expected to produce a particular type of political environment characterised by the specific history of plantation colonialism, racialised inequality and survivalism, and the islanders' experiences in creating a postcolonial national identity within the parameters of the global geopolitical environment.

3.4 Summary

This chapter reviewed the historical and critical literature to obtain insight into the cultural and institutional context in which actors targeted in this study are understood to operate. The chapter focused on two sets of identities which emerged from the Jamaica's colonial history, the meso-Creole and the Afro-Creole (Besson, 2003), and identified patterns of political practice associated with each, reflecting variable expressions of exit, voice and loyalty (Hirschman, 1970, 1980).

The chapter established that the plantation was not only social and economic in its effect on the island, but political and cultural — defining the symbols, roles and relationships of power that provide the foundation for the emergence of a multi-level patron-clientelist democracy (Edie, 1984; Reno, 2020; Stone, 1992). The chapter reinforces the argument that there is a dynamic and iterative relationship between cultural knowledge and the emergence of political institutions (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2019, 2022). The chapter also made the case for considering the role of spatiality in this formula by highlighting the tendency towards rational adaptation in small hyper-personalised societies (Corbett & Veenendaal, 2019; Portes & Itzigsohn, 1994).

Having contextualised the concept of narratives of Creole islandness in chapter two and explored, in this chapter, the political environment within which local development planning processes are expected to be undertaken, the next chapter defines the conceptual framework for the thesis placing the subjects reviewed in chapters two and three in a framework for understanding the research data that is explored in chapters six, seven and eight.

CHAPTER FOUR

UNDERSTANDING NARRATIVES AS CULTURAL TOOLS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This research applies to the concept of the Creole island the premise that the relational practices of a community produce cultural repertoires which reflect the adaptation of its members to living with each other, over generations, in a particular ecological space (Oyserman, 2011; Swidler, 1986, 2001). I use the term community here (as an alternative to society) to refer to a network of social relations, to underscore the notion of society as made up of multiple communities, and therefore, multiple cultures (Bessant, 2018; Spicker, 2019). Culture is therefore understood as an important part of a community's knowledge base, toolkit, or repertoire, accumulated through the scaffolding of learning from intergenerational experiences and practices in place (Cerulo et al., 2021; Rogers et al., 2021; Swidler, 1986, 2001). This knowledge base or cultural repertoire becomes embedded in the institutional structures of a community (Patterson, 2014, 2018) reinforcing practices and relations among its members.

Chapters two and three explored elements that contribute to scaffolding the cultural repertoires of the Creole island society generally and the Jamaican society specifically. This chapter uses the ideas of cultural toolkits, repertoires and resources to elaborate a conceptual framework for understanding how those layers of intergenerational history may inform the ways in which public servants and community leaders participate in governance processes. Section 4.2 explains how I understand narratives as elements of a cultural repertoire. Section 4.3 positions the thesis in a post-development approach to development studies. Section 4.4 presents an understanding of participatory governance and planning processes as a function of the sociocultural context of the Creole island. Section 4.5 concludes the chapter and organises the concepts into a visual framework, and section 4.6 summarises the chapter.

4.2 NARRATIVES AS RELATIONAL RESOURCES

Cultural Toolkits and Repertoires

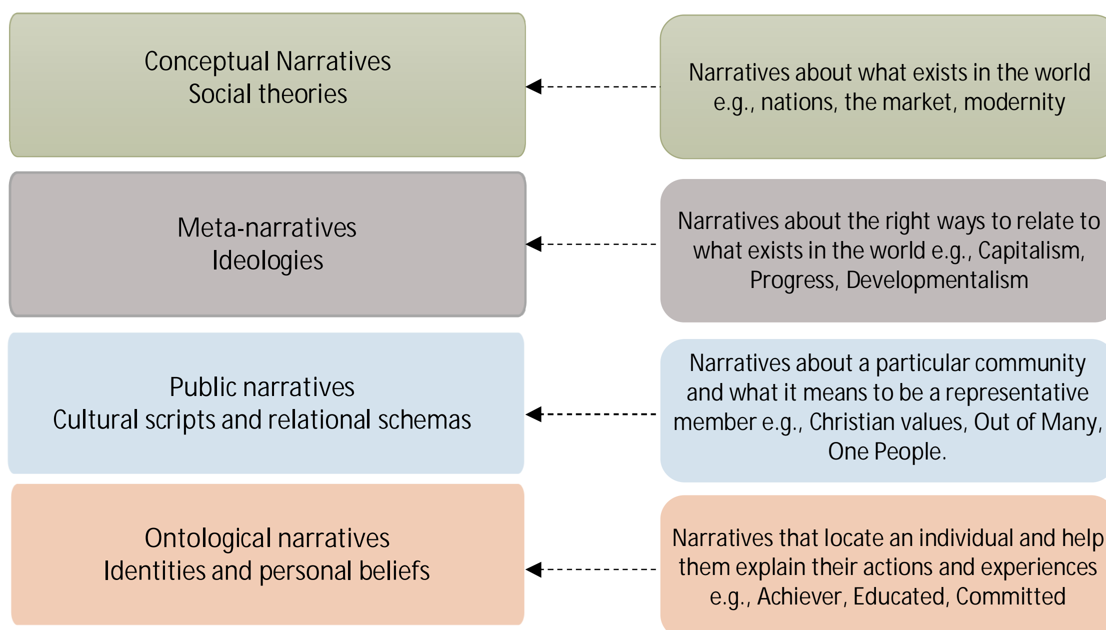
As indicated in chapter one, actors involved in governance and planning processes are understood to make use of available narrative resources to guide their interactions and navigate their participation in the processes. This follows Bevir & Rhodes (2007, 2010, 2016) who understand the work of the state as cultural practice and the actors as cultural practitioners, operating with traditions and beliefs acquired through their networks of social relations. Here, a distinction is made between historical and cultural determinism, and *culture as practice*. Rather than proposing that the state is determined by history and culture, what is proposed is a relationship between historical practice, beliefs, and *agency*. History and culture may provide constraints and opportunities, but do not determine the results (Bevir, 2017). Each actor brings to their role within the governance process their own set of cultural tools informed by their level of access to the wider set of cultural repertoires (Bevir & Rhodes, 2013; Swidler, 1986). Agency is practiced through the interaction of actors using their particular sets of cultural tools and working with the expectations and traditions of institutions. How their agency is practiced will be informed, rather than determined, by the specific cultural tools at the disposal of those actors as they negotiate their interactions. Although history and culture structure the state and create constraints and opportunities for social action, it is the collective agency of actors that determines whether these structures are maintained or disrupted (Bevir, 2017; Klimina, 2016).

To understand the ways cultural toolkits and repertoires operate, I adopt the understanding of narratives as cognitive and reality structuring resources (Bruner, 1991; Gallagher & Hutto, 2008; Hutto et al., 2020; Somers, 1994), that individuals engage implicitly and explicitly as they operate in the world and make sense of their lives. In this way, traditions and beliefs, as used by Bevir and Rhodes (2010, 2016) to refer to the contextual influences of state agents, are understood to be narratively constituted. I engage the literature of schema, narrative identity and collective memory to understand narratives as operating at multiple levels. At the implicit level narratives help to schematise information in the world, establishing associations and providing cultural codes for how things (should) work (Baldwin, 1992; Hutto & Kirchhoff, 2015; Lizardo, 2021). Narratives, when used explicitly, also help people make sense of experiences at the individual (McAdams, 2011; McLean et al., 2018) and collective/ community levels (Brewer & Caporael, 2006; Hammack & Toolis, 2016; Wertsch, 2008, 2012).

Somers (1994) proposes that narratives can be identified at four different levels, as illustrated in Figure 4-1. The highest level is the conceptual narrative level, aligned with social theory, and produces stories of society and culture. Conceptual narratives are what Somers (1994, p. 620) refers

to as explanations constructed by social researchers, such as the economy and the society. The meta-narrative level is the level of ideology that uses those conceptual narratives to produce stories that drive political and religious contestations. These include narratives of progress and "the epic dramas of ... Capitalism vs. Communism ... Barbarism/Nature vs. Civility" (Somers, 1994, p. 619). The public narrative level defines the expectations of individuals and groups, and through stories of the family, the church, and what it means to be a member of the society, individuals learn about these many expectations and are able to build their cultural toolkits. Public narratives allow individuals to locate themselves, establish expectations, and emerge their unique ontological narratives which situate and orient them in relation to their world (Somers, 1994). In exploring the concept of narratives of Creole islandness my focus is on understanding public and ontological narratives specific to the groups included in this study. However, it is acknowledged that these cannot be understood independently from the meta-narratives in which they are framed, as meta-narratives provide an understanding of truth, that is interpreted by a community to produce as public and ontological narratives (Somers, 1994).

Figure 4-1: Levels of Narratives



Source: Based on Somers (1994)

Narratives build the cultural toolkit by providing a mechanism for reproducing cultural knowledge and schematising experiences and relations. National imagination (Anderson, 2006), social learning (Wenger, 2010a), and the cultural knowledge base (Swidler, 1986, 2001) are facilitated through narratives that encode repertoires of being and relating in interactions, within the community, and across generations. Through narratives, relational schemas emerge which help

individuals to define and interpret themselves and others in those interactions and ongoing relationships (Baldwin, 1992).

Narratives in Interaction

Stories about group history and identity and their meaning for individual expectations explicitly encode narratives, and everyday experiences and practices implicitly encode narratives. Through everyday discourses and interactions, individuals participate in communicative practices which provide them with access to a "multiplicity stories" in different spaces over time (McAdams, 2011, pp. 102–103), and opportunities to create and tell their own story (Bamberg et al., 2011; Koven, 2015). Everyday practices of narratives-in-interaction (Bamberg, 2020; Georgakopoulou, 2007) allow active negotiation with narratives and exposure to multiple potentially conflicting stories (McLean, Boggs, et al., 2020; McLean & Syed, 2015) that exist in the world.

Georgakopolou (2007) uses the term small stories to refer to the type of narratives that emerge in everyday talk. Everyday talk produces

> a fascinating complexity and multiplicity of tellings and conversational actions: they span the continuum from highly monologic to highly collaborative tellings; from past to future and hypothetical events; from long and performed to fragmented and elliptical tellings. (Georgakopoulou, 2007, p. 17).

Actors produce these narratives in their interactions with each other. As they negotiate their interactions, they draw on their available cultural repertoire to apply schemas and position each other within those schemas (Davies & Harré, 1990; Harré & van Langenhove, 1999b). Positioning is important to this understanding of narratives in interaction and the engagement of cultural repertoires. Davies & Harré (1990) describe positioning as a process used by individuals discursively locate themselves and others. In this process of positioning, individuals engage with the "local moral order" to assign rights and obligations to the actors in conversation and to those who may be the subject of conversation (Harré & van Langenhove, 1999b, p. 1).

Positioning can be both implicit or explicit, as actors in their interactions with each other negotiate their relative relationships, take stances, assign moral attributes, and establish power positions (van Langenhove & Harré, 1999). Individuals access their cultural toolkits for taking stances and assigning positional attributes in their discursive interactions (de Fina, 2013; Deppermann, 2015). Positioning can therefore also be understood as a form of dynamic cultural negotiation in interaction

as actors share their understandings and expectations while navigating the understandings and expectations of others. It is dynamic because it is situational and provides actors with an opportunity to use different cultural tools, while being constrained by what actors may understand to be appropriate, as well as by the extent of their personal repertoire (Swidler, 1986).

In engaging with Bevir & Rhodes' (2010, 2016) understanding of the state as cultural practice, it is this notion of narrative interaction and positioning negotiation (de Fina, 2013; Georgakopoulou, 2007; Harré & van Langenhove, 1999b) that is used to understand how actors use cultural repertoires. The idea of positioning and its role in interactional narrative production provides one way to understand how narrative resources and cultural repertoires are implicitly and explicitly engaged by actors in interaction. It also reinforces the notion of cultural narratives as negotiated and negotiable. Through interactions, available cultural scripts and relational schemas are elaborated, modified, or reinforced. Therefore, while Lizardo & Strand (2010) make the point that much of the cultural cognitive work is structured for individuals by the institutions and the environments they inhabit, Bevir & Rhodes (2010) see agency emerging through the application of personal beliefs and dilemmas.

The traditions and beliefs held and observed by individual actors obtain their meanings from the history of the communities that make up the state (Bevir & Rhodes, 2010, 2016). However, this history exists within communities as (contestable) narratives (Hammack & Pilecki, 2012; D. J. Hilton & Liu, 2017), making these beliefs and practices susceptible to change (Bevir & Needham, 2017). While historical experiences provide an "ideational background against which individuals come to adopt an initial web of beliefs" (Bevir & Rhodes, 2010, p. 78), individual actors, as a complex union of traditional beliefs and personal desires, will suffer *dilemmas* when they encounter "an experience or idea" that conflicts with their inherited beliefs and practices (Bevir & Rhodes, 2010, p. 79).

Although desires and dilemmas are capable of motivating contestation of traditional narratives, the dynamics of power among a network of actors determine the extent and level of success of such contestation. Therefore, while Bevir and Rhodes (2010, 2016) support the importance of individual agency in their conceptualisation of the state, Crossley (2018, p. 485) notes that agency is itself relationally contingent, as the individual is "continually nourished and reproduced (or not) in ongoing relations and interactions". An individual acting on their desires and dilemmas, even if apparently contrary to their traditions and beliefs, can therefore be understood to do so as a function of the relational dynamics of their networks which delimit their agency (Crossley, 2018; McLean & Syed, 2015).

Bevir and Rhodes (2010, 2016) propose that the state and its institutions should not be understood as a vague and impersonal set of rules and processes, but rather as a web of practices

constructed through the beliefs, desires, and dilemmas of actors tasked with performing roles in various networks of interactions (Crossley, 2018), using the cultural tools (Swidler, 1986; Tappan, 2006) available to them. Understanding the institutions of the state therefore requires an identification and understanding of the cultural tools and repertoires that individuals use, and how and when they use them to navigate interactions and relations. This requires a focus on meanings as much as on actions, and therefore this thesis explores both the narratives that inform meaning-making generally, and the specific practices of public servants and community leaders in the governance processes identified.

Institutions, as networked systems of norms and power dynamics, emerge as a reflection of the relationships, knowledges, and negotiations of actors operating across multiple networks within a socio-political environment (Barley, 2017; Crossley, 2018; Powell & Rerup, 2017). Institutions, like the socio-cultural systems from which they emerge, are therefore contingent on the relations, interactions, and negotiations which produce them. This creates a dynamic view of reality with the potential for change constantly being produced through interactions in and across networks of relations. This makes the nature of relations, interactions, and negotiations, as opposed to the institution itself, a primary target for understanding the direction and nature of change.

The thesis is therefore structured around the assumption that cultural knowledge resources emerge from experiences within island communities and are maintained, reinforced, and expanded through narrated and narrative interactions (Bamberg, 2013; de Fina, 2013) and the schematisation of relations (Baldwin, 1992). Once emerging, these cultural knowledge resources are maintained and applied to new experiences, as applicable, within and across generations, to produce a cultural toolkit or a set of cultural repertoires (Swidler, 1986, 2001) available to members of the community. Having elaborated on narrative resources as the core element of the concept of Creole islandness, the next section further positions the concept in relation to the postcolonial and post-development discourse.

4.3 Development and Modernity /Colonial/ Postcolonial/Decolonial

This research explores how culture and colonial history implicate relational practices in governance processes within the context of development studies scholarship. I however take a post-development perspective, acknowledging that development is always entangled with coloniality (Mignolo, 2007). In this section I present my understanding of the relationship between modernity, coloniality and development and their relationship to the concept of Creole islandness.

Modernity/Coloniality

Narratives of Creole islandness contain the interconnected histories of the mnemonic and imagined communities that make up the Creole island state. My thesis is designed around an understanding that these histories are maintained in public narratives that become embedded in the systems and institutions, which structure relations within the state. As products of the process of coloniality, Creole islands, and the narratives they produce, cannot be understood outside of modernity/coloniality (Mignolo, 2018). Creole islands as colonial products were the initial sites for the global re-distribution of labour in service of the proto-capitalist world system that was to follow the European colonisation of the Americas (Trouillot, 2003). With their identities legitimated by their ability to operate as nodes within the global movement of "capital, labor and the commodities they generated", Creole islands emerged as part of the "first moment of globality", prefiguring the entangled nature of the world (Trouillot, 2003, p. 843).

Coloniality is both historic and epistemic. Historic coloniality is temporally and spatially defined by European imperial expansion, emerging in the Atlantic with the discovery of the Americas in 1492, expanding across the Indian and Pacific Oceans over the subsequent four centuries (Mignolo, 2012; Trouillot, 2003). Epistemic coloniality, on the other hand, represents the European experience and conception of knowledge emerging within the period of colonialism, legitimised by Enlightenment philosophers, and established as universal ways of being and knowing (Maldonado-Torres, 2016a; Mignolo, 2019).

The colonial epistemology, promoted as modernity, is a way of thinking and being that produces and reproduces the relations of domination, exploitation and accumulation (Maldonado-Torres, 2007). Modernity further rests on the notion that there is a linear trajectory to human civilisational development, from less-advanced savage cultures to more advanced, modern or developed cultures, of which the Eurocentric example provides the best available measure (Simpson, 2020). Modernity, promoted as the ultimate objective for decolonised nation-states, reflects the notion of a modern civilised way of being based in rationality, democracy and secularity (Simpson, 2020), even as it is:

> inseparable from elements of modern colonialism like the hierarchization of human difference, the imposition of racial slavery, the appropriation of land, the monopolization of knowledge, and the naturalization of…[violence] against bodies negatively marked by coloniality. (Maldonado-Torres & Cavooris, 2017, p. 112)

Epistemic coloniality is therefore not only about the hegemony of European knowledge, but also about the inferiorising of non-European ways of being and knowing (Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). Understanding the world through the lens of modernity/coloniality means acknowledging that the more than seven decades that have passed since the dissolution of empire in the early 20th century has not addressed the four centuries of epistemic coloniality that governs the organisation of power in the contemporary world, and is embedded in the narratives, knowledges and ways of relating in colonial and postcolonial spaces (Grosfoguel, 2007; Maldonado-Torres, 2016b; Mignolo, 2017).

Coloniality is able to transcend the temporality of the period of colonisation to become integrated in a way of being through the ascription of postcolonial nation-states to the ideology of modernity and its promises of prosperity. However, a prosperity based on a Eurocentric conception of modernity is unsustainable. As Simpson (2020, p. 58) proposes, the crisis of the Anthropocene is the direct result of European civilisation premised on the imposition of the will of humanity over nature, with dominance and mastery becoming the defining characteristics of European civilisation and evidence of advancement. And as Mignolo (2008) contends, it is the logic of the advancement of civilisation that drove more than four hundred years of colonialism, which continues to be used to rationalise past and present actions of "colonial violence, dispossession, and the genocide of Indigenous peoples" (Simpson, 2020, p. 63). Further, the philosophy of Euro-American civilisational advancement creates a system of global coloniality that is "reflected in relations of power", that informs "conceptions of being and knowing", and produces:

> a world divided between legitimate human subjects, on the one hand, and others considered not only exploitable or dependent, but fundamentally dispensable, possessing no value, and denoting only negative or exotic meaning. (Maldonado-Torres & Cavooris, 2017, p. 119)

Colonial history is preserved through the coloniality of power, the coloniality of being and the coloniality of knowledge, which work in tandem to create global coloniality, with specific consequences for African and afro-descended populations (Ndlovu-Gatsheni, 2014b).

Decoloniality and Post-development

Decoloniality, emerges as the undoing of, and transcendence from, the ways of being and knowing which emerged and were legitimised during the period of European imperial expansion and colonisation. The language of sustainability and decoloniality attempts to address the damage created by Eurocentric conceptions of development and modernity, or what Brand & Wissen (2017, 2018b)

refer to as the imperial mode of living. There is increased awareness of a plurality of worldviews and the decoloniality and ecological relationality discourse provides a potential pathway for humanity to forge a different relationship with the planet in the light of the destruction wrought by development and progress during the Anthropocene (Fischer et al., 2015; Lejano, 2019; Simpson, 2020). However, the issues of unsustainability are not only about humanity's relationship with the planet, but quite significantly about relationships of human beings with each other. As Brand & Wissen (2017, 2018b, p. 289) write, the imperial mode of living is inscribed into political, economic, and cultural relations ... secures socio-economic well-being and status to those who benefit from it and works as a promise to all who aspire to it". Humanity's relationship with the planet is entangled with humanity's relationship with itself. The imperial mode of living as Eurocentric modernity is based in principles of accumulation, exploitation, and exclusion to achieve progress and prosperity for those who meet the criteria of deservingness (Mignolo, 2008; Quijano, 2007) and is embedded in the political structures and social institutions that operate globally (Brand & Wissen, 2018b). The politics and lived reality of development is inextricably entangled with coloniality and implicated in decolonial approaches to development. As Walsh (2010, p. 20) indicates, the co-optation of the ancestral language of Indigenous people, through the integration of *buen vivir* into the Ecuadorian Constitution, did not address "legacies, reproductions, and reconstructions of coloniality and of the modern-colonial-world system" within the country. Where development appropriates the ancestral language and philosophies of Indigenous communities and those who have suffered the costs of coloniality but does not address socio-political relations and the distributions of power (Brand & Wissen, 2017, 2018b; Tuck & Yang, 2012) "colonial entanglements" (C. E. Walsh, 2010, p. 20) continue.

Across the post-development literature, references to pluriversality and alternatives to development are often references to pre-colonial and indigenous practises and cosmologies, even as European standards are maintained as a reference. This is potentially problematic in the context of the Creole society which emerges as a product of colonial relations with no established set of precolonial traditions and beliefs to build on. The precolonial cultural fragments that exist across the society as remnants of ancestral misremembering, distorted by the trauma of displacement (Bernabé et al., 1990; Nettleford, 1979), do not reflect the cosmological histories of indigenous communities to which much of the Latin Americanists (Esteva & Escobar, 2017; Quijano, 2007; Rivera Cusicanqui, 2012) direct their pluriversal rhetoric. It is a fragmentation, Nettleford (1979) bemoans, that makes these societies ripe for North American cultural hegemony. However, Bernabé et al. (1990) propose that the lack of a preserved precolonial tradition is not a hindrance for the Creole.

> Fortunately, there were some insignificant reproducers of misunderstood gestures, some modest collectors of useless memories ... indispensable links

> that contributed to save Creoleness from the glorious yet definitive fate of Atlantis. We learned from them that culture is a daily lift and thrust, that ancestors are born every day and are not fixed in an immemorial past; that tradition takes shape everyday … Our history (or more precisely our histories) is shipwrecked in colonial history… Our chronicle is behind the dates, behind the known facts … Only poetic knowledge, fictional knowledge, literary knowledge, in short, artistic knowledge can discover us, understand us … interior vision and the acceptance of our Creoleness will allow us to invest these impenetrable areas of silence where screams were lost. (Bernabé et al., 1990, pp. 896–897)

Post-development as situated within postcolonial/decolonial discourses is about locating historically, economically, and politically the dominant narratives of development and modernity and challenging the proposed universality of the Euro-American onto-epistemology which energises those narratives (Escobar, 2007, 2015; Halperin, 2006). Though post-development is criticised for romanticising traditionalism and insufficiently addressing the heterogeneity of perspectives, experiences, identities, and contestations among those defined as subaltern (Asher & Wainwright, 2019; Ziai, 2019), it is valuable for facilitating engagement with ways of thinking which go beyond traditional conceptualisations of development as a product of economic growth and neoliberal public policies (Pieterse, 2009; Ziai, 2017, 2019).

For this reason, Escobar (2012) reinforces the need to understand histories, cultures, and people as interconnected, and questions the discursive boundaries of that are created, such as developed/undeveloped, North/South, urban/rural, Europe/and the rest, in light of the everyday experiences of people in their communities. This is not to deny the existence of Eurocentrism, but to identify the problem of Western and Eurocentric ways of thinking and being as rooted in its history of colonialism and imperial domination and acknowledging that practices of colonialism and imperial domination are not the sole preserve of the West (R. Jones & Phillips, 2005). That is, it reinforces the need to understand histories, cultures, and people as interconnected, and questions the discursive boundaries that are created in light of the everyday experiences of people in their communities.

As Sylvester (1999, p. 711) highlights, women in rural Zimbabwe, experienced “local gender rules” as more disadvantageous to their self-actualisation than the Western “outside knowledge” which actually “opened the doors to power”. Similarly, Rivera Cusicanqui (2012) identifies the ways colonialism, patriarchy, and the co-optation, exploitation and neutralisation of local knowledge is as much practiced by the local, the indigenous and their allies as much as it was practiced by the former

colonial powers. This may be interpreted as proof of the reach of Eurocentric thinking and "evidence of mental colonisation" (Matthews, 2017, p. 2657). However, Rivera Cusicanqui's (2012, p. 105) call to focus on the "gestures and acts and the language" refocuses the practical concern on the identification of colonial and imperial manifestations in a manner that is able to transcend myopic binaries of Western and non-Western and prevents colonial and imperial practices from hiding behind a non-Western façade.

The potential corrective to this misleading binary is what Rivera Cusicanqui (2012) refers to as "the parallel coexistence of multiple cultural differences that do not extinguish but instead antagonize and complement each other" (2012, p. 105). Goodchild (2021, 2022) makes a similar point in relation to the weaving of knowledges and bridging of worldviews, which allows sharing and negotiation between multiple, equally respected ways of knowing and being without inferiorising or superiorising any particular knowledge system. It is in this vein that the post-development discourse is interpreted in the context of this research, not as anti-development or anti-Western (Matthews, 2017; Pieterse, 2009) but rather as an approach to development which denounces universals (Mignolo, 2012, p. xiv) and engages with the pluriverse (Escobar, 2020).

Post-development does not pretend to be a coherent theoretical perspective (Escobar, 2000). It is a way of thinking with decoloniality to reconceptualise development possibilities, or ways (Demaria & Kothari, 2017; Esteva & Babones, 2013; Esteva & Escobar, 2017). The aim of post-development thinking is to "decolonize the developers [sic] minds both from the North and the South" (Alloo et al., 2007, p. 5). Post-development as a decolonial ontology (Asher & Wainwright, 2019) engages in the "battle over cultural understandings of social life, over worldviews, and ultimately, over ways of constructing the social and material worlds we inhabit" (Alloo et al., 2007, p. 10). This approach to development is not antidevelopment, as some interpret post-development, but is an approach to development that moves "beyond the paradigm of liberal modernity" to achieve improvements in people's livelihoods through engagement with a "pluriverse of social, cultural, economic and environmental configurations" (Alloo et al., 2007, p. 12).

The relationships between coloniality, modernity, and development are being continually contested, as are the individual concepts of coloniality and modernity. The discourses on coloniality, modernity and development are also in danger of creating binaries which undermine and invisibilise the variety of experiences and realities, as the development discourse is dominated by the enduring singular narrative of the colonial, the colonised, and the imagery of (Dube & Banerjee-Dube, 2019; Mignolo, 2019). It is this singular dominant narrative of the West and Europe to which Tlsotanova & Mignolo (2009) make reference. There is a need to address the continued reification of Europe and

the West, particularly in discourses of decoloniality and post-development. This underscores the need for unlearning and delinking from the colonial epistemology (Tlostanova & Mignolo, 2012).

This is in keeping with Grosfoguel (2007) and Maldonado-Torres (2007, 2017) who position coloniality as an attitude, a way of being in the world, an onto-epistemology, an approach to life, the resistance to which produces decoloniality, or decolonialities. This thesis therefore adopts Maldonado-Torres' (2007, p. 262) interpretation of decoloniality as an approach that shifts "away from the imperial attitude" and "demands responsibility and willingness to take many perspectives, particularly the perspectives and points of view of those whose existence is questioned and produced as insignificant". As Bhambra (2014, p. 115) suggests, this attitude challenges "the insularity of historical narratives" and unsettles the globally dominant and universalised narratives of being and ways of thinking about the world and relationships.

Decoloniality, or decolonial thinking, as a way of thinking and being with the pluriversality of knowing, challenges epistemological fundamentalism or hegemony (Grosfoguel, 2007; Mignolo & Walsh, 2018). However, in engaging with the concept of decoloniality, it is important to acknowledge the specific realities of colonisation and the intergenerational effects of dispossession, displacement, violence, and injustice experienced by members of Indigenous groups (Manning, 2018; Rivera Cusicanqui, 2012; L. T. Smith, 2012). Decolonisation in these spaces is about real reparation to Indigenous people for the effects of colonial occupation and the reality of being minoritised in their ancestral homeland (Tuck & Yang, 2012).

In approaching post-development as decolonial development, this thesis positions narratives of Creole islandness within the pluriverse, or as "the parallel coexistence of multiple cultural differences" (Rivera Cusicanqui, 2012, p. 105). The exploration I undertake assumes that there are multiple ways of understanding and achieving *the good life* and diverse ways of envisioning modernity, which go beyond colonial modernities, to reveal "different ways of being modern" (Dube & Banerjee-Dube, 2019, p. xiv). That is, different experiences that do not require an understanding through comparison with European modernity, but which need to be understood as having been produced from their own history.

In exploring narratives of Creole islandness I explore the possibility of relating to Creole ways of being and thinking, not as Eurocentric derivatives, but as emergent from a specific experience of the world (Maldonado-Torres, 2017). The exploration of Creole island narratives is an attempt to understand the ways in which the postcolonial historical context produces an islandness that must be discovered, because it is "unknown to our consciousness", having for so long been "seen through the filter of western values" (Bernabé et al., 1990, p. 13). This project therefore focuses on the narratives

Creole island people engage about who they are and their experiences in governance processes to identify their "practices and institutional expressions of development" (McEwan, 2018, p. 402).

4.4 State Actors as Culturally Implicated

Acemoglu et al. (2001) identify the importance of institutions to the process of development and point to differences in colonisation strategies as one of the determining factors for the level and types of political and economic institutions that were inherited by new nations in the postcolonial era. Colonial strategies set the foundation for the types of institutions that evolved in European colonies. Extractive institutions, such as slavery, monopolies, and legal discrimination, emerged to support the transfer of resources from colonies to the European metropole, while inclusive institutions such as universal education and equal protection of property rights were established in colonies where Europeans chose to settle and improve on European political and economic institutions (Acemoglu et al., 2014).

Acemoglu et al., (2020; 2019) define institutions as the formal and informal rules and norms which emerge from the dynamics of power within the society. They reinforce this with the point that, "elites never willingly create inclusive institutions, they are forced to do so by the collective action of society" (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2019, p. 20). Inclusive political institutions therefore reflect the presence of a broad-based distribution of political power able to force elites to operate more justly, while extractive institutions reflect a society unable to contain the oligarchic elitist control of political power (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2019). If power distribution is about cultural norms of relation, then there is a correlation between the type of institutions that emerge within a society and the culture of that society.

Patterson (2019) argues that in addition to Acemoglu et al.'s (2001) inclusive and extractive colonial strategies, there was a third type which he refers to as "settler elite democracies". This colonial strategy, which included the establishment of democratic institutions in the plantation islands, fell somewhere in the middle between inclusive and extractive strategies. Although the institutions of settler elite democracies may have been designed and operated for the benefit of the colonial elite, Patterson (2019) contends that those inheriting these institutions at independence had the responsibility to preserve and redirect their operations for the benefit of all citizens of the new nation. From Patterson's (2019) perspective, the problem was not the absence of democratic institutions, but that the post-independence political and administrative elite did not possess the implicit cultural knowledge required to operate them for the benefit of the populace. The operation

of democratic institutions was not part of their cultural repertoire. This raises the question of what constitutes the cultural repertoire of those operating the institutions of the state, which I explore in chapters six to nine of this thesis.

As indicated in chapter one, actors in the governance and planning processes in Jamaica are understood to make use of available narrative resources to guide their interactions and navigate their participation in those processes. This assumption is based on the decentred interpretivist approach to public administration research popularised by Bevir & Rhodes (2007, 2010, 2016). A decentred approach to the analysis of government and governance, understands the work of the state as cultural practice and the actors as cultural practitioners. This is not declaring the state as determined by culture, but identifying the relationship between history, tradition, beliefs, and agency. Each actor in the policy process brings to their role their traditions, beliefs, and desires (Bevir & Rhodes, 2010). As indicated in section 4.2, traditions and beliefs are considered to be communicated and accessed as narratives. There is space for the negotiation of public narratives. Such negotiation may result in: 1) narrative maintenance, particularly where there exists a high social cost for deviating from the status quo; 2) narrative contestation where costs of maintenance are calculated to be higher than costs of deviation; or 3) the creation of hybrid ontological narratives which integrate available public narratives to best reflect lived experience (Hyvärinen, 2020; McLean et al., 2018). The patterns of state practice emerge from the convergence of the actions of multiple actors in negotiation with the multiplicity of public narratives, and the competition of beliefs, traditions, experiences, and desires as they undertake their day-to-day roles (Bevir & Rhodes, 2016).

To understand the state as cultural practice is to understand the meanings that structure the social systems within the island. The history of the majority of the current population of the island of Jamaica is directly related to the island's experience with European plantation colonialism and postcolonial efforts at nation building. Understanding the Jamaican state as cultural practice requires an understanding of actors as situated within their own sets of beliefs, desires and dilemmas defined by and experienced within an island state created out of coloniality.

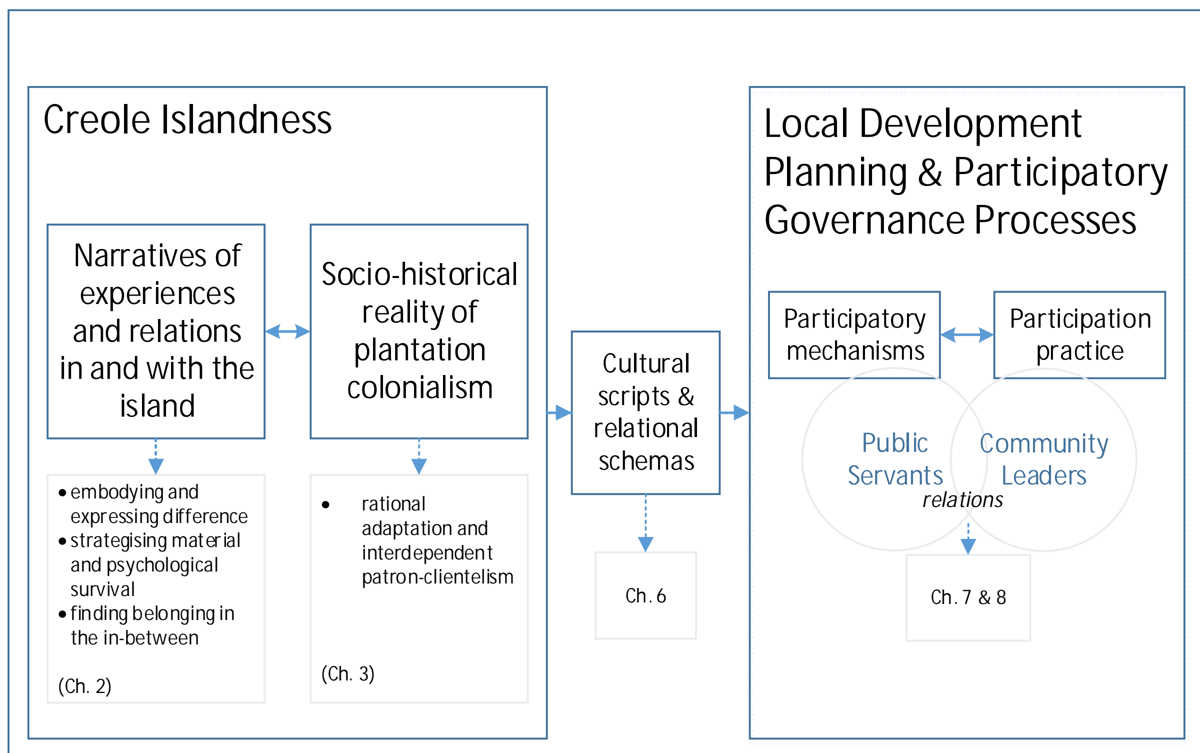
4.5 Conceptual Framework

This research proposes that through an exploration of the narratives of actors and their stories of relation, it is possible to identify the embedded narratives of Creole islandness and examine the ways

in which they mediate the participatory governance and planning processes within a specific postcolonial Creole island space.

Figure 4-2 illustrates how narratives and the experience of coloniality are understood as constitutive of Creole islandness, and able to implicate the governance and planning processes. Therefore, the assumption is made that social realities are grounded in narratives (Koven, 2015; van de Mieroop, 2015) and individuals and groups create understandings of and responses to the world based on their engagement with the narrative resources available to them (McLean & Syed, 2015). Narratives of Creole islandness are therefore understood to inform the cultural repertoire by providing cultural scripts and relational schemas which implicitly and explicitly inform the ways actors identify self and other and negotiate their interactions as they participate in governance processes. The elements of the conceptual framework are covered by a thesis chapter. Creole islandness is covered in chapters two and three with chapter two capturing the narratives of relations in and with the island, and chapter three capturing the political history of the island based in the reality of plantation colonialism. Chapters six and seven capture the relations of public servants and community leaders, respectively, in the participatory governance processes.

Figure 4-2: Conceptual Framework



Public narratives obtain their strength and are maintained through their reinforcement by those with the power and resources to craft and maintain them (Lindemann, 2020), as well as through those who believe their livelihoods and sense of self depend on them (Jost, 2020; Jost et al., 2017). This means, that while multiple contending narratives may exist in the same environment, and the potential exists to influence the reconstruction of any given set of narratives, this requires an engagement with the dynamics of power, and will depend significantly on who benefits from the narrative status quo and has the authority to maintain the structures that reinforce them (Hyvärinen, 2020; Kuntz et al., 2015; Lindemann, 2020; K. C. McLean & Syed, 2015). Therefore, a distinction can be made between power as the capacity to act, and authority as the right to use that power. This distinction will be pertinent to the discussion on public servants and community leaders in planning and governance processes.

4.6 Summary

This chapter established an understanding of reality as interactively created knowledge, defined culture as shared knowledge resources produced from interactions and experiences between people with each other and with their physical environment, and narrative as the intergenerational relational resources of that cultural knowledge base operating at the conceptual, ideological, public, and ontological levels. Narratives of Creole islandness therefore reflected the intergenerational relational knowledge base of the Creole island mnemonic communities. Based on these definitions, the chapter outlined the conceptual framework that guides an understanding of the ways in which culture becomes embedded in the governance processes through intergenerational narratives which transform into cultural resources.

Through an understanding of the state as cultural practice, the basis for examining the participatory governance and planning processes was presented. The state was understood as structured by power-embedded narratives, with actors negotiating interactions using the available cultural resources provided by narratives of Creole islandness. While operating within the same relational setting and from similar mnemonic communities, the relational nature of human experience also means that each actor will have access to distinct cultural resources based on their individual experiences and interactions and will have different desires that motivate and inform the ways they negotiate those interactions. The aim of the thesis is therefore to understand the *ways* in which narratives of Creole islandness implicate those interactions.

CHAPTER FIVE

METHODOLOGY

5.1 INTRODUCTION

In this chapter, I outline the approach to the research design and provide details on the data collection and analysis. This chapter introduction establishes the philosophical basis of the research and the methodology. In section 5.2 I provide information on the selection of the case study and in sections 5.3 to 5.6 I outline the methods of data collection and analysis. The positionality of the researcher, ethical considerations, and study limitations are then addressed in section 5.7.

The researcher is expected to identify the most appropriate methods for engaging the subject of study based on the lens through which the research questions are understood (J. Mills, 2014). The primary lens that I take is constructivist, which emphasises an understanding of reality as based in the relationship between actors and their environment (C. Hay, 2015). As development studies do not fall within "a discrete academic discipline" (Kothari, 2019, p. 4), I try to follow Mignolo's (2009, pp. 174–176) advice on performing "epistemic disobedience" as a way to delink from the colonial matrix of power and the related epistemology of coloniality. Doing so requires questioning the prevailing systems of knowledge-making and engaging with decolonial possibilities. This has been interpreted to mean embracing an undisciplined, epistemologically plural approach with different "epistemological postures … [and] ways of thinking" about the research topic (Darbellay, 2015, pp. 171–172). An undisciplined approach does not mean without methodology (Freiband et al., 2022), but an approach that is guided by curiosity rather than "disciplinary demarcations" and that travels "across bodies of knowledge" to apply knowledge "between ways of knowing" (Ings, 2019, p. 48;63). This is not unlike what Denzin & Lincoln (2018, p. 45) describe as methodological bricolage, where the researcher as bricoleur moves "between and within competing and overlapping perspectives and paradigms", eschewing any singular research perspective, on the basis that each is naturally laden with "assumptions, blindnesses, and limitations" (Kincheloe, 2001, p. 682).

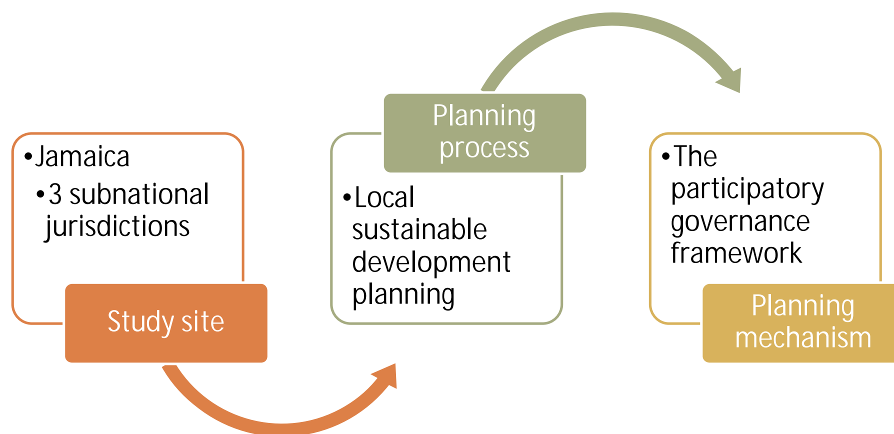
All elements of this research, including the researcher, are situated, and entangled in systems and structures of coloniality. The Creole island place and the citizens of the island, in their roles as state and nonstate governance actors, are products of experiences that began with European imperialism, plantation colonialism and culminated in the emergence of the existing culture and society. Therefore, rather than a discipline determining the methodological approach, the subject of interest, the question and the location suggested the suitability of a qualitative study. As referenced

in chapter one, the topic of study was selected based on my own area of professional curiosity, and in section 5.7, I further elaborate on this under researcher positionality.

5.2 The Case Study

Simons (1996) notes that the strength of case studies in celebrating "the particular and the unique" is often cited as its weakness (1996, p. 227). This is due to the expectation that research findings should be applicable to a wider population than the specific sample included in the study (O'Leary, 2014, p. 60). However, as pointed out by Schwandt and Gates (2018, p. 304), case studies are useful, despite their potential lack of generalisability, as they allow for in-depth examinations and can support the creation of "new concepts, variables, and causal mechanisms" to explain any deviations from a proposed theory. However, as they further indicate, this makes the choice of case extremely important (Schwandt & Gates, 2018). In keeping with the focus of the research question, the case study design has three elements.

Figure 5-1: The Case Study Elements



The Study Site

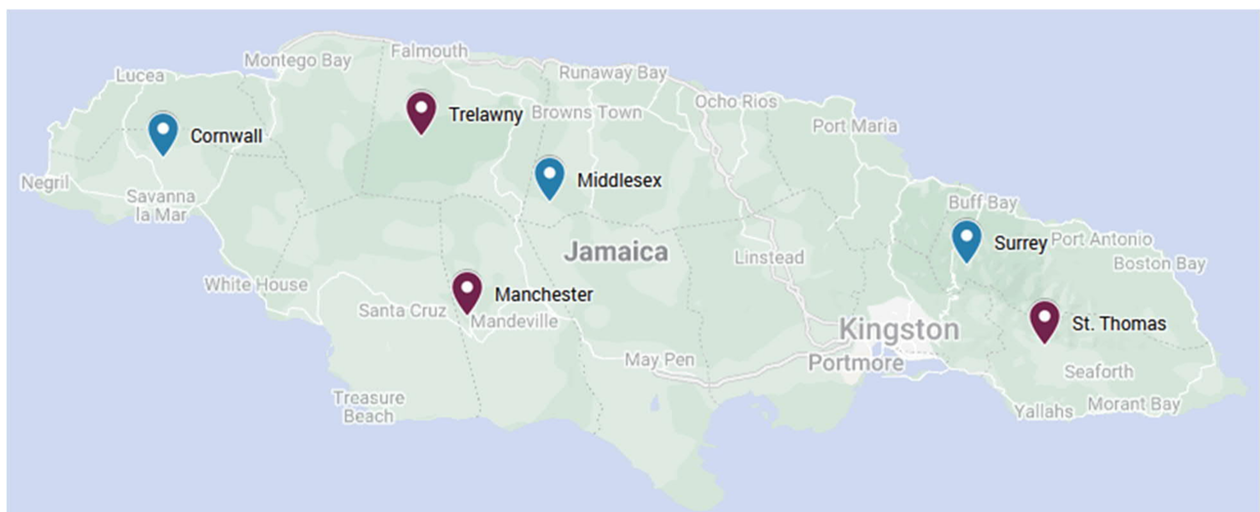
That Jamaica is an island, there is no contention. That it is a small island could be argued. With a population of 2.7 million (Statistical Institute of Jamaica, 2022) Jamaica receives the label of a small island depending on the context of the study. In most literature on small island developing states that use the label geo-politically, focussing on economic and ecological vulnerability, Jamaica is included (Everest-Phillips, 2014; Kelman, 2018). When the analysis focuses on social scientific typology, Jamaica tends to fall out of the small island state category, which in those contexts tends to use 1 or 1.5 million as the population cut-off point (Corbett & Veenendaal, 2016; Rodrigues Sanches et al., 2022). However, when the lens shifts from small islands to small states, Jamaica gets back on the list, as the

population bar shifts to 5 million (Corbett & Veenendaal, 2019). Therefore, from an island studies perspective, while Jamaica may not conventionally be considered a small island state, it is a small state that is an island (Corbett & Veenendaal, 2019).

For the case study, I selected Jamaica, not only because as a Jamaican it allowed me to operate as a cultural insider, but also because the island is considered a particularly representative example of the Creole island type (Alleyne, 2002; Brathwaite, 1971; Burnard, 1994; R. Cohen & Sheringham, 2013). It is, however, acknowledged that Jamaica, as a Creole island, does not represent all forms of Creole islandness and is only one of many examples. As such, the case study approach cannot generalise findings to all Creole islands and has only examined and presented Jamaica as a specific case. The case study is designed to allow for an examination of emerging themes in different jurisdictions and levels of government within the island, with the subsequent analysis of findings providing the potential to "reveal generalizable patterns of variation" within the study site (Benzer et al., 2013, p. 10).

Although Jamaica is identified as the case island, the research is not conducted on the entire island. Instead, the case study is designed around three subnational jurisdictions. The primary subnational jurisdictions within the island are called parishes and are organised under three counties, as indicated in Figure 5-2. For this enquiry, a parish was selected from each county, the selection being based on whether the parish had completed, or was in the process of completing, its local sustainable development plan. The selected parishes reflect those with the first (Manchester) and the most recently completed (St. Thomas) plans. To protect participant anonymity, the three selected parishes are not identified in the findings.

Figure 5-2: Map of Jamaica



Map created by author using Google MyMaps (2022)

Parishes in Jamaica are administered through local authorities, designated as Municipal Corporations under the Local Governance Act, 2016. Jamaica's system of parishes, as a mechanism for local government, is one of the island's oldest remnants of colonial administration. The first parishes were established in 1664, based on the British system of church supervision of local affairs through vestries. Vestries took care of matters such as education, health, market operations, local police, and maintenance of roads within the parish (Brathwaite, 1971; Jemmot, 2019). By 1887 the vestry system was abolished, removing the responsibilities for the maintenance of churches while expanding the responsibilities of local government to include public health, sanitation, fire protection and the provision of public water (Miller, 2017, p. 522).

The Planning Process – Local Sustainable Development Planning

Under section 21 of the Local Governance Act 2016 (hereinafter referred to as the Act) local authorities are responsible for "promoting, spearheading and coordinating local sustainable development" and section 22 requires the authorities to "promote, establish and utilize appropriate mechanisms to facilitate participation" (Local Governance Act, 2016). The local sustainable development planning process and the participatory governance framework are enshrined in the Act, which is, among other things, designed to "facilitate the participation and empowerment of civil society and communities in local governance processes" (Local Governance Act, 2016, secs. 3, subsection f). Under the Act, each subnational jurisdiction is responsible for: "the preparation, adoption, and implementation of local sustainable development plans for the entire area within its jurisdiction or such selected districts or communities therein as it considers desirable" (Local Governance Act, 2016, secs. 21 (1), subsection (e) (i)).

The practice of local sustainable development planning preceded the Act, having been introduced in Jamaica in 2000 with the development of the Local Sustainable Development Planning (LSDP) Framework (Environmental Action Programme, 2001). Under the LSDP framework, the Social Development Commission (responsible for overseeing the participatory governance framework) and the Municipal Corporation work with the communities and the various stakeholder bodies to develop plans for the different governance levels within a parish (Environmental Action Programme, 2001). The development of the first local sustainable development plans began in 2001, with the first parish publishing their plan in 2008 (Manchester Parish Council & Manchester Parish Development Committee, 2008).

The process for developing the Vision 2030-The National Development Plan, published in 2009, involved Parish and Community Development Committees, and established the role of participatory governance and local sustainable development planning in the achievement of national sustainable development (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2009). At the time of writing, only four of an expected fourteen local sustainable development plans have been finalised (Clarendon Local Sustainable Development Plan Secretariat, 2017; Manchester Parish Council & Manchester Parish Development Committee, 2008; St. Elizabeth Municipal Corporation & St. Elizabeth Parish Development Committee, 2015; Trelawny Municipal Council, 2018). The three parishes selected for inclusion in the case study have developed local sustainable development plans, though only two had been finalised and published at the time of writing.

Local development planning, in the physical planning discipline is traditionally concerned with land use development and the related public administration concerned with regulating access to land and the expansion of infrastructure through the issuing of permits and licences (J. Pugh, 2005). The integration of sustainable development planning into the development planning portfolio has modified that focus and has translated development planning into the spatialising of sustainable human development (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2009; J. Pugh, 2005). This is the context in which the term local development planning is used throughout this thesis.

The Planning Mechanism – The Participatory Governance Framework

The Local Governance Act, 2016 identifies Parish Development Committees and related groups as "appropriate mechanisms" to engage "relevant stakeholders" and provides the Minister with the authority to make regulations to govern the establishment, constitution, and functions of those groups. These groups are collectively referred to as the participatory governance framework and are guided and regulated by the Social Development Commission (SDC), an agency of the Ministry of Local Government (Social Development Commission, 2015). As illustrated in Figure 5-3, the participatory governance framework is a system of nested entities. The system is designed to facilitate community representation in local development planning and decision-making by providing spaces for the participation of community members in committees relevant to their community, area, and parish, and allows plans to be developed and managed at each level (Social Development Commission, 2015). The base of the participatory governance framework is the community, which may be comprised of several districts or residential areas, after which there are four levels or components to the participatory governance framework:

1. Community based organisations (CBOs) such as neighbourhood watches, youth groups or environmental resource management groups which emerge from the free association of community members or are facilitated by state agencies.
2. the Community Development Committee (CDC) is the community level governance group formed by the executive members of CBOs across a community.
3. the Development Area Committee (DAC) brings together the executive members of CDCs within a prescribed development area to share plans, issues, and concerns.
4. the Parish Development Committee (PDC) brings together all DACs within a parish to plan, share issues and concerns. The PDC chair is elected by the DAC members to represent the citizens at the monthly meeting of the Municipal Corporation, which is chaired by the mayor and attended by elected councillors and government representatives. (Social Development Commission, 2015)

In this thesis, I refer to these entities, the PDC, DAC, and CDC, individually as *community governance bodies* and when referring to the integrated system I use the term *participatory governance framework*. Through its mandate for the development and implementation of local sustainable development plans (Local Governance Act, 2016, secs. 21, subsections b, e, i & h) the state has placed the participatory governance framework at the centre of its strategy to achieve the sustainable development goals (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2009; Planning Institute of Jamaica et al., 2017).

Figure 5-3: The Participatory Governance Framework

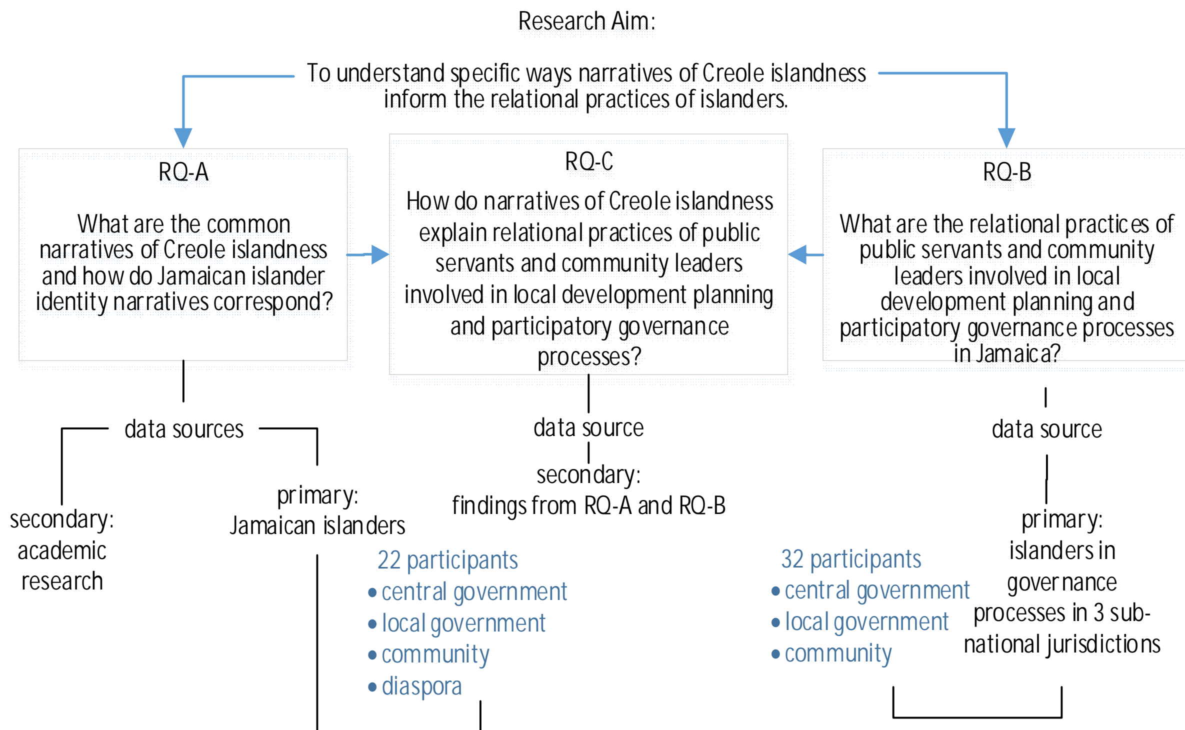
Source: Based on Social Development Commission (2015)

To align the research question and design with a practical context, I selected a policy issue to include in conversations to understand how national development planning was integrated into the local development planning processes. I chose community-based tourism, as tourism constitutes a significant part of the lived reality of islanders and is entangled with the postcolonial geo-cultural identity of the island (Wijesinghe, 2020). As with many postcolonial island states, tourism is a leading industry in Jamaica, contributing to GDP, employment, and foreign exchange earnings (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2009, p. xxxii). Tourism is also identified in the island's SDG roadmap, along with agriculture and manufacturing, as a sector that contributes significantly to the achievement of the island's commitments to the Global Goals (Planning Institute of Jamaica et al., 2017).

5.3 Data Collection

This research explores cultural narratives and how they are reflected in experiences and relations among actors in local development planning processes. To explore these narratives of Creole islandness, the research had two parts. The first focused on understanding the narratives of Creole islandness and the second captured the relational practices of the actors involved in the design and implementation of the processes. As indicated in Figure 5-4 ,the two parts, represented by RQ-A and RQ-B, are brought together to respond to the final question, RQ-C. For each question, a related data source was identified. Academic literature general to the Creole phenomenon was used, in part, to respond to RQ-A, to establish a baseline for Creole island identity. Conversations with Jamaican islanders were then used to explore the same question, but with a focus on shared narratives of self and others among Jamaican islanders. Data for RQ-B were sourced from state and nonstate actors with defined roles in the local development planning processes, the selected national policy issue and subnational jurisdictions selected for the study. RQ-C is analytical and is based on the findings of RQ-A and RQ-B. A purposeful sampling strategy was used to identify relevant journal articles in collecting the secondary data for RQ-A, and guided conversations were used to collect the primary data for RQ-A and RQ-B.

Figure 5-4: Research Aim, Questions & Data Source



A content, or thematic analysis is a commonly used approach to extract trends or make inferences from qualitative data (O'Leary, 2014; Renz et al., 2018). Therefore, using Hsieh and Shannon's (2005) framework, conventional content analysis was used for both the secondary and primary data collected, with an Iterative, abductive approach taken to the coding of the data (Earl Rinehart, 2021; Saldaña, 2013).

Secondary Data – Systematic Review of Journal Articles

The first step in the research process was the review of the literature, presented in chapter two. While a standard review of the academic literature is a necessity for any dissertation (O'Leary, 2014), a systematic review (Heyvaert et al., 2017) was conducted to explore the concept of Creole islandness to synthesise the literature into an overarching narrative (Wong et al., 2013) and identify the core themes of Creole islandness. As the purpose of the synthesis was to identify themes across a wide literature, the application of the concept in different island environments and from various disciplines of social science was the target of the selection criteria.

Identifying the Articles

Two different sets of journal articles were targeted. First, the Scopus database was used to identify articles from multiple journals. Scopus, though it has its biases and limitations, is still one of the largest databases for multidisciplinary academic literature (Chadegani et al., 2013; Mongeon & Paul-Hus, 2016). The second set of articles focused on the content of specific journals. The Ebsco database was used, as it provided easy access to the databases of the identified journals.

The first set of articles represented Creole identity and the second set represented Creole islands. The first set of journal articles was created on 6 May 2020, from a search in the Scopus database using the search statement: *creol* OR creoli?ation OR "Creole culture" AND identity*, with filters for final publication, English language, and Social Science. Following the application of exclusion criteria, 38 articles were identified in 29 different journal publications. Although the publication date was not included as a search parameter, most articles were published after 2013, 55% between 2013 and 2019, and 21% before 2010, possibly indicative of the increasing use of Creole as a socio-analytic category in the last 20 years.

The second set of journal articles was selected on 2 July 2020 from the databases of Shima: The International Journal of Research into Island Cultures and the Island Studies Journal. These two databases were searched separately, using the Ebsco Discovery Service as a search interface. Both journals were searched using the search term "*creol**". 17 articles were identified between the two journal databases, following the application of exclusion criteria. Ten of the articles (59%) were published between 2013 and 2020, and 2010 was the oldest publication year.

The purpose of the systematic review was to gain insight into the defining characteristics of the lived experience of the Creole island identity. Therefore, the objective was to find peer-reviewed research that had, as a primary focus, the lived experiences of people from Creole island cultures. This target determined the exclusion criteria, and therefore articles were excluded if:

1. the primary subject matter was not the Creole island experience
2. the article was a conference paper, book review or literary critique
3. full-text references were not available

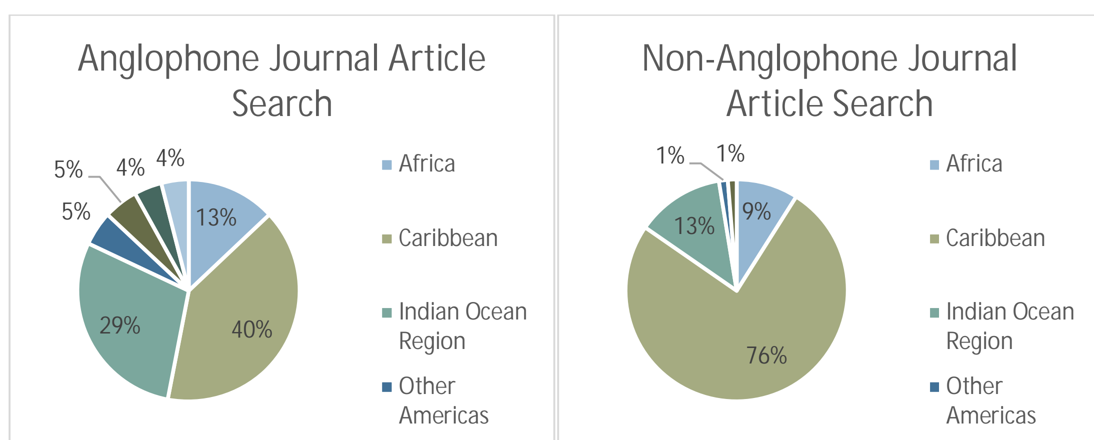
55 articles remained after the application of the exclusion criteria. These articles represented Creole experiences in various locations around the world (Figure 5-5). Most of the articles focused on the Caribbean (40%), followed by the Indian Ocean region (29%). The other significant location representation was Cape Verde, the subject of seven articles. Locations appearing in only one article are categorised under Other. These included the Canary Islands, the British Isles, and the Mediterranean. The distribution of articles probably represents the distribution of the Creole island experience across the world, with most Creole islands located in the Caribbean. It should be noted

that within the Caribbean, most related articles (67%) focused on English-speaking islands. This reflects the limitation of the researcher to studies produced in the English language.

A second search process was conducted to take non-anglophone literature into account. In keeping with the spirit of the initial search, the search was undertaken in both the Scopus and Ebsco databases for the terms *creol** OR *crio** OR *krio** OR creool * *kreool* AND *identit** with search filters for final publication, Spanish, French, Portuguese and Dutch language, scholarly peer-reviewed journal articles in the Social Science field. This search produced 283 items from Ebsco and 47 items from Scopus. Duplicates, book reviews, nonhuman Creole topics, non-island locations, and an analytical focus not directed to the question of Creole identity within a specific island setting (for example, the study of second language acquisition where the focus is on instructional techniques as opposed to sociolinguistic analysis or a discussion on the creolisation of French society by postcolonial identities) were eliminated. 76 articles which remained after exclusion criteria were applied. 50% of the articles were in the French language, 22% Portuguese, and 18% Spanish. One article was written in Dutch and another in Italian. Although the search targeted non-English language articles, five such articles were captured in the search.

Figure 5-5 provides a breakdown of the regions captured by both searches. The comparison indicates that while there may be some bias presented by the limitation of the researcher to studies produced in the English language, this should not undermine the findings, as the regions covered by the anglophone articles provide an even wider range than those covered by the non-anglophone articles.

Figure 5-5: Subject Location of Journal Articles in Anglophone and Non-Anglophone Searches



(Note: n=55 for the anglophone search and n=76 for the non-anglophone search)

Analysing the Articles

The purpose of the systematic review of the journal articles was to explore the ways in which the Creole island experience had been captured or represented in the academic literature, and the extent to which these experiences could be considered as characteristic in the forming of Creole island identities. The review included historiographic, ethnographic as well as mixed methods research. Each of the selected journal articles were reviewed and coded using an inductive iterative approach (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Saldaña, 2013), with coding units identified as multiple sentences or whole paragraphs (Finfgeld-Connett, 2014). Once all codes were identified in all articles, the codes were organised into themes and categories. This was done over several rounds until eight dominant themes emerged and were organised under three thematic categories as indicated in Table 5-1. The first two columns in the table reflect the number and related percentage of the 55 articles in which the theme was identified and the second pair of columns reflect the number and related percentage in which the theme was the subject of the article. Chapter two provides details of the findings.

Table 5-1: Primary Themes in Journal Articles

Theme	Articles in which theme was found		Articles in which theme was central	
	#	%	#	%
Embodying and expressing difference	N=31	56	T=19	35
cultural expressivity	20	36	10	18
evaluated difference	16	29	7	13
ambivalent africanity	15	27	2	4
Strategising material and psychological survival	N=21	36	T=12	22
strategic adaptation	18	33	8	15
creative resistance	13	24	4	7
Finding belonging in the in-between	N=21	36	T=11	20
historicity	14	25	4	7
archipelagraphy	11	20	3	5
insularity	7	13	4	7
	N=55			

Primary Data – Conversations with Islanders

RQ-A and RQ-B required the collection of primary data on identity and experiences in the participatory processes. The selection of the three subnational jurisdictions and the planning and policy processes provided the basis for identifying state and nonstate actors who could be asked to share their experiences, practices, and perspectives.

Identifying the Participants

As the focus of the research is on public servants and community leaders, the case study criteria were used to identify potential participants at the local and central government levels, and among the community leadership in the three parishes. As illustrated in Figure 5-6, local development planning processes are designed and managed in multiple domains, with actors responsible for developing policy and regulatory instruments and other actors involved in the daily management and implementation of the processes to produce community and local development outcomes. Though process domains do overlap through monitoring, support, and regulation, actors can be identified as having a responsibility for designing and regulating the process, separate from those who have a responsibility for using the processes for local development. Process design and regulation are led primarily by officers in central government, under the direction of the governing political administration, the latter referenced as the political directorate. However, on a daily basis the processes are used by actors at the local level. The local level includes local government public servants employed to Municipal Corporations, Councillors (political directorate), as well as central government public servants assigned to local jurisdictions to inform and implement national level policies. As the focus of this thesis is on the relational practices of public servants and community leaders, members of the political directorate were not invited to participate. However, as they are important to the processes and are involved in the experience and practice of public servants and community leaders undertaking their roles in those processes, they are referenced in the findings.

Figure 5-6: Domains in the Local Development Planning Process

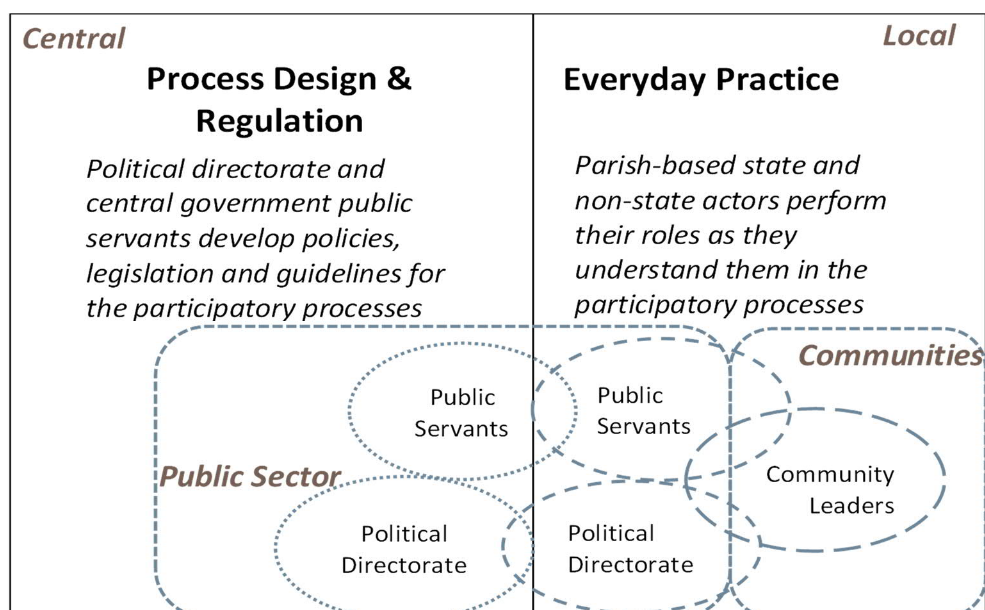
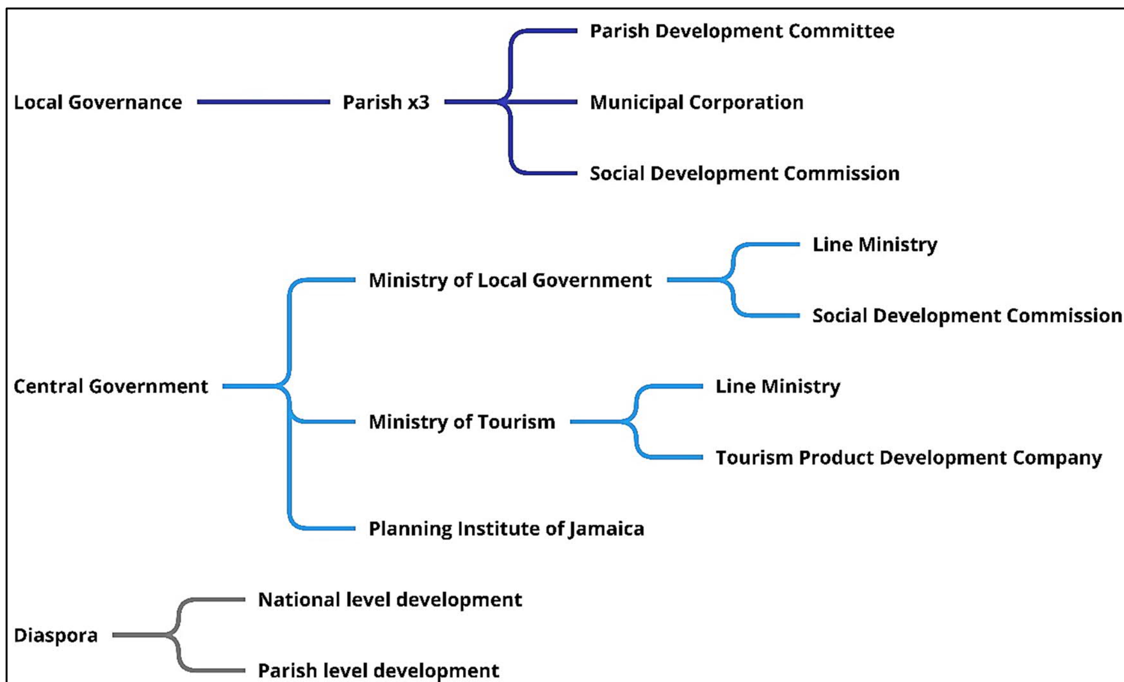


Figure 5-7 identifies the entities from which the participants were recruited. I started the recruitment process with the Social Development Commission (SDC), which is the Jamaican agency

responsible for maintaining the local governance process. The SDC operates a decentralised organisation with a head office in the capital of the island, with offices in each parish headed by a parish manager. Having previously collaborated with officers of the SDC, I was able to informally request their assistance in contacting their colleagues in the three selected parishes. Through them, I was also able to obtain contact information for the chairs of the parish development committees. Municipal Corporations are administratively led by a Chief Executive Officer (CEO). I contacted the CEO of each municipal corporation and requested their help in identifying members of their team to participate in the study. The administrative heads of the central government entities were also contacted, and a similar request was made. A sample of the correspondence sent to heads of entities is included in Appendix B. Additionally, since I was also interested in understanding the extent to which members of the diaspora were aware of or involved in the local development planning processes, an attempt was made to recruit members. To do this, I asked public servants and community leaders who agreed to participate about members of the diaspora with whom they had worked. This approach led to the identification of a single diaspora member who was involved in development planning projects at the parish level. I then went online to find diaspora organisations and sent out emails where contact information was available. I received a positive response from a network organisation that indicated that it did extensive work on the island, including working with central government agencies. Two members of the network agreed to participate.

Figure 5-7: Institutions Included in the Case Study



As requests were sent out during the first year of the pandemic, there was some difficulty in obtaining responses from some heads of entities. Fortunately, in those cases, directly identifying the relevant persons was not difficult and the majority were amenable to participation.

The focus of the case study was to understand the ways in which persons interacted with each other and practiced their roles in the local development planning processes, as opposed to analysing the processes themselves. The parishes, processes and policy issue identified were used to create context, that is, to locate persons and define the network of actors. Once identified, the focus was on how they understood their roles and related to each other in fulfilling the expectations of the processes. The next section outlines how data was collected and analysed.

Table A-1 in Appendix A provides the full list of participants. In keeping with the case design, participants were identified through role-based purposive sampling (O'Leary, 2014) — individuals involved in local development planning processes in the three subnational jurisdictions selected for the study. Based on role and location, participants were categorised as either state (S) or nonstate (NS). As indicated by Table 5-2, a total of thirty-three conversations were held with 35 individuals, the difference between the two numbers occurred because two conversations were conducted with more than one individual.

Table 5-2: Number of Conversations and Participants

Category	Organisations	# Participants
Nonstate (8)	National-level diaspora network	2
	Parish based diaspora organisation	1
	Parish Development Committee	3
	• Development Area Committee	1
	• Community Based Organisation	1
State (27)	Social Development Commission-Parish Office	3
	Municipal Corporation	8
	Planning Institute of Jamaica	1
	Tourism Product Development Company	3
	Ministry of Tourism	1
	Current Ministry of Local Government	4
	Former Ministry of Local Government	4
	Social Development Commission-Head Office	3
	Total	35

The majority of the research participants were public servants. The relatively high number of public servants in part reflects the inclusion of a number of current and former staff of the SDC and the Ministry of Local Government, who provided information on the design and operation of the local government, participatory governance and development planning mechanisms.

Conducting the Conversations

Exploring the research questions required an approach that could elicit information on subjective notions of identity, as well as general and personal experiences of the governance processes selected for the study. Traditional research approaches can be extractive (Stewart-Withers et al., 2014), and for many persons, the word interview has a negative, and often anxiety-inducing connotation, often associated with situations in which there is an unequal power relationship between the Interviewer and the Interviewed (P. A. Adler & Adler, 2011; Wengraf, 2001). Therefore, as opposed to treating participants as subjects from whom I was to collect data, it was important for me to rethink my relationship with those sharing their time and experiences with me and approach the research in a way that acknowledged both researcher and participants as partners in the process of uncovering knowledge. This is an approach to research that Rogers et al (2021, p. 50) refer to as "humanizing".

Primary data collection was originally planned around site-based immersion that would allow the researcher to get to know the participants in their respective spaces. The researcher would travel from New Zealand to Jamaica and spend time in each local jurisdiction getting to know the individuals who had agreed to participate and have meaningful conversations about identity, political participation and development planning and implementation. In the context of the Creole island, there are no established Indigenous practices, no authentic *ancient traditions* available. However, in the same way that *talanoa* exists as an indigenous method for Pacific peoples to explore knowledge while participating in mutual learning and connecting spiritually (2013, p. 193), Caribbean peoples have ways of being that can provide entry into "local ways of knowing, building networks and collaborating for social change" (S. Wilson et al., 2019, p. 10). Liming and reasoning as "culturally relevant" (S. Wilson et al., 2019, p. 11) ways of interacting in an atmosphere of sharing and the suspension of judgement (Santana et al., 2019) were initially targeted as options for decolonial knowledge-making. RQ-A and RQ-B are distinct questions, and initially two different approaches had been planned to explore each. RQ-A, which focused on shared identity narratives, could be explored in group discussion formats, and therefore liming had been targeted as the best approach. RQ-B addressed individual experiences and practices in the local development planning processes, and therefore, one-on-one reasoning sessions were planned with participants invited in accordance with the case design.

Liming, ole talk, and similar practices with different names reflecting the oral tradition of Caribbean islands (S. Wilson et al., 2019) allow people to come together, share food and drink, and have discussions that are simultaneously meaningful and light-hearted (Nakhid-Chatoor et al., 2018). Whether scheduled or spontaneous they are defined by their atmosphere of lively storytelling, questioning, and collective imagining (Nakhid-Chatoor et al., 2018). The liming space is one in which

people feel able to speak freely, to imagine, contest, and reflect in their own language without fear of judgement or the need to explain themselves (Nakhid-Chatoor et al., 2018). This also meant that such spaces were often constructed by attendees and tended to occur among networks of friends and family. A lime is therefore unlike a focus group session where the composition is determined by the researcher (Macnaghten & Myers, 2011). To use a liming event as a research method would require the researcher to negotiate an invitation from someone organising an appropriate network, or to use my own network to host one. This also means that limes have the potential to not be representative of the population. However, this limitation could be addressed by targeting different networks and including the issue of group characteristics in the data analysis.

Similar to liming but reserved for exchanges involving social justice and philosophical thinking (Rodney, 1969), *reasoning* is a discursive method integrated into popular Jamaican culture from Rastafarian ways of living and being, otherwise referred to as Rastafarian *livity* (Evans-Hall, 2006). A reasoning session can emerge from a small liming session, persons can separate from a larger lime, or a reasoning session can occur independently once there are two or more persons open to exploring and deconstructing social phenomena. Reasoning sessions provide a method for exploring "issues of a deeply personal, religious, historical and/or doctrinal nature" (Savishinsky, 1994, p. 46) involving complex, ambiguous conversations about social reality where those involved speak freely towards the aim of mutual consciousness raising (Bonacci, 2013; Kebede et al., 2000).

However, months before fieldwork was scheduled to begin, border closures and lockdowns were implemented internationally, and a new way of conducting research had to be found. Although several options for qualitative research were available during the pandemic, such as asynchronous communication through email or digital diarising (Lupton, 2020), these forms require significant commitments from participants. Though email is the least demanding of the two, if participants are not committed to the researcher's timeframe, or are not naturally communicative, the quality and frequency of feedback may not align with the research needs (O'Connor & Madge, 2017). While the challenges created by the Covid-19 pandemic were also opportunities to consider new and creative research methods (Lupton, 2020), such pivoting proved easier to imagine than to execute. Ultimately, it was determined that the most appropriate approach would be to ask all participants to set aside an hour of their time for an online interview and address both RQ-A and RQ-B in the same session.

Not being able to create the in-person interactional dynamics that produce liming (Nakhid-Chatoor et al., 2018; Santana et al., 2019) and reasoning exchanges (Evans-Hall, 2006), the aim was to approach the online interview using a humanising method (Rogers et al., 2021). However, being in a virtual environment, mediated by a computer screen or digital device, can potentially reduce the

humanising characteristics of the exchange. To address this, the proposed online interviews were re-imagined and approached as conversations (Rogers et al., 2021; Stage & Mattson, 2003).

The online conversation approach was useful for a couple of reasons. The first is that the online space is somewhat informal, and in many cases I was able to speak to individuals outside of their work environment, which added to the informality. This allowed a natural shift from the interview to the reasoning approach that was intended in the original research design. Second, the open-ended nature of the conversation approach encourages storytelling (Kovach, 2020) and creates a reciprocal relationship between the researcher and the participant that encourages more authentic representation (Mattson & Stage, 2003; Stage & Mattson, 2003).

There is a need to strike the balance between the formal interview exchange and the free-flowing conversation to ensure that the exchange does not become researcher-dominated or veer into areas outside the scope of the research (Wengraf, 2001). Mattson & Stage (2003) also provide advice for managing the research conversation, pointing to the need to establish rapport with the participant, acknowledge their personhood beyond the frame of the research, and manage reciprocal turn-taking.

This less formal interview approach is also considered by Rogers et al. (2021, p. 50) to be particularly useful for examining culture, as it represents a space where the "researcher and participant are *in conversation* and *in relationship* [emphasis in original] with each other". The interview as conversation balances power in the relationship by transforming the researcher into a mutual participant who "guides but does not dictate" (Rogers et al., 2021, p. 50), and allows the research participant to direct the interaction based on their own understanding of the questions and where it takes them. Like a reasoning session, the research conversation allows both the researcher and the research participant to mutually produce a shared understanding of the subject being discussed (Rogers et al., 2021).

This co-constructed and contextual approach to research is usually criticised for producing unreliable data, as participants are likely to perform what they believe the researcher wants to see and hear (Rapley, 2004; Wengraf, 2001). However, for the purposes of understanding identity and experience in the context of culture, those criticisms are precisely the elements that make the research conversation most appropriate (A. J. Pugh, 2013; Rogers et al., 2021). What an individual understands to be an *appropriate* performance gives insight into their perception of what they believe is valued (A. J. Pugh, 2013). Conversation reveals meaning-making systems and worldviews as the researcher and the participant exchange metaphors and small stories (Georgakopoulou, 2007) to produce shared understanding.

Analysing the Conversations

35 individuals participated in the conversations. 22 participated in the first conversation related to RQ-A, and 32 participated in conversations responding to RQ-B. All 35 were not included in the collection of data for RQ-A based on a need to manage the time allotted to conversations and the amount of time that was required for participants to provide in-depth information on the design and management of the process. The three diaspora participants had no experience with the participatory governance framework nor the local sustainable development planning processes and were therefore not included in the detailed findings for RQ-B. Appendix B provides a copy of the correspondence, Appendix C provides a copy of the information sheet, and Appendix D provides a copy of conversation guide. These were used to invite individuals to participate.

The invitation to participate included advice on the recording of conversations, and participant consent to the recording of data was confirmed before each conversation commenced. Importantly, participants were reassured of the confidentiality of the recordings and their anonymity in the presentation of the findings. For this reason, codes are used instead of names, and the names of parishes are omitted in the presentation of findings.

As conversations were conducted online, the recording of conversations was done on the virtual platform which facilitated automatic transcription. However, automatic transcription was limited in its usefulness due to the use of dialect and specialised vocabulary (Hepburn & Bolden, 2017). The conversations were therefore transcribed verbatim by the researcher and then edited for readability. In editing the transcript section headings were used to label the different topics discussed and, where various parts of the conversation related to the same topic, these were combined, while maintaining timestamp and conversation segment structure, i.e., questions and responses together. The edited transcripts were returned to the participants, with sections considered for inclusion in the research highlighted. I requested that they review the transcripts with special attention to the highlighted sections and invited them to make any changes they deemed appropriate. None of the participants requested changes to the transcript of their conversation.

A benefit of manually transcribing the conversations was becoming familiar with the material (Wengraf, 2001). During the transcription process, insights emerged, areas for additional clarification were noted, and connections were identified. The preparation of the transcript also allowed each transcript to be divided by focus of conversation. The transcripts were uploaded to Nvivo, and a systematic and iterative coding approach was applied (Saldaña, 2013). As the transcripts responded to more than one question and were already organised into subtopics, once uploaded to Nvivo, the data were immediately organised by participant category and conversation topic. The transcripts were then coded over several rounds until themes and categories were identified in all the transcripts based

on the interpretation of similarities in the data and their resonance with the existing academic literature (Earl Rinehart, 2021; Saldaña, 2013).

Coding the Data for RQ-A

Chapter six presents the findings responding to RQ-A. To generate the findings, the conversations with 22 participants were coded against three coding schema which were developed based on the data emerging from the conversations. The coding schema covered identity themes, development definitions and development actors. I used the first round of coding to familiarise myself with the content and make notes across the conversations. Definitions of codes were adapted from Adler et al. (2017) which focuses on narrative identity development within the context of cultural master narratives, and Shanahan et al. (2018) who provide an approach to narrative policy analysis. A second round of coding was then done to identify narrative elements. Finally, using the unit of analysis as the entirety of the participant response on the related to the topic, a third round of coding was done to categorise and align codes across similar content. This approach generated three themes as listed in Table 5-3. The themes were then scored based on their presence in responses provided by participants, with 0 being scored for absence, 1 scored where the theme was reflected in only a single statement, and 2 scored where the theme was reflected in multiple statements. The total presence indicates the total number of participants against which the theme was coded. The themes were then scored based on their presence in responses provided by participants, with 0 being scored for absence, 1 scored where the theme was reflected in only a single statement, and 2 scored where the theme was reflected in multiple statements. The total presence indicates the total number of participants against which the theme was coded. Example statements are elaborated in chapter six.

Table 5-3 Coding of Identity Themes

Theme	Description	2	1	0	Total Presence
Achievement	References to resilience, hard work, ambition, doing well, etc., and the positive acknowledgement of others	13	4	5	17 (77%)
Connection	References to family, spirituality, positive relations with people, community, relational values	13	3	6	16 (73%)
Gratitude	References to appreciation, or having received something of value, particularly in comparison to others	13	1	8	14 (64%)
		N=22			

As the issue of island development was also discussed as part of the conversation on Jamaican identity, another coding schema was developed based on the three definitions of development emerging from the data, as indicated in Table 5-4. To identify the frequency with which the definitions

were present, the codes were again scored, with 0, for absence, and 1 for presence. When there was more than one definition, the score of 1 was equally divided among the codes. No participant was coded with more than two different definitions of development. The total presence indicated in Table 5-4 reflects the total number of participants against which the definition was coded. Descriptions with example statements are elaborated in chapter six.

Table 5-4: Coding of Development Definitions

Development Definition	Description	1	.5	0	Total Presence
Inclusivity	References to development as integrated, equitable, inclusive, and not foreign dependent.	7	2	13	9 (41%)
Economic Growth and Infrastructure Expansion	References to economic growth, infrastructure expansion and a quality of life comparable to that experienced in the global north	6	3	13	9 (41%)
A State of Mind	References to development as a mentality, a way of thinking and being	6	1	15	7 (32%)
		N=22			

The third aspect of the conversations coded to respond to RQ-A was development actor characterisations. These characterisations emerged from descriptions of development roles and responsibilities provided by the participants. Modifying Shanahan et al.'s (2018) approach to characterising policy actors as heroes and villains, I coded conversations by actors as identified in Table 5-5, and sub-coded the descriptions of actors as either problems or solutions. The coding of development actors as problems and solutions was, for the most part, prompted by participants labelling a subject in the conversation as either a problem or a solution. Where participants were not explicit in their statements, the context and meaning of the statements were used to guide the coding. As in other coding schemas, a score was used to measure frequency, where a conversation did not characterise an actor in relation to the development process, the conversation was scored 0. When an actor was identified as having a role in the development process, they were coded as problem or solution and scored as 1. Where a development actor was framed in a conversation as both a problem and a solution, 0.5 was assigned to the two sub-codes. Table 5-5 provides the summary results of the coding. The total presence identified in the table indicates the number of conversations in which the actor code was identified. Descriptions with example statements are elaborated in chapter six. However, though five actors were identified in the conversations, only four are discussed in chapter six, as the private sector as actor emerged in only five conversations and was not considered sufficiently significant to be included in the further analysis.

Table 5-5: Coding of Development Actor Characterisations

Actor Code	Problem			Solution			
	1	.5	0	1	.5	0	Total Presence
Citizens	5	4	13	6	4	12	15 (68%)
Diaspora	1	2	19	11	2	9	14 (63%)
Government	3	4	15	7	4	11	14 (63%)
Politician	5	5	12	3	5	14	13 (59%)
Private Sector	2	0	20	3	0	19	5 (23%)
	N=22						

Coding the Data for RQ-B

Chapters seven and eight present the findings for RQ-B. 32 conversations informed the analysis for RQ-B, which focussed on participant's practices and experiences in the local development planning processes. Based on data emerging from initial rounds of coding, the literature on relational analysis (Crossley, 2018; Fuhse, 2009), positioning theory (Davies & Harré, 1990; de Fina, 2013; Deppermann, 2013, 2015; Harré & van Langenhove, 1999a) and institutional theory (Hinings et al., 2017; Lawrence et al., 2013; Topal, 2015) was reviewed and inspired the final choice of categories and definitions used to develop codes and categories. Chapters seven and eight present these findings.

The descriptions provided by each participant were reviewed and compared to each other to identify patterns. Emerging data patterns were recoded as the phenomena identified during the coding process were aligned with the wider literature. Specifically, positioning (Davies & Harré, 1990; de Fina, 2013; Harré & van Langenhove, 1991) was used to understand the ways in which participants described their interactions with other actors in the processes. This understanding of the descriptions of the interactions recounted by participants produced the coding schema reflected in Table 5-6. 16 interactions were coded across the conversations with frequencies indicated under three different initiating actors referenced by participants. The 16 interactions were categorised into four sets of relational practices. Controlling and surviving practices occurred within institutional/domain boundaries, while maintaining and disrupting relations occurred between institutions/domains. Chapter seven elaborates on the relational practices of public servants, and chapter eight elaborates on the experiences of community leaders. As no politicians were included among participants, each chapter indicates how their practices were experienced by public servants and community leaders, respectively.

Table 5-6: Coding of Relational Practices of Public Servants and Community Leaders

Code	Description	Frequency		
		Political Directorate	Public Servants	Community Leaders
In-domain Controlling Relational Practices *interactions that position the initiating actor as able to direct the actions of others based on their role in a structural or perceived hierarchy*				
1. Discretionary authority	the initiating actor is described as unquestionable and operating based on the sole consideration of their goals	17	0	0
2. Bureaucratism	the actor is described as prioritising processes and administrative formalism above the specific needs of the community	0	7	0
In-domain Surviving Relational Practices *interactions that position the initiating actor as finding a way to pursue their own goals despite the constraints of their subjectively or structurally subordinate role.*				
3. Participatory prudence	the initiating actor is described as freely determines how and when they (actively or passively) participate in community governance and development efforts based on their assessment of potential benefit	0	0	11
4. Reverse co-optation	the initiating actor is described as taking advantage of de jure powers in a relationship of unfavourable power imbalance to access resources	0	0	6
5. Reverse exploitation	the initiating actor is described as taking advantage the targeted agenda of a more powerful actor (de facto power) to obtain resources.	3	0	0
6. Adaptive incrementalism	the initiating actor is described as regulating their own actions to align with the preferences of a more powerful actor to achieve a longer-term vision	0	4	0
Boundary Maintaining Relational Practices *interactions that position the initiating actor as reinforcing the prevailing distribution of power*				
7. Benevolent elitism	the initiating actor is described as capable and responsible for providing direction and guidance based on their superior position relative to other actors	0	10	6
8. Distance	the initiating actor is described as de-emphasising responsibility in relation to another actor with which they share responsibilities	2	10	0
9. Co-optation	the initiating actor is described as positioning (non-governmental) actors as accountable to, or working on behalf of the government in the execution of their advocacy and community development work	0	8	0
10. Information extractivism	the initiating actor is described as using the community as a source of data without reciprocal accountability to the community for how that data is used.	0	6	0
11. Disconnection	the initiating actor is described as practicing incomplete communication and limited (to	1	5	0

Code	Description	Frequency		
		Political Directorate	Public Servants	Community Leaders
	no) operational alignment with other actors with whom they share responsibilities			
12. Resource conflict	the initiating actor is described as undermining efforts at collective resource sharing	0	0	4
Boundary Disrupting Relational Practices *interactions that position the initiating actor as modifying the distribution of power and creating opportunities for collaboration across domains.*				
13. Resource sharing	the initiating actor is described as offsetting operational resource deficiencies by cultivating personal relationships with other actors	0	6	0
14. Accessing influence	the initiating actor is described as achieving a favourable procedural outcome through the engagement of a more powerful actor or set of actors	0	0	5
15. Enabling partners	the initiating actor is described as using their formal (and informal) power position to provide opportunities to other actors to display their capabilities	0	4	1
16. Information exchange	the initiating actor is described as taking advantage of opportunities to access and disseminate information and knowledge resources across domains	0	0	3

5.4 LIMITATIONS AND OPPORTUNITIES

Case studies are inherently limited as a method for the ability to generalise findings (Herriott & Firestone, 1983; O'Leary, 2014). Therefore, the intention is not to generalise findings, but to obtain an understanding of the interrelation of variables. The generalisability of findings from any study assessing cultural issues will be problematic because culture is contextual (Rogers et al., 2021). Within a specific national context cultural practice will be heterogeneous (Patterson, 2014), with potentially greater variation within culture than between cultures (D. Cohen, 2019). Specific findings will be particular to the context under study and the individuals included in the study. The focus of the study is on the postcolonial environment, culture, and interactions in the context of local development planning processes. It is the relationship between culture and governance and planning processes that will be interesting to consider in other research contexts, and not the specific cultural findings themselves.

Taking a qualitative approach rather than a quantitative or mixed-method approach could also be questioned as a research choice. Despite the increased use of qualitative research in social sciences, there still remains a bias towards quantitative research as *real science* (Denzin & Giardina, 2019;

O'Leary, 2014), and interviews as a reliable method (A. J. Pugh, 2013). However, the issue is not whether qualitative or quantitative approaches reflect better science, but whether the method is appropriate for the inquiry (Gorard, 2015). A qualitatively driven mixed-method approach was initially considered, which would have involved qualitative research to establish the theoretical framework and basis for the development of a survey that would then be used to capture hard data (Morse, 2017). Although this could have provided additional depth to the research findings, time did not allow such a design to be implemented. However, this is not a significant limitation. The fundamental value of the research would still have been the qualitative component, as it is needed to provide the theoretical framework that would be used for any subsequent quantitative research design (Morse, 2017). A quantitative study is therefore a possible next step based on the findings from this thesis. Furthermore, since the subject of the research is relations within the local development planning process and the role of narratives, it is the words that people choose to use in describing their interactions that form the primary research data. This makes conversation-based data collection and analysis the most useful method, as it illuminates the dynamics of narrative negotiation (McLean & Syed, 2015).

Unfortunately, because the words form the data, computer mediated interviews can create a challenge, as poor connection quality may impede the interaction and cause individuals to be less expressive and the quality of the recordings may also distort communication (Deakin & Wakefield, 2014). This limitation was in part addressed by establishing email and instant messenger communication channels with participants, creating a way for necessary follow-up where clarifications were necessary. Email and messaging apps allowed the researcher to ask clarifying questions and obtain updates on information shared during the conversation. While asynchronous remote data collection can pose challenging if there is no relationship between the researcher and participants (O'Connor & Madge, 2017), once the relationship is established, this may be less of a challenge. Being able to carry-on the conversation across time zones, using Whatsapp and email allowed the researcher to iterate and clarify interpretations from the transcription data with participants and allowed participants to share documents and feedback they thought might be useful.

On one occasion, after a conversation with a public sector participant, where they explained to me how the participatory governance framework was expected to operate, they sent me a newspaper article to emphasise a point they had made in our conversation. It was an article about events in a case study parish. I shared that article with my nonstate participant from that parish to get their perspective. The exchange provided valuable insight on aspects of the participatory governance framework in that parish. On another occasion when reading through the transcripts and relating this to information that I found online, I became concerned about duplication in the participatory

processes as there appeared to be multiple roles and mechanisms that were not clearly integrated. With a few exchanges of messages over a few hours, I was able to confirm that the participatory governance framework was not integrated with participatory mechanisms used by other ministries, which was important information for analysing my findings. When my queries were more extensive, using the messaging app, I was able to arrange follow-up conversations, which provided important additional data for analysis.

The messaging platform provided multiple ways to communicate, which meant that individuals could type a short response when they saw a message, respond with an emoji, or leave a voice note. Whichever way individuals chose to communicate, it was recorded so that the researcher could always go back to a message, and if necessary, reply to a previous message to start a new conversation. Keeping the conversation going after the initial session meant that I could challenge my interpretation of any aspect of the data with a short message and within a few hours obtain a response that could focus my thinking in relation to the data.

5.5 Positionality and Reflexivity

Denzin & Giardina (2019) urge researchers to have no illusions of objectivity in relation to their research. This is especially the case for the qualitative researcher, who becomes the research instrument, defining, collecting, and interpreting the data, often on their own (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Stewart-Withers et al., 2014). However, this is not a reason to embrace subjectivity, but to be cautious and to continuously question the assumptions that are made along the research process (Denzin & Giardina, 2019; Stewart-Withers et al., 2014).

From the choice of the research focus to the identification of the participants and the analysis of the transcripts, this research has been personal: I am a Creole islander and a Jamaican public servant working at the centre of government in the area of governance reform. I am also a product of a specific history and social context, located in structures of power from which I understand my world (Denzin & Giardina, 2019; Grosfoguel, 2007). I am embedded in narratives informed by my social and cultural location and which, in turn, inform the ways I conceptualise the research and execute the processes of collection, selection, and interpretation of the data (Finlay, 2002; Vanner, 2015). I have no illusions of objectivity.

My interest in the topic was motivated by my own experiences in the public service and an acknowledgement of the perceived inability of multiple iterations of public sector reform to create

meaningful change (E. Jones, 1996; Miller, 2017; Osei, 2007). Much of the work of the public service has been on capacity building, with the rationale being that if people have knowledge, they will apply it. My first responsibilities in the public service were related to capacity building for Green Government, as part of a wider sustainable development agenda. My role in the public service evolved along that trajectory of designing and implementing change initiatives to transform the public service to more efficiently and effectively deliver on the sustainable development mandate for the island. My government allowed me to accept a scholarship to pursue a doctoral degree with the understanding that I would be building my capacity to better contribute to the efforts of the public service in guiding the island toward sustainable development.

My original research proposal was to undertake a comparative analysis of countries that were successfully confronting the sustainable development challenge. The intention was to understand sustainability thinking, to identify the institutional behaviours and decision-making approaches that allowed those countries to get it right. I quickly realised that my own conceptualisation of the issue was problematic. The capacity building approach adopted in the postcolonial context is based on the narrative of *lack*. The locals are not developed because they lack the knowledge, skills, orientation that those who are developed have. This lack can be addressed by imparting to them the knowledge, skills, and orientations of those who know better, of those who are developed. Outside of the fact that this approach had not yielded significant long-term gains on the island, I saw how inadequate the narrative was in framing capacity as something that existed in lack as opposed to understanding the capacity that was *present*. By shifting my focus to what existed and asking why, instead of accepting an external standard and assuming there must be a lack if that standard was not met, my PhD journey became one of personal and professional discovery.

Kincheloe et al. (2018) make the distinction between subjectivity and positionality, defining subjectivity as an understanding of one's ideological perspective. Positionality, on the other hand, they regard as understanding oneself in relation to the world and others (Kincheloe et al., 2018). Being a Jamaican public servant involved in public sector governance issues establishes my subjectivity in relation to the research topic. My identity is embedded in the subject matter of this study. This embeddedness has the potential to make my assumptions invisible to me and make it difficult to distinguish between knowledge and bias (Berger, 2015)

Positionality is related to one's status as a cultural insider or outsider of the group being studied (Dahler-Larsen, 2018). I position myself as a member of the wider environment and the specific group being researched, both the Creole island and the public sector. However, as positionality is relational, it is not only how one positions themselves but how they are positioned by others. Throughout the research process I had an opportunity to talk to persons operating in different

institutional domains. Although I am a member of the larger group of public servants, in those individual interactions, I was variably positioned as either an insider or an outsider. As my public sector experience is in the central government domain, with some participants who worked in local government, I felt positioned as an outsider and those participants were more guarded in their conversations. Although the majority of participants were communicative, there were therefore a few who were not inclined to participate in a reasoning session. This is also in part a function of relations in a small island society, where people relate to others based on a perceived level of connection. In one case, an individual politely deferred to participate until they realised that we shared a mutual friend, and then became a participant with whom I had multiple interactions.

My insider status was significantly derived from being personally known to a number of the participants or having only a few degrees of separation from those I did not know personally. While this gave me easier access to some people and made those conversations relatively more comfortable, it also meant that this sense of comfort and shared reality made some of what was shared during early conversations go unquestioned because it was taken for granted as part of a shared reality. As Berger (2015) points out, although blindness affects both the insider and the outsider, the outsider's awareness of their ignorance makes them more likely to ask questions. This does not mean that being an insider is always problematic, as sharing a language and meaning system with those being studied allows one to see and understand the data in ways potentially inaccessible to those unfamiliar with the environment.

Addressing positionality requires researchers to be reflexive, self-aware, introspective, and extrospective throughout the entire process, to identify how and when their subjectivity and deeply held assumptions are mediating their interaction with the project elements (Crabtree, 2019; Stewart-Withers et al., 2014; Vanner, 2015). This is not always easy and can make qualitative data analysis potentially problematic, as the researcher's perspective and position are entangled with their interpretation (Rapley, 2007; Rogers et al., 2021). Researchers working in a team or in the community can usually address this by accessing the perspectives and interpretations of others (Rogers et al., 2021). However, in preparing a dissertation, such a community approach to analysis is unavailable. Therefore, it was important for me, as Crabtree (2019, p. 933) recommends, to maintain a disposition of openness throughout the research process and consciously examine any "preconceived understandings".

One such realisation of a preconceived understanding emerged during the analysis of the conversation transcripts. The research questions were focused on the relational practices of public servants and community leaders in the local development planning and participatory governance processes. The research was not intended to critically assess the processes themselves. It was

assumed that the processes had been designed by the state and provided as a participatory mechanism for public servants and community leaders to use in local decision making. In many ways, this was reflective of my own way of thinking at the outset of this research project, taking the institutions for granted and only questioning the ways they were used. I approached the why and how of engagement with the process as a potential function of Creole island narratives and explored with those participants identified as users of the process questions of identity in addition to their relational practices. Conversations with persons responsible for the why and how of the process I limited to questions about the workings of process. I did not discuss with them their island identity or their perceptions of development. This was in part due to my assessment of the amount of time needed for those conversations and where I wanted to focus that time, but also because I did not consider the identity perspectives of those individuals central to my research question. They were not the actors in the process that I was focussed on. Therefore, the data collected to respond to RQ-B was meant to focus only on the actors who use the processes, with the information provided from the process designers and regulators used as insight to help query the data. However, as I analysed the transcripts a more reflexive stance allowed me to look critically at the processes and to question the narratives that informed their design.

As I re-read transcripts of each conversation and processed the narratives that emerged, my perspectives, perceptions, and understandings of self and other became less clear. I had to become comfortable with ambiguity and appreciate nuance, knowing that I was only ever seeing a small part of any story. Therefore, my approach to data analysis was characterised by the constant critiquing of my own thinking (Berger, 2015; Jacobson & Mustafa, 2019). Maintaining a reflexive stance allowed me to not only be aware of my positionality but to critique the perceptions produced by that positionality. While questioning my perspective and perceptions in relation to the research, my framing of myself, my colleagues, and my fellow islanders constantly shifted, forcing me to rethink concepts such as complicity, empathy, intention, and agency.

Chambers (2019, p. 85) identifies those who influence the policies and therefore the lives of others as important for development studies scholars to understand, identifying them as a "blind spot" for the discipline. He also proposes individual reflexivity as part of a radical approach to development studies. This research, focussing on the relational practices of public servants and community leaders, though not involving the most powerful, engages in a form of professional reflexivity among a mid-tier of development actors. As such, it accepts Chambers' call for a radical approach to development studies that involves "self-critical epistemological awareness" and an approach to learning that takes into account how those with power "can change and act more for the better" (2019, p. 85).

5.6 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In keeping with Massey University's policies on research ethics (Massey University Human Ethics Committee, 2017), this project was evaluated by a departmental in-house ethics process. Having been judged to be low risk by that process, the project, with Ethics Notification Number 4000022265, was not reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. This placed me, as the researcher, as fully responsible for the ethical conduct of the research.

Several ethical issues arise when designing research with human participants (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Mertens, 2018). For this research, located in a relatively small island, with adult participants in positions of power, as public servants and representatives of community leadership organisations, the most important ethical issue was confidentiality (Mertens, 2018; Sieber & Stanley, 1988). Therefore, for participants to be open and honest in sharing their thoughts and perspectives, it was important for me to assure them that what they shared would not be taken out of context or represented in a way that would reveal their identity.

The invitation to participate included advice on the recording of conversations, and participant consent to the recording of data was confirmed before each conversation commenced. Individuals were also advised of the voluntary nature of their participation and their ability to decline participation or terminate their involvement in the study at any time (Banks & Scheyvens, 2014). As indicated in the information sheet in Appendix C, at the point of invitation, participants were ensured that their data would be carefully managed to protect their identity. Importantly, participants were reassured of the confidentiality of the recordings and their anonymity in the presentation of the findings. Quotations used in the thesis were not attributed to a named individual. Codes, instead of names, were used to identify participants. Additionally, I omitted the names of parishes in the presentation of findings to further limit the possibility of readers being able to identify the participants.

All data collected have been maintained in a secure electronic filing system. The edited transcription of their respective conversations was shared with each participant for member-checking (Morse, 2015), and the results of the study will be made available to them after the submission of the thesis. While transcripts will be retained by the researcher, all audio recordings will be destroyed on final submission of the thesis.

5.7 SUMMARY

This chapter presented the research approach used for this thesis. It established social constructivism as guiding what is understood to be truth. In keeping with a decolonial epistemology the research aims at being undisciplined and open to taking multiple epistemological postures. The chapter outlined the case to be studied and provided an overview of the methods used in collecting the data and performing the analysis. The difficulties of conducting research during the pandemic were mentioned and the efforts made to maintain the spirit of the original research design through online conversational exchanges were indicated. Research design limitations associated with qualitative case study research were explored, researcher positionality discussed, and ethical considerations noted.

The next three chapters present the findings of the conversations and respond directly to the research questions. Chapter six responds to RQ-A and identifies narratives of Creole islandness as themes of identity and island development. Chapters seven and eight respond to RQ-B by presenting the practices and experiences of public servants and community leaders in local development planning processes. Chapter nine responds to RQ-C and concludes the discussion by analysing the two sets of findings in relation to each other, and chapter ten concludes the thesis.

CHAPTER SIX

CHARACTERISING JAMAICAN IDENTITY AND ISLAND DEVELOPMENT

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter responds to RQ - A by exploring the identity narratives of Jamaican islanders to determine their correspondence with the Creole identity themes identified in chapter two. As indicated in the methodology chapter, of the 35 individuals invited to share their experiences and practices in local development planning processes, 22 were also asked to share their perspectives and perceptions in relation to their identity as Jamaicans. The individuals who participated in this conversation were categorised as eight nonstate and 14 state actors and are listed in Appendix A. A sample of the conversation guide is provided in Appendix D. As also indicated in the methodology chapter, the eight nonstate actors reflect three diaspora members and 5 community leaders, while the 14 state actors were six central government and eight local government public servants.

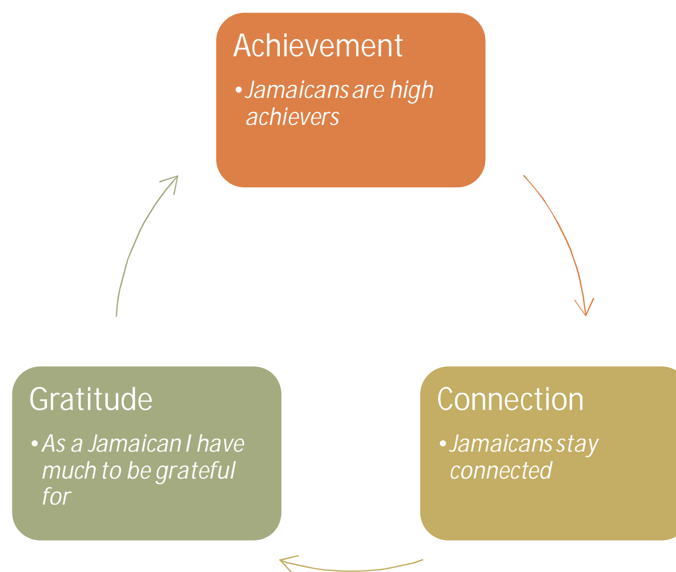
The findings in this chapter, based on conversations on Jamaican identity and island development, are presented in two parts. Section 6.2 presents the three themes that emerged from the conversations that reflect the descriptions that the participants shared of themselves as Jamaicans. Section 6.3 reflects the characterisations participants provided on island development and their characterisations of state and nonstate actors in the development process. Section 6.4 provides an analysis of the findings in the context of the Creole identity themes identified in chapter two, and section 6.5 summarises the chapter.

6.2 CHARACTERISING ISLAND IDENTITY

Characters are an essential element of a narrative (Shanahan, Jones, Mcbeth, et al., 2018), and the main focus of this chapter is the characterisation of self and others. While categories of state and nonstate actor are introduced to distinguish roles played in the policy process, all individuals are primarily understood to inhabit the character of the Jamaican Creole islander. Participants were asked *What does being Jamaican mean to you?* They were allowed to interpret the question and answer it as they preferred. This was done to understand the ways in which they individually internalised the identifier Jamaican and to see whether their responses would reveal any qualities that could be interpreted as particularly island or Creole. To understand the collective application of the identifier, after their initial response, participants were also asked to think of the island, the people and its history and elaborate on the words that came to mind.

In characterising the Jamaican identity, participants consistently expressed the sentiment of pride, as in, to be Jamaican is to be proud of being Jamaican, even as they readily acknowledged elements in the society of which they were not particularly proud. Therefore, the analysis of the conversations went beyond the expressions of pride, to understand the motivational themes, goal orientations and life concerns (K. C. McLean et al., 2020), participants used in contextualising their pride, and in so doing, characterised their identities as Jamaicans. Based on the inductive, iterative coding of the conversations, three themes eventually emerged characterising the Jamaican identity, as indicated in Figure 6-1, *achievement*, *connection*, and *gratitude*. These are elaborated in this section.

Figure 6-1: Jamaican Identity Themes



As there were different levels of emphasis in individual expressions of the themes, a three - level coding score was developed. This allowed a proxy measurement of emphasis by participant. After initial rounds of coding, for each participant, the section of the conversation transcript where they responded to the question *What does being Jamaican mean to you?* was reviewed. Where the theme was not identified, the conversation was coded as 0. Where the theme was reflected in a single statement, the conversation was coded as 1, and where the theme was reflected in multiple statements, the conversation was coded as 2. In the following subsections (6.2.1-6.2.3) I define and present the extent to which each theme was emphasised in each participant category (nonstate and state), and then provide examples of responses for each theme. Although the themes were coded on the basis of their positive expression in the conversation, in some cases individuals qualified their statements. To provide the range of sentiments and present the nuance which attended the

expression of the sentiments, where the qualification of positive sentiment was meaningful this is presented in the findings.

Achievement – Jamaicans are High Achievers

The achievement theme was informed by references made by participants to resilience, determination, ambition, hard work, and excellence, as they responded to what it meant to be Jamaican. In the majority cases, they reinforced their descriptions with reference to the importance of positive international recognition. Although the theme emerged in all participant categories, as indicated by the higher number of conversations scored at 2 in Table 6-1, it was particularly resonant among the responses provided by nonstate participants who were members of the diaspora, and state participants working in local government.

Table 6-1: Coding of Conversations - Achievement

	Nonstate Participants		State Participants	
Coding Score	Diaspora N=3	Local N=5	Central Government N=6	Local Government N=8
0	0	1	4	0
1	0	2	0	2
2	3	2	2	6

Although the word achievement itself was not repeated as often as resilience, where resilience emerged, it was underscored by *hard work* and *determination*. It was this relationship of resilience to personal capacity that supported its interpretation as achievement in the face of obstacles. Participants discussed resilience as the refusal to give up on efforts towards achievement. Achievement was the goal, resilience the means. As described by participants, resilience was therefore expressed, as one participant indicated, as *tenacity*. Achievement was also related to the other two themes. It was related to gratitude as an obligation to do well and to connection as a form of collective ambition. In its relationship to gratitude, achievement reflected the pursuit of individual excellence, as one member of the diaspora implied when speaking about making the most of opportunities available:

> if we never had this opportunity in Jamaica, but now we get it, we have to use it … I think what make us Jamaican is the individual tenacity, to wanting to do the best thing. … every Jamaican want to be the best at whatever their choice is. … whether Jamaican abroad or Jamaican in Jamaica, the one thing that defines us is our ability – our tenacity at wanting to be the best at anything that we do … And I don't take that lightly. … Because it's in every part of our being. (NS5)

The two other diaspora members who participated in conversations expressed similar sentiments:

> So, the Jamaican culture to me is the epitome of hard working, a commitment to excellence – pride – academic rigor … discipline, excellence. (NS4)

> As a Jamaican you can do just about anything. We're a resilient set of people. We know how to turn our hands and make fashion … you can do just about anything that you set your mind to … the ability to do, or the thinking that you can do just about anything, that's to me what Jamaican is and what it means to be a Jamaican (NS6)

However, not only was the sentiment resonant among all three diaspora members, but other nonstate participants also made shared the sentiment. As an example, below is a statement from a local nonstate participant who associated ambition with resilience.

> We are resilient people. We are strong people. We are hardworking, Jamaicans. … we have a level of ambition that might be not replicated in many other countries. We have that in our DNA. Hardworking, resilient. And persons who … have a vision for the betterment of life. … They dream and pursue those dreams. … we are people with ambition. (NS8)

Other local nonstate participants, maintained the sentiment by placing it in historical context:

> In whatever capacity we operate we tend to do very well. I suspect that has to do with our determination, and … the Paul Bogle[9] culture that we would have been exposed to. That we are determined to excel in whatever way, whether we are representing the country, or we're doing it for our own good. (NS7)

> It is our resilient nature – our ability to overcome struggles, especially from a historical and cultural perspective. To succeed. The ability to rise above struggles is one of the most important attributes of a Jamaican. (NS1)

As indicated by the participant, achievement was not simply survival, as the motivation was not only to survive the struggles, but to "rise above". However, as participants lauded the achievement

[9] Paul Bogle was the leader of the 1865 Morant Bay uprising, considered a turning point in the island's political and cultural history. He was executed following the uprising and on the event of the island's Independence was made a national hero. Bogle, and the parish of St. Thomas in which the uprising took place, provide strong narrative templates for islanders, and were referenced across conversations.

orientation of Jamaicans, some made the point that alongside achievement was an orientation towards individualism and competition. Therefore, while there was an appreciation for the existence of the achievement characteristic, they expressed the importance of collaborative working and the need to understand success as something that was best achieved "together":

> we are very individualistic sometimes … we could have done a lot better if we were together. … if we look[ed] at the bigger good at times, instead of the incremental gains from being an individual. Our growth has been constrained, and [our] development, primarily because we tend not to exploit the opportunities together, as a nation. (NS7)

> we have a slavery background. … persons want to get out of it, in terms of their minds. … So, if we see ourselves as persons who want to achieve, persons who want to forget the culture in terms of our past, where we were held down as black people, and move towards a more fulfilling life, then we are going to be doing that, and that is going to be done through our ambition to achieve. …we should not be like crabs, when we see one of our race climbing, we reach up and pull them down. … if we pull together, then we can achieve. NS8)

Connection – Jamaicans Stay Connected

While togetherness was expressed by some as a strategy for achieving collective success, it was expressed by others as a value in itself. As indicated in Table 6-2, the theme of connection was most found mostly in expressions by local nonstate participants and state participants working in central government. It was least emphasised by those in local government.

Table 6-2: Coding of Conversations - Connection

	Nonstate Participants		State Participants	
Coding Score	Diaspora N=3	Local N=5	Central Government N=6	Local Government N=8
0	1	1	1	3
1	0	0	1	2
2	2	4	4	3

The theme of connection emerged in three different ways: as a connection to history; as a psychological connection, providing a sense of cultural belonging and comforting familiarity; and as a relational connection reflecting the maintenance of warm and supportive relationships. Several

participants referred to their Jamaican identity as a connection to history and the story of diversity, recalled the island motto, Out of Many, One People. This narrative positioned all islanders as connected by their collective ancestral experiences in the island place: Despite the history and despite their differences, their fates had been and continued to be connected. One participant elaborated on this sentiment from his own perspective:

> We are culturally aware of our history – of our identity. ... That's why we show so much love. Because of our … awareness of the struggle … that each of us … not only the negro race, but out of many, one people. So, the Indian, the Chinese, the White, although we go through that kind of history … in terms of slavery, we still have that kind of love and unity … Our consciousness says to us, the Chinese is here, the Indian is here, the White is here. ... We have to learn to forgive, not to forget, but to forgive, for us to survive and live as one – out of many, one. (NS3)

For others, this sense of connection was less metaphorical and more literal, as their stories of family genealogy provided them with an embodied connection to the diversity of people, culture, and histories inhabiting the island:

> the motto … maybe because I am out of many one people … that resonates with me a lot … it speaks a lot about Jamaicans. ... it's just a part of the mix of who we are. Whether it's from the African, Indian, Chinese, Arab or it's the newer persons who would have come in from South America and other places … Out of many one people, to me, is something that really resonates with being a Jamaican. (S6)

For yet others, their connection was more generally to the island as place. This type of connection expressed a sense of feeling at home within the island. A few described this sense by referencing international travel. Such travel reinforced the feeling of connection to a place where one can feel authentic. As one individual recounted:

> I usually miss Jamaica terribly whenever I'm away for too long … the interaction in the place is unique compared to meeting a Jamaican in another country … you have to speak a certain way in another country … the people from Jamaica, in Jamaica – that interaction is different from people from Jamaica in another country. We would drop all layers; we drop all masks once we are here. So, we will just say certain things and be a

> certain way. Even if we don't express it verbally, it's that sense of home, that sense of belonging that you experience when you're on the island. That you can be homesick abroad and as soon as you return home, without anybody saying anything at all to you … Nobody has to say welcome home, but you just feel as if you're at home. (S7)

There was therefore an association between their Jamaican identity and an affective connection to place that was related to experiencing psychospiritual comfort. The connection to place was also referenced as an appreciation of the aesthetics of place. There were references to the beauty of the island and the island as paradise. Identity as connection was also expressed as an "emotional commitment", as expressed by a member of the diaspora:

> it stands out now more because I've left. … the Jamaican culture is so strong; we are extremely ethnocentric … Jamaicans really do standout in terms of how connected we are – how much we want to stay connected, how invested we are, our emotional commitment. … it is [important] for us to stay close to the culture – maintain our culture … because it's the navel string … beyond giving back … [it is about] ensuring that the culture stays strong, and we don't forget where we came from. (NS5)

Several participants referenced a sense of good neighbourliness, warmth, and conviviality when thinking about what it meant to be Jamaican. I interpreted this as another way to understand connection, as a manner in which persons related to each other with warmth and happiness:

> like any Jamaican, we always say we're just very proud to be a part of this small island, to know that we are a nation of people that would come together. … We love music, and we love to dance. … And just being in Jamaica, that you're Jamaican … Jamaicans are just full of life. … we're easy going, we're friendly. (S10)

That sense of the Jamaican identity being embedded in, or reflective of a certain quality of interpersonal relationships resonated among participants:

> we are friendly people. It is just natural for us to be friendly. You live abroad and people will walk past you and not acknowledge you … [in Jamaica, people are] so warm and caring. … that define us as Jamaicans. This is who we are. (S13)

Others acknowledged that the sense of connection and familiarity can at times have less than positive consequences, such as nepotism. Such use of relationships might be frowned upon in formal or institutional contexts, but as the statement below appears to express, that is simply the cost of relationships being so important to the islanders' way of being:

> we like fluidity because of the relationships ... It allows us to be less formal with each other ... for bonds to be built on what we see as mutuality, which sometimes mean nepotism, unfortunately ... those are parts of that sense of togetherness that we like to feel. We like ... that we can see somebody on the bus and start talk to them like we know them all our lives. ... Jamaicans like that sense of connection. (S14)

However, others noted that the level of connection and affection may not always be apparent, emerging primarily during times of need.

> [Jamaicans] are human-conscious, in terms of love. ... the day-to-day living you might not feel the kind of love, but whenever there's an issue, maybe sickness or any other crisis, you can really feel it (NS3)

The sentiment of togetherness being most often prompted by crisis was repeated in several conversations, and not always in a positive sense. For those participants togetherness was the exception, while difference and individuality were the dominant traits. One participant attempted to address the myth of togetherness by stating:

> In Jamaica we like to talk about out of many one people, and it's true. But ... there's a barrier, there's a divide. We may be living in one country, but we're not necessarily all one ... we can unite in common victories ... Whether you see a Chinese ... half Chinese, half-white, half-Indian, [afro]Jamaican. One thing that we all share ... is our pride [in] being Jamaican ... But we are divided on so many different lines, that out of many one people ... is a catchphrase ... we're divided on so many lines that prevent us from really being one, most of the time. (S7)

Others maintained their belief in the narrative of a warm, caring, and convivial Jamaican social identity, but characterised it as an identity threatened by urbanisation and globalisation. As such, they indicated their positive sentiment for togetherness and connection by raising concerns about its perceived decline.

> in the countryside … I had the warm experience. … the urban areas that are dominated by the cable television … you don't get that feel[ing]. It is almost like an American way of life. We are losing some of it because of globalisation. (S13)

> Christian-like social value … of doing good and going to church … Being your neighbour's keeper. … it's more in the rural … [which] are becoming urbanised. So, you are really losing a lot of that family, community feel. … So that is quite unfortunate. (S6)

Gratitude – As a Jamaican I Have Much to be Grateful For

It is acknowledged that those who participated in this research are not representative of the Jamaican population. These are instead members of specific groups who have committed themselves to public service, whether through their work in civil society or in public administration. Gratitude is therefore more likely to be a characterisation particular to the categories of people invited to participate in the research than a characteristic theme potentially generalisable across the society. This is further underscored by the fact that while references to achievement and connection as important aspects of their Jamaican identity were expressed as shared with other Jamaicans, references to gratitude were, with the exception of references related to the diaspora in general, embedded in personal statements of duty, for example:

> I am committed to the country, based on what it has done for me personally. (NS7)

> it is my duty to do whatever I can to improve the quality of life for our citizens. (NS1)

> I am prepared to try to change whatever social ills that we have that would cause us to maybe not be so proud. (S13)

However, the theme was emphasised among some groups more than among others. Specifically, among state actors, central government participants were most likely to express sentiments of gratitude when discussing their identity as Jamaicans.

Table 6-3 Coding of Conversations - Gratitude

	Nonstate Participants		State Participants	
Coding Score	Diaspora N=3	Local N=5	Central Government N=6	Local Government N=8
0	0	1	1	6
1	0	1	0	0
2	3	3	5	2

The sentiment of gratitude was aligned to a sense of duty and obligation, both as an expectation to which individuals felt they needed to respond, and as a personal motivation. However, though duty and obligation were associated with statements coded as gratitude, there was a clear sense that participants felt a duty because of how grateful they were for being Jamaican. As such, participants expressed gratitude for the efforts of ancestors and the society at large,

> God has blessed me to be a Jamaican … look at our history, which is vibrant, and what our forefathers have done for this country … we have a rich history, a very flamboyant one, and a very fulfilling one. (S9)

> we have so much — a lot of history. … the St. Thomas Rebellion. … Sam Sharpe in Montego Bay, St. James, his rebellion. Yes, everything rally back on slavery, but we were fortunate with certain things. (S5)

Even where participants provided strong criticism of the socio-political systems, they identified reasons to be grateful and to contribute to manifesting further accomplishments for the island and its people:

> Being Jamaican, I am very proud, despite the challenges that we have experienced in the country …I have always been proud of my country and wondered why the elusive growth has beset successive Governments. That is why I'm engaged in the pursuit that I am engaged in right now, to make it a duty of mine in whatever way I can to improve the quality of life for Jamaicans. Brand Jamaica has also enforced my commitment, because for a little country as Jamaica to have a brand that's acclaimed around the world, I think we take it for granted. (NS1)

Others were clear that they felt they had personally benefitted from the country and deserved to give back:

> I'm very proud to be a Jamaican. Maybe because that's what I have been exposed to. As such, this is why I try to even make my own contribution,

> based on the fact that I think I am committed to the country, based on what it has done for me personally. It has exposed me to a lot. (NS7)

All three diaspora members were actively involved in relatively large-scale national development activities, through their own organisations. Their work not only provided a platform for encouraging other diaspora members to contribute time, money, and expertise to a variety of development projects, but also promoted the personal achievements of diaspora members as a way of motivating participation. For these diaspora members achievement created not only a capability to contribute to development but an obligation to contribute to development within the island:

> in many cases we are the escaped lower class … there's a level of commitment and compassion … that doesn't exist even in Jamaica and the upper class … Because we know. We were the ones without the TV. We were the ones seeing our mom and dad struggling … So, it's very real to us, even when it's no longer our experience. … [there is a sense that] we're all here … [doing well] … but let's not forget where we're coming from … there's that level of constant awareness that really drives the level of giving. (NS4)

> your country did not send you [abroad] so you could come back and do things in a small way. … you've learned all of these things, when you are coming back, come back with some big bold ideas and then take the bull by the horn and do it in a big way. Because the worst that's going to happen is that a couple of people are going to get jobs. … for people in the diaspora that would be my charge to them. … Come back do things in a big way. (NS6)

Even those who expressed ambivalence about their affection for the identity, felt the need to communicate appreciation:

> Sometimes you're proud. Sometimes you're not so proud. Generally, sometimes you're happy, but at other times maybe … you might be "oh my gosh, I'm not so happy to be a Jamaican, I wish I were in a country with more opportunities". But generally, I am appreciative. I'm glad to be in a democratic country. When I do look at other countries, and compare, there's good and bad. … So, I'm still happy that I've been born in a country that offers opportunities. Freedom of speech and democracy. And still offers the opportunity for education, and for you to pursue what it is you want to pursue, generally. (S6)

6.3 CHARACTERISING ISLAND DEVELOPMENT

In addition to characterising themselves and fellow islanders, participants were asked their perspective on the past and future of the island's development. Similar to the identity narratives, development narratives which emerged from the conversations had clear characters and characterisations. This section presents the three perspectives of development shared by participants and their characterisation of islanders as development actors.

Defining Development

Building on the discussion of the Jamaican identity, participants were guided into discussing the island's development — To share their thoughts on the island's development trajectory, looking at where the island was coming from and how they saw the future unfolding. In providing their responses, participants reflected on the issue of development in three different ways. Participants characterised the issue of development as: the achievement of a new state of mind which would produce a better way of thinking, being and prioritising; the attainment of a quality of life comparable to that experienced in the Global North, defined by economic growth, infrastructure expansion and access to social amenities; or, as the fulfilment of the sustainable development goals or the National Vision 2030 in a manner that was inclusive, integrated, equitable, and self-reliant.

The three characterisations of development were not expressed as mutually exclusive, with three participants coded at more than one definition. However, most of the participants had an emphasis. Table 5-4 provides the coding scores, indicating economic growth was emphasised more by nonstate participants than participants representing the state. Local government participants were more likely to describe development as inclusion and social justice, while central government participants, proportionally, expressed development as a state of mind, more frequently. The next three subsections provide the understandings of development shared by the participants.

Table 6-4: Coding of Development Definitions

	Nonstate	State	
Code	N=8	N=14	Total
Inclusion and social justice	2	6	8
Economic growth & infrastructure expansion	4	3.5	7.5
A state of mind	2	4.5	6.5

Development as Inclusion and Social Justice

Those who emphasised development as inclusion and social justice went beyond economic growth as a standard, and some questioned it, pointing out that past levels of resource exploitation and infrastructure expansion had not benefitted the masses. As they described it, development should be

about benefiting the population, beyond economics, to include the wider environment. They had already experienced extractive development that had "desecrated the Parish" and had heard "the cries from the people and almost no redress" (S5). They spoke about a different approach to development going forward that was about "multidimensional justice" and "fairness" (S14). They emphasised integration, "linking all the sectors…natural environment…the economic…the social and the governance" (S10). It was about empowerment and self-determination, the "participation of people in their own development" (S7). It was about making sure that everyone was considered in determining the path forward, as one local government officer put it:

> ensuring that all the country is prosperous and not just prosperous based on the economy, but the people of the country … What does their well-being look like? … education status … healthcare … access to national resources … standard of living … our persons who are homeless … our poorest and most vulnerable … our incarcerated … If you are not thinking about the population holistically … persons from every single sector of the population, you cannot truly consider yourself as developed … all the cultural groups … everybody has a role to play … Unless we are able to look at things like that, and work together … I don't see where we can consider ourselves as developed. (S1)

Development as Economic Growth and Infrastructure Expansion

Among those who emphasised development as economic growth and infrastructure expansion, the standard was the global North. And the work had already started, with "the seaport development … the airport development … the road infrastructure development … town centres … various development taking place" (NS3). Such infrastructure work made the path to development visible and potentially attainable. They could see that "the country is working in terms of getting there", and those infrastructure projects gave them "hope that we will eventually get there" (NS3).

A diaspora member (NS4) who described the "leaps" that the island had made, noted the poor distribution of the development. They observed that the island was no longer "in that bottom tier – that Third World tier", but still not everyone was benefitting. They commented on the economic expansion that had been experienced with "BPOs and our proximity to North America". "Gucci or Prada" had opened stores on the island, making development visible, "there are multiple TVs in every house … everybody has multiple cell phones". Development was happening but "it's still concentrated … not spread across the entire society". This was, however, for them an indication of "a need for greater development across the entire nation" (NS4).

Though some participants equated economic growth and infrastructure expansion with roads, buildings and conspicuous consumption, others emphasised an improved quality of life that enabled them to access "social support, health care and education" (S6), and what they considered was "just [a] greater level of quality of life". For them, a significant part of what made the difference between the island and so-called developed countries was "just the variety of activities [that are available]" (S6). From this perspective development meant having "more places that persons can go to just socialise … [like a] nice theme park or just a recreational park" (S12). There was also, however, the acknowledgement of the risks that attended economic growth and expansion, as another participant cautioned, that "with development is going to come change and we can't run from that … We have to ensure that while we grow and expand, we do not lose sight of who we are and where we want to be" (S13).

Development as a State of Mind

Participants who described development as a state of mind referred to the attainment of an individual and national awareness or consciousness. A changed state of mind was not only a first step to achieving development but was expressed as the development standard itself. Economic opportunities without mindset change would not address the issues that they saw the society having to deal with, the biggest of which was crime. For them development meant "a concerted effort to develop the human capital" (S8). As some participants saw it, the problem of development was not poverty, as wealth accumulation so far had not appeared to address what they saw as the fundamental issue, "it's the mindset that is the problem. How you think, is the problem" (S8). Another participant framed the issue as maturity, making their point by comparing the island to a European society they felt represented a more mature way of national thinking:

> we are a country of profilers … It's not about national development …. [in] Sweden … [for] example … they're thinking on a different level. Quite different level from where we are thinking. Which is right down at the bottom like a child. We are not yet adults, mature in our thinking as a nation. (S22)

For another participant, the island had already achieved development but was behaving like "an underdeveloped country". Behaving underdeveloped meant that "we do the things that are for today rather than the things that are for tomorrow" (NS6). Development as a state of mind meant having a society of people who could think "differently" who were sufficiently educated, psychologically

developed, and enlightened. As one participant shared, "it will be a slow enlightenment and a faithful few who may lead what has to be ultimately a cultural shift" (NS2).

Characterising Islanders as Development Actors

In describing development, participants also characterised the actors involved. After asking the participants their thoughts on the past and future of development on the island, I asked for their perspectives on the capacity within the island to achieve the development trajectory they had described. As indicated in Table 6-5 the primary development actors discussed represented the state, as politicians and the government more generally, and the nonstate as citizens generally, and the diaspora, specifically. The participants framed each actor as a problem or a solution to achieve the island's development goals. As indicated by the table, both state and nonstate development actors were more likely to be framed as solutions than problems, with the exception of politicians. Participants overwhelmingly positioned nonstate actors as the solution for development, with the diaspora being framed as the solution by most participants across both categories.

Table 6-5: Development Actor Characterisations

		Problem			Solution		
Development Actor		Nonstate Participants N=8	State Participants N=14	Total	Nonstate Participants N=8	State Participants N=14	Total
State	Politicians	3.5	4	7.5	3.5	2	5.5
	Government	1	4	5	3	6	9
	T=	4.5	8	12.5	6.5	8	14.5
Nonstate	Citizens	1.5	5.5	7	3.5	4.5	8
	Diaspora	0.5	1.5	2	4.5	7.5	12
	T=	2	7	9	8	12	20

The following two subsections elaborates on the characterisations provided by participants of state and nonstate actors in the development process, using quotations from the conversations.

Characterisations of the State

Participants across both categories, state and nonstate, identified politicians as a development problem with references to the past. These references framed politicians as responsible for existing problems based on the actions they took or did not take previously:

> Around the 70s when the elections got violent and the politics got to a point where persons would carry the guns, on each side. That changed and then the introduction of the scarce benefits politics. ... That scarce benefits

> politics that was practiced at that time, that persons have now become accustomed to and has become intergenerational. (S4)

> we are constrained by the type of politics. That we can't do what we want to do, because we are looking at the next election, and we are so partisan … Nobody wants to put forward a 10-year program, to wait 10 years to see results, because an election is coming in five years. (S6)

Participant S4 alludes to the clientelist politics that has dominated the island's political culture in their reference to "scarce benefits politics". While participant S6 notes the level of partisanship that affects the island and hampers the ability for long term planning and the continuation of plans across political administrations. The highly partisan and clientelist nature of the politics promoted by the political class was therefore identified by participants as a significant challenge to development. However, while there was a widely shared view that political mistakes were made in the past, participants were also of the belief, where they expressed it, that the political class was capable of leading change, particularly with the Vision 2030-National Development Plan providing a roadmap:

> if they should come together and try to make the decisions that need to be made, we still have an opportunity to move from where we are now … our leaders are competent and capable enough to push the country in the right direction. (S1)

> your political agenda can really influence how we progress as a country … with the 2030 Vision being enacted by both major political parties, I think that has created the kind of engine that will allow for us to develop. (NS7)

Participants therefore acknowledged the capacity of the politicians to lead, underscoring that it however required them being able to work together across partisan divides.

In addition to references to politicians specifically, participants made references to government in general as the regulatory and administrative capacity of the island. Participants characterised the government as contributing to delays in achieving development targets, even as they were identified as the solution to achieving those targets. State participants representing the central government were particularly critical in their assessment of government in general. As one central government actor expressed, citizens had a responsibility to raise issues and engage in national conversations to address the "crisis" they believed the island was on the brink of. However, they also believed that the government had a responsibility to encourage and support citizen engagement in such a national problem-solving process, a responsibility that was not being adequately fulfilled:

> What we don't have is government itself asking for those kinds of involvement. … individuals may raise an issue, but it's the government who has responsibility for the country. They are charged with leading and driving and making sure that as a people we are moving in the way that we're supposed to be. But are they actually engaging us? No, they aren't. (S22)

There was also a difference between how state and nonstate actors spoke about the role of the politician. State participants (public servants) tended to frame politicians as less central to development progress, emphasising the role of government as a whole in achieving their expressed vision of the future. However, local nonstate actors (community leaders) made little distinction between politicians and government generally, framing both as equally responsible for taking the island forward. However, participants who were members of the diaspora characterised the politician as more significant to achieving development outcomes than the government as a whole. A possible interpretation of this is that there is greater deference to the role of politicians among nonstate actors and a greater appreciation for the potential of the government as a system, among state actors. This could also be the reason that among state participants those in central government were most likely to frame government as a problem as they had an awareness of the system not working as it should or could.

Characterisations of Islanders as Citizens

Island citizens, as political actors, were framed as important to the development process. However, among participants, there were mixed perspectives on the performance of islanders in this role. Participants in the diaspora and in the local government were more likely to frame citizens as a problem, while local community leaders only framed citizens as the solution. This difference in emphasis between locally resident citizens and those living abroad was reflective of references made by members of the diaspora to island citizens not being sufficiently oriented to a developed way of thinking. Diaspora members expressed that despite islanders having the intellectual competence, there was an orientation they possessed that potentially undermined their ability to lead development in the island:

> they certainly have the intellect, and the training … But I've noticed … that there's this mental block. Call it colonialism. Call it Third World. Maybe there's a new level of perspective that we have being in a developed country that being in Jamaica you don't have because you never left. So, while the skill and the aptitude are there, I think there's some traditional, historical

> ways of behaving and relating and interpreting that hinders that progress. (NS4)

It is notable here that the reference to colonialism is not about entrenched political traditions and institutional practices, but about individual mentalities, ways of thinking, and being that is traditional and regressive, as opposed to modern and progressive. This traditional mentality was framed as a trap waiting for those who are exposed to development and who return to the island and try to make changes:

> our leaders … have taken advantage of education someplace else, so they have a lot of things that they can do, [they] bring home a lot of ideas … the capacity is there … probably what happens is we fall back into old habits … and we regress (NS6)

> You're back, and you have to function, and you happen to fall into the traps … the lack of urgency, all these different things. And so, it's probably very hard. (NS4)

To illustrate the point, participant NS4 told a story of someone they knew who went to an Ivy League university in the United States and worked for a few years before returning to the island. The response of islanders to the returned individual was understood to undermine the value of the experience and knowledge they had acquired on the continent, as the returning migrant was forced to re-assimilate to islandness in order to succeed in the local environment. The individual's experience was for the participant indicative of a pattern of behaviour of local islanders toward people who would ordinarily be highly valued in a North American setting.

> he's … innovative and … out of the box … He became a threat. And so, in a developed context … you go, 'oh that's a star… how do I develop, sponsor, mentor, move'. Right? That's the developed way of operating … Now you're back – and it's not a judgment. These people have not abandoned the best of what they've learned … they have to operate in a new context. And … what created success for them in the old context is going to be damaging in the new context. And so, the trade-offs they have to make to survive in their career … it unfortunately undermines a lot of the value that they could bring, and it's not their fault … you create these programs … to insert these different ways of being, and then you punish these different ways of being

> … homogenise them … what's the point? Don't do it then. Just stay with what we have. (NS4)

A picture is presented of those who want to help make the island developed, who go away, get knowledge and inspiration, get the development mindset, but when they return to the island, locals try to revert them. However, the participant did note that most of those with whom they were able to work effectively on the island were those who had lived away from the island for extended periods of time in the Global North. They made the point that despite the efforts of the island collective to "homogenise" them, they never fully lose the benefit of that experience once they return:

> I can think of the people that we have the most effective working relationships within areas of leadership [on the island], without even realising it, we talk to them, you hear 'oh yeah I lived in England for 10 years'. Just a kind of happenstance. And it's always a big coincidence. And it always happens to be the ones – that it just always works out better (NS4)

The point being made was that those who had been developed abroad were most likely, with the support of the diaspora, to be pivotal in the achievement of the island's national development goals, as they helped to transform young islanders one at a time. This was the way the citizenry would be able to have a positive impact on development, through members of the diaspora returning to the island and leading the charge:

> In the best scenarios … they don't … have to fall back into those old traps. But [instead], they create their own environment … a whole new hybrid culture … based on what they know to be true for the last 20, 30, 40 years. And now they have employees operating in this new way and they have control … those are the best things we've seen. Where Jamaicans in the diaspora start enterprises … and … all the people they hire, they're bringing them to … a developed standard … and then the ones who can't reach, they're gone … only [the] ones that stay and thrive with them are the ones that have the ability to step up and match what they're expecting. And the more of that that happens is the more of them you create. (NS4)

From this perspective, development is about a mentality attuned to urgency and productivity, a developed way of being, in keeping, in part, with the idea of development as a state of mind. Members of the diaspora becoming returning residents, if they are able to maintain this mindset acquired in the Global North, if they are able to escape the trap of reassimilation on the island, can

help transform islanders by passing on the developed mindset and standard of behaviour. But citizens need to be receptive.

Citizens were also framed as a problem specifically in their capacity as voters. As one diaspora participant indicated, when voters focus on immediate gratification, voting for leaders that make road work and "rice and flour" promises, instead of bold leaders with vision, they disincentivise those visionary leaders:

> Because [politicians] have to report to [their] constituents and some of those people don't have any vision. … we shouldn't have to say that the immediate needs should come first, and then those things that are aspirational should take a backseat. But that's exactly what's happening … the leadership may want to do it … the willingness is there … [but] fear…afflicts them. Because if you fail, then the next time you're going to be voted out … the citizenry have to select the right people … as the person casting the vote, you have to say I am willing to accept immediate deprivation for future gratification … This person has that vision, that's the person I'm going to be voting for, even though what it is that would help me now I won't be able to have. (NS6)

State actors also framed citizens as a problem based on the perceived orientation of their priorities:

> We are people for instant gratification. I don't know where it is that we lost the body of people who were visionaries and philosophers and thinkers. … our generation is not putting them out … now what we have is our fun people … Back in the 70s … people were … marching … and demonstrating for certain rights … we don't have that anymore … we're unable to get involved in anything that matters, because what matters to us is how we look to the other person … for most of the country, and from top go straight down to bottom … it's the way in which we're thinking about things (S22)

> The problem we have … we love to have this image … It is like a competitive success thing. It has caused the parents to drop their guard and the kids can come in with goods and money that they can't explain where it came from, and the parents are no longer questioning (S4)

In addition to the actors and roles which emerged organically in conversations on development, I specifically asked participants about their thoughts on the role of the diaspora in the development process. For those who provided a perspective, the diaspora was mostly framed as having a positive role in the island's development. Of the three participants who reflected on negative effects the diaspora had on the island, two also expressed that they saw them as part of the solution, in both the contribution of remittances to the national accounts, as well as their skill and experience.

Where the diaspora was identified as potentially part of the problem, there were primarily two reasons. The first was the familial disruption that affected the emotional development of children "left behind". And the second was the extent to which participants considered the sacrifices and generosity of the diaspora to have been abused and had allowed a sense of dependence on "easy money" to develop among those remaining on the island:

> today's Jamaica is very much a product of what I call a brain drain from the 1960s and 70s, where everybody left … and built the UK and built Canada and built America, and Jamaica was left. We had a generation of children who were left without parents for a number of years … and they never turned back to look at what they'd left behind…And there is a certain degree of resentment … there's this idea that 'you are doing better than us so it's your duty to look after us'. The level of aspiration and what people aspire to is affected by that. (NS2)

> when money comes through the remittance, it creates a culture where there is no training in … money management … then they start [to] develop a "get it" attitude … I think there is a correlation where that attitude allows the person to easily adapt into scamming. (S5)

However, while there was a sense among some participants that those who had left the island and maintained a connection based primarily in remittances created a way of thinking and behaving not supportive of a conception of positive development, there was the acknowledgement that members of the diaspora still had an important positive role in the island's development project.

> But they have been participating in a positive way with all of this foreign exchange coming in that has saved us right now in Covid … And when you think of all of that US dollars coming in, if we were to check it as part of the gross national product, it would bring up our per capita earnings and takes us out of a certain poverty level … So even if they are not participating

> individually, the aggregate effort…will go a far way in helping us to achieve Vision 2030 – The foreign exchange, the extra income. (S4)

> the diaspora has a huge part to play … almost like pouring back in some of what was drained away 40 - 50 years ago … what was poured out of the glass can now be poured back in … with greater things to contribute. (NS2)

When discussing the value of diaspora members outside of remittances, one local government officer provided a distinct characterisation of the contribution of diaspora members, particularly when diaspora members became returning residents. They appreciated the challenge that returning residents brought to the conversation on local development:

> They are the ones that normally have the serious confrontations in the community meetings, because they know what a proper municipality should run like. They know what a proper community - base "should" be, and we would have that dialogue with the community members against the returning residents. and they are very very sceptical of their environment and what they want for their community, and they will tell you straight out, write letters and so forth … The returning residents and the youngsters are the ones driving this movement [of local development]. (S2)

This appreciation was however not universal, as another senior local government officer expressed the belief that diaspora members did not have enough context to effectively contribute to discussions around development within the local jurisdiction,

> People go abroad, and they stay abroad and prejudge what is going on here or try to superimpose what happens abroad onto Jamaica … They will tell you' … and in Britain it doesn't happen that way' … I bring him right down to earth and tell him, 'Shut up, do you know the reason why England has all those resources … because they got wealth from Jamaica over hundreds of years … England to a large extent was built out of the blood sweat and tears of Jamaica' … Not that they cannot contribute or say something, but they take it out of context … that type of notion from our people who are abroad causes a problem. (S4)

Though there was a general appreciation for the role of the diaspora, for some it was theoretical, in that the diaspora was a potential solution. Some participants expressed that while there was an expectation of the diaspora to contribute positively to development, they had insufficient

information to determine whether that was in fact the case or had not yet seen the evidence of the diaspora's impact.

> You hear about the diaspora, but I can't think of really anything that I can say that 'yes, they have been integral, they're leading the charge, they're making a difference'. They have the potential to. But I don't think I'm seeing it. (S6)

> the diaspora is so powerful, so powerful and our support internationally is really important for the acceleration of growth. But sometimes you get the impression that it is not happening … you wonder if with their participation, why is it that we tend to struggle so much as a country. But again, maybe they can do so much and no more. (NS7)

6.4 Discussion: Characterisations as Creole Narrative Resources

In this chapter, three sets of narratives were identified: Jamaican identity, island development, and actors in the development process. The identified patterns can be understood as reflecting the narrative resources available to islanders around these three areas. The following subsections are used to discuss the findings in the context of the broader literature and relate them to the Creole identity narratives revealed in chapter two.

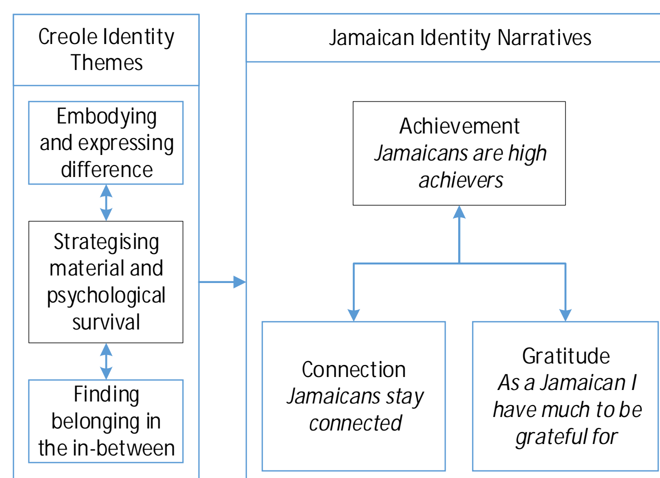
Connecting Creole Island Identity and Themes Jamaican Identity Narratives

The consistency of the responses to the questions in the 22 conversations provided evidence of the importance of the three themes for Jamaican identity. This consistency would appear to validate the themes as a set of narrative resources that are part of the cultural repertoire of islanders, available and accessible for identity constructions of *self* and negotiations with *others* (Hyvärinen, 2020; McLean et al., 2018; Swidler, 1986). This general social psychological theory, when placed in the context of the Creole island, reveals the accessibility of narratives which characterise the Jamaican identity as one defined by achievement and underscored by tenacity and assertiveness. This was expressed by a considerable number of participants as a cultural inheritance based on the history of the island and the struggles that their ancestors had to overcome. Achievement was habituated in survival, but extended beyond survival to excelling and thriving, and reflected an amalgamation of the Creole identity themes and emancipatory tensions that emerged in chapter two, of *embodying and*

expressing difference, *strategising material, and psychological survival*, and *finding belonging in the in-between*.

As illustrated in Figure 6-2, the Creole identity themes from chapter two, and the Jamaican identity narratives highlighted in this chapter are anchored and connected by *strategising material and psychological survival* and *achievement*. This understanding of achievement as it emerged in Jamaican identity narratives positions the sentiment not only as a matter of self-confidence and goal attainment, but as a reflection of a motivation for emancipation from a historically defined condition. In this way, the narrative of achievement and its resonance among islanders can be understood as a continuation of an ancestral effort of self-emancipation and social rebirth, the next step to be fulfilled after legal emancipation (Patterson, 1982). For those in the diaspora, this was a particularly strong motivation that defined who they were as Creole islanders and was a part of what kept them connected to the island. This motivation of achievement as self-emancipation could also be interpreted as underscoring the emphasis on collective rather than individual achievement from among some participants, which could be understood as collective self-emancipation.

Figure 6-2: Creole Identity Themes and Jamaican Identity Narratives



Through the lens of Creole island identity themes, achievement as a characterising theme reproduces the tenacity and resilience of ancestors forced to simultaneously negotiate resistance to cultural marginalisation, and adaptation to the dominant standards of success. From this perspective, achievement not only supports survival but drives the need to manifest the imperial mode of living (Brand & Wissen, 2017, 2018a) as a response to deAfricanisation. The imperial mode of living becomes a standard of achievement not only because of the cultural cues which identify it as the highest level of dignity and civility, but specifically because it represents what one's ancestors were previously denied. Achievement as a motivating characterisation of Jamaican Creole island identity therefore

produces a renarrativised Africanity, reflecting a conservative neoliberal conceptualisation of individual success. Emancipation becomes attained through the achievement of imperial standards of being, even as efforts at attainment are maintained by a psychological grounding in the Africanity that requires subversion.

Austin-Broos (1984) understands the fixation on individual achievement as part of the hegemonic ideology of education that she identified in her post-independence field work on the island. Austin-Broos (1984) identified it as an ascriptive ideology that helps to legitimise social inequality, more usually associated with industrialising societies. In Jamaica however, achievement as educational attainment was equivalent to socialisation and "proper behaviour" (Austin-Broos, 1984, p. 223), a way of overcoming the inheritances of enslavement. Austin-Broos (1983, p. 224) identifies this ideology of education as part of the legitimating mechanism of the dominating social order through which the masses are able to understand their position in society by their ability to "prove their capacity for human achievement".

Gratitude becomes applicable for the efforts of one's ancestors who have provided the foundations for achievement, and whose sacrifices drive the obligation to achieve. Connections with families and communities reinforce the achievement motivation not only to remind individuals where they are coming from, but to provide a mechanism for expressing that gratitude by allowing persons to pass on to others the benefits from their achievements, their contribution to collective self-emancipation. This was the motivation for members of the diaspora who participated in the conversations informing this chapter. Participants from the diaspora expressed a sense of moral obligation to contribute to the island, or their parish of birth, to pass on the fruits of their achievements. However, as Eibach et al. (2015) note gratitude has a dark side, with its potential to reinforce support for the status quo.

Although achievement was not only about survival, it was also about survival, reinforcing the tension between adaptation and resistance. This was best expressed by one participant, who, though Rastafarian by religion - characterised by resistance to the status quo and its anticolonial philosophies - responded to the conversation prompt about changing social norms, by indicating that:

> As Rastafari coming up from in the 30s … they had to make adjustments to survive … you don't let go of your fundamental principle, but you have to give way … If you want to live, or not to die that early, you have to adjust … You have to close your eye[s] and don't see some of the things … don't let them get inside. You just let them float around while you are going through … you must intake what the system have out there … it's not that you can

> avoid the system … you have to be a partaker within the system for us to survive … to move forward the word is compromise. (NS3)

There was therefore a narrative of acceptance, reflecting a sense that post-emancipation social rebirth required adaptation and compromise. This acceptance reflected an appreciation that emancipation could only be achieved through working with, and not against the system. Therefore, achievement, at the individual level, and development at the national level, were defined within a neoliberal capitalist context in which the highest value of the island's culture existed in its ability to be commodified and consumed by markets in the Global North.

Connecting Identity and Development Narratives - Strategies for Collective Self Emancipation

The three definitions of development that emerged can be understood as three perspectives on the institutions of society. The first accepted the institutional structures of society and appeared to believe that access was the issue to be addressed. Therefore, it was the responsibility of politicians and public servants to facilitate greater access so that all members of the society had the opportunity to benefit. For these people, development was identified as inclusion and social justice (I refer to this as inclusion going forward). In conversations, they described inclusion as the focus of their efforts as public servants and community leaders in engaging with policy and planning for development, some specifically referencing their work in creating paths for those locked out of opportunities to benefit from the economy.

The second perspective was that the institutions of the state and society were adequate, but individuals did not have the right mindset to access opportunities. For these persons, the state had a responsibility to direct, guide, and train; civics needed to be reintroduced into the education curriculum; and, human capital development, as citizen transformation was the solution for society. Some of these participants shared their work in facilitating training, with less of a focus on having people access employment opportunities, and more on exposing them to thinking so that they could operate more effectively and relate more positively in, and to, society.

The third perspective was that the design of institutions of the state was not the problem, but the way they were managed could be improved to produce better economic outcomes. Development challenges could be addressed by focussing on the right economic levers to achieve economic growth and infrastructure expansion (I refer to this as economic growth going forward). Some of these participants had faith in the state to make those decisions and believed it was only a matter of time for the economic policies and the investments in infrastructure to start paying dividends, while others expressed concern that political short-termism might undermine efforts to achieve economic growth.

Therefore, although participants had slightly different ways of characterising development, none questioned it as a social goal. There were questions about the best strategies to achieve it, and there was acknowledgement that the Covid-19 pandemic had delayed and possibly set the island back in its target, but all accepted some narrative of development. Adaptation to the system was a consistent theme between the conversations characterising islander identity and those characterising development.

Adaptation in the context of development transcended individual levels of survival to inform the ways in which people understood the global system within which the island operated. This adaptation could be observed among those participants who emphasised economic growth in their characterisation of development. On the other hand, those who emphasised an inclusive and social justice definition of development could be understood as deviating from the narrative of development as growth. In both cases however, the overarching motivation behind their characterisations of development appeared to be collective well-being.

Those participants reflecting the narrative of *inclusion* explicitly acknowledged the difficulty of the adaptation survival strategy, noting the challenges many faced because of entrenched inequalities. This acknowledgement could be understood as motivating a sense of social justice and resistance to the status quo. Those participants expressed an awareness of the ways in which the status quo did not work on the behalf of the majority and identified the importance of involving citizens and the diaspora alongside the government and politicians in creating the changes required to achieve a more just and inclusive conceptualisation of development. This reflected a narrative of collective responsibility that resonated with the identity themes of connection and gratitude.

However, there were those who characterised the issue of development not by gaps in the system, but as the result of a citizenry that needed to make better use of institutional structures and practices to benefit the society. For these participants, the problem was not the systems or the institutions, but the cultural orientations observable in the tendencies towards individuality; the use of confrontation to address perceived inequity; and an approach to prioritisation reflecting national immaturity. For these participants, visionary politicians and an involved government needed to lead the citizenry toward development. For these participants, the role of the state as leader was important for a majority society that was not sufficiently developed or mentally emancipated.

This narrative of citizens requiring the wisdom of elite leaders is resonant with the narrative of beneficent paternalistic leadership that has echoes of both plantation and post-emancipation religious leadership cultures (C. Hall, 1993). It reflects a leadership model in which those with authority and power are expected to be superior in knowledge and ability and are expected to use their

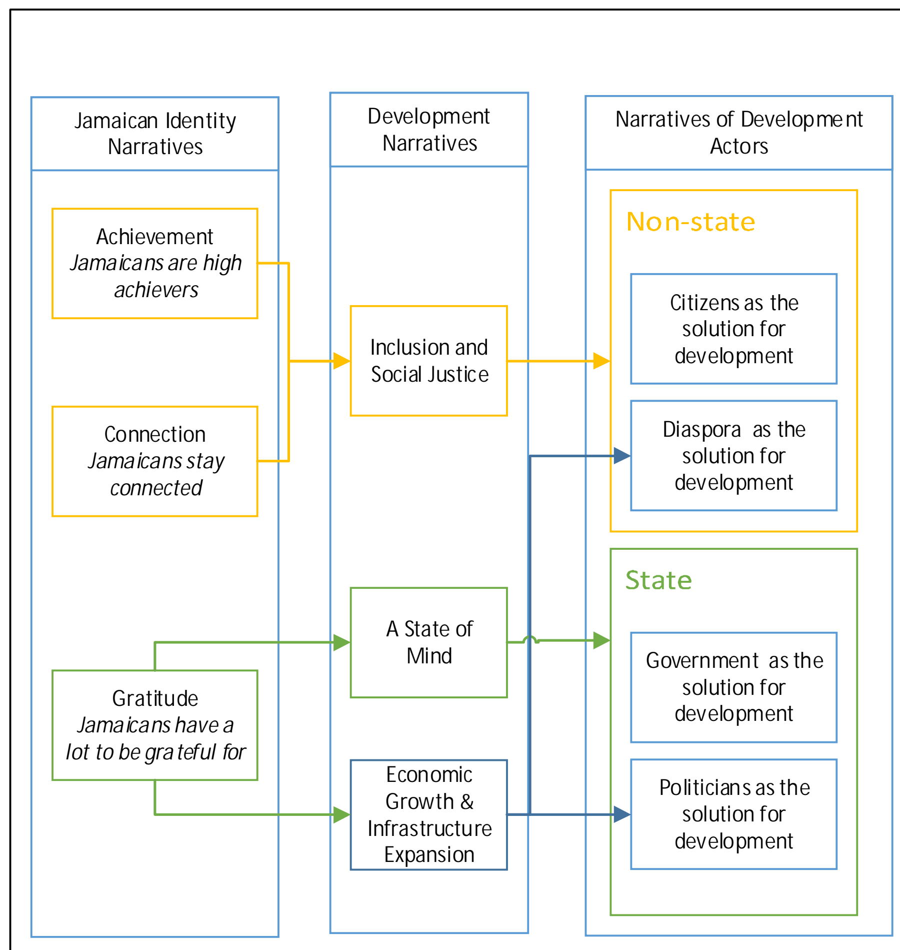
authority and power for the benefit of the masses. It is a narrative of leadership which was, in part, reinforced by the church, which played a key role in the emancipation effort as well as in the post-emancipation period on the island (C. Hall, 1993; B. L. Moore & Johnson, 2004). Missionaries and church leaders intent on the creation of a post-emancipation colonial society "modelled on that of the English middle class" (C. Hall, 1993, p. 110), maintained dominance in post-emancipation village settlements, with a similar level of leadership status being transferred over time to "the teacher, the parson, the postmistress and the police — persons identified with the middle class" (Francis, 1969, p. 43). As Francis (1969) notes, the attitude of the middle-class leadership towards the masses tended to reinforce the role of leaders as "paternalistic and protective" (1969, p. 43).

Therefore, for participants who noted that those among the leadership class were not fulfilling their responsibilities as wise and benevolent leaders, that was where they saw the gap in the system. The problem was not institutional structures that reinforced inequality but need for leaders to fulfil their duty, towards the masses who could not be expected to know better. In this way, both the development characterisations as economic growth and infrastructure expansion, and as a state of mind maintain elements of historic narratives of coloniality, and progress towards an ideal of development that is externally defined. However, this external definition is part of the adaptation to the global system and an understanding of what emancipation into such a system requires. Graham (2017, pp. 3–11) makes the point that adaptation to the colonial status quo needs to be understood as emerging from a fear of economic insecurity, with national survival understood as requiring an acceptance of the systems of and relations "inherited from colonialism" despite being "inconsistent with the demands of national consciousness". Therefore, participants reflecting narratives of the status quo, economic growth, and development as state of mind can also be understood to be motivated by the same sense of survival and collective emancipation as those participants who emphasised development as inclusion.

The characterisations of island identity and characterisations of development explored in this chapter potentially provide insights into islanders' relational schemas which implicitly organise their social knowledge (Ridgeway, 2006). Specifically, gratitude as a narrative underscoring a sentiment of 'as a Jamaican I have much to be grateful for" was associated with narratives of development and the state in keeping with the status quo of paternalistic leadership. This was highlighted by the observation that among participants defining development as inclusion, the theme of gratitude did not emerge as often in their characterisation of island identity. On the other hand, those who defined development as economic growth and infrastructure expansion or as a state of mind, were more likely to emphasise gratitude. This finding could support an interpretation that those who characterised development as inclusion did not feel constrained by a sense of duty or obligation to the past, and for

that reason did not emphasise gratitude in their characterisations of Jamaican identity. Such an interpretation would support the notion that those who maintain narratives of the status quo may be constrained by collective memories of the past and a sense of obligation to the prevailing systems of power (Eibach et al., 2015; Jost et al., 2017). These associations are generalised and highlighted in Figure 6-3. Additionally, participants who defined development as inclusion were just as likely to define state and nonstate actors as a problem for development but were more likely to define nonstate actors as the solution. Therefore, there was a consistency in the narrative for those defining development as inclusion, as they also emphasised the importance citizen engagement for defining and executing the development process. This differed from those who defined development as economic growth, among whom politicians and the diaspora were more often identified as the solution for development.

Figure 6-3: Relationships Across Narratives



The patterns reinforce the relationship between narratives of the status quo, associated with definitions of development as economic growth, and the marginalisation of the role of the citizen in the development process. The patterns also highlight the relationship between narratives of development as a state of mind and the centring of the state — politicians and government — as the solution for development. This correlation aligns to the idiom of beneficent leadership and the role of the state in providing direction, discipline, and control. However, though patterns emerged indicating that some narratives may be more closely associated with each other and indicative of certain relational schemas, participants expressed sentiments framing development actors as either problems or possible solutions in a way that reinforced the notion of development solutions as complex. Most development actors were framed as both a solution and potential problem, with participants identifying the types of relationships they thought were best and least supportive of their definitions of development. Participants repeated narratives of collective agency and the importance of close partnerships between the state and the wider society, with the distinctions on where they placed their emphasis, meaning that all narratives were available and accessible, if unevenly emphasised.

6.5 Summary

This chapter explored Creole narrative resources through an analysis of conversations with Jamaican islanders. The findings revealed islanders embraced identity narratives based in themes of *achievement*, *connection,* and *gratitude,* with the latter linked to a sense of societal obligation. The findings resonated with the Creole identity themes identified in chapter two. Narratives of Creole islandness were reflected in the characterisation of the Jamaican identity reflecting sentiments of collective self-emancipation, or achieving individually, together. Connection resonated with the Creole identity theme of embodied difference and survival in its interpretations as singularity in plurality, embodied diversity, and as a psychological survival strategy of adaptation — ethnic and spiritual oneness. Identity narratives reflected an obligation to build on the sacrifices of one's ancestors as an act of gratitude for their survival efforts. The narrative themes reinforced the tension between adaptation and resistance, with achievement possible only through working with, and not against the established social and political systems.

Participants also provided conceptualisations of development and characterisations of key actors in the island nation's process of development. Development was conceptualised as *inclusion, economic growth,* and *a state of mind.* The three characterisations of development were not mutually exclusive but were emphasised differently by each category of participant. Economic growth and

infrastructure expansion tended to be emphasised by nonstate participants, while state participants emphasised inclusion and development as a state of mind. Adaptation to the established social and political systems was a consistent theme between the conversations characterising islander identity and those characterising development.

The responses of the participants explored in this chapter reinforced the narratives on Jamaican identity as consistent with the Creole island identity themes explored in chapter two. However, the narratives emerging in this chapter also indicate an association between those who defined development as inclusion and their positioning of citizens as the solution to development, and those who defined development as economic growth and infrastructure expansion and as a state of mind and their positioning of the state as the solution for achieving the island's development goals. These associations appeared to reinforce the relationship between the maintenance of the status quo and the marginalisation of citizen voice in the development process and align with the idiom of beneficent leadership and the role of the state in providing direction, discipline, and control. However, partnerships and collaboration among all development actors were generally acknowledged as important by all participants.

Using conversation data, the next chapter begins answering the second research question which focuses on the relational practices of state and nonstate actors in the local development planning and participatory governance processes.

CHAPTER SEVEN

RELATIONAL PRACTICES OF PUBLIC SERVANTS

7.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter, and the next, respond to RQ-B, by exploring the relational practices and experiences of islanders involved in the local governance and development planning processes described in the methodology chapter. As also indicated in the methodology chapter, of the 35 individuals invited to participate in the research, three of these persons, members of the diaspora, indicated having no knowledge of or experience with the participatory governance framework or the local sustainable development planning processes. Therefore, chapters seven and eight present findings from conversations with only 32 individuals, five community leaders and 27 public servants, as listed in Appendix A. The findings reflect the analysis of conversations focussed on their different roles, responsibilities and experiences in the governance and planning processes. A sample of the conversation guide is provided in Appendix D.

Identifying Relational Practices

As RQ-B asks the question *What are the relational practices of public servants and community leaders involved in the local development planning processes?* the analysis of conversations was targeted at understanding the relational practices used to regulate and operate the governance and planning processes. As indicated in the methodology chapter, four types of relational practices were identified from the conversations; these are presented in Table 7-1. Before presenting the findings, I explain how these relational practices are understood.

Table 7-1: Types of Relational Practices

RELATIONAL PRACTICES			
In-Domain Practices		Boundary Practices	
Controlling:	Surviving:	Maintaining:	Disrupting:
interactions that position the initiating actor as able to direct the actions of others based on their role in a structural or perceived hierarchy.	*interactions that position the initiating actor as finding a way to pursue their own goals despite the constraints of their subjectively or structurally subordinate role.*	*interactions that position the initiating actor as reinforcing the prevailing distribution of power across domains.*	*interactions that position the initiating actor as modifying the distribution of power and creating opportunities for collaboration across domains.*

I use the term relational practice to reference patterns of relations, building on the concept of relational work as used in organisational studies (Topal, 2015) and economics (Bandelj, 2012, 2020)

to describe the ways individuals negotiate interactions in different social domains. Bandelj (2012) identifies relational work as interactions to which actors attribute social meaning and as they use them to produce targeted outcomes. She further makes a distinction between relational work and boundary work, with relational work capturing the relationships between the actors working toward meaningful outcomes and boundary work capturing the navigation of structural constraints across social domains (Bandelj, 2012). In this thesis, I refer to boundary practices as a form of relational practice that describes interactions at the boundaries of social and institutional domains. Domains in this sense can be jurisdictional, with boundaries separating the national (central) from the subnational (local), socio-political, with boundaries separating the government from the communities (civil society), and organisational, with boundaries separating ministries and agencies from each other. As such, the boundary relations described by participants explicitly referenced the negotiation of relationships between actors across different domains. The categories of relational work identified are based on the data emerging from the conversations and their alignment with scholarship on institutional work (Lawrence et al., 2013; Topal, 2015; Zilber, 2009).

Creation, maintenance, and disruption are the three categories of institutional work identified in the literature (Lawrence et al., 2013). I identified maintaining and disrupting as boundary practices based on how participants described their cross-domain interactions in which actors had the potential to either maintain or modify the nature of relationships and the corresponding balance of power with other actors when working toward shared outcomes. The correlate to *boundary relational practices* I identified as *in-domain relational practices*. These emerged as controlling or surviving practices. As the potential for institutional creation was described in conversations as taking place in the context of control, this was the term that I adopted to describe the related practices which treat institutional creation and destruction as emerging from the same source of power. Surviving practices, as described by participants generally emerged in response to control and did not have a clear correlate with the institutional work identified in the literature. The main distinction between in-domain and boundary practices that emerged from the conversations was the extent to which power distribution was open to negotiation. Actors employing in-domain relational practices (referred to from hereon as domain relational practices) did not openly negotiate the potential redistribution of power, interactions were negotiated under the shared assumption of maintaining the prevailing balance of power. Boundary relational practices, on the other hand, existing as they did between domains, held opportunities for actors to modify the distribution of power. Negotiating domain boundaries provided participants with opportunities to reinforce the prevailing power dynamics (maintain) or disrupt domain boundaries by sharing knowledge, material resources, and decision-making power.

Domain controlling relational practices described by participants were governed by the authority legitimately held by the actor initiating the interaction. This was another distinction between domain and boundary practices, the different ways individuals used power. Where actors related on the basis of their legitimate authority, as in relations of control, their roles in the processes were experienced differently than when they could be more creative in their use of power, as when operating across boundaries. *Domain surviving relational practices* emphasised the limited authority of an actor based on their subordinated role. However, despite their subordination, actors found ways to produce results in accordance with their own motivations. Domain surviving relational practices performed an emancipatory function for the actor, allowing them to position themselves as capable of directing a desired outcome, despite their relative disempowerment in the relationship.

The remainder of this chapter presents the relational practices and experiences of public servants (chapter eight presents the relational practices of community leaders) with other actors in the local governance and development planning processes. Other actors include politicians (the political directorate), other public servants, and community leaders. Table 7-2, which is informed by the coding Table 5-6 in the methodology chapter, identifies the three findings sections that are presented in this chapter. Specifically, section 7.2 presents the relational practices between public servants and the political directorate as described by public servants. Section 7.3 presents the relational practices between public servants either working across central/local domains or between state entities, and section 7.4 presents the relational practices between public servants and community leaders. This covers those relationships in which the political directorate is the initiating actor, performing domain controlling, domain surviving, and boundary maintaining relational practices, and those in which the public servant is the initiating actor, performing domain surviving relational practices. Section 7.5, not included in the table, summarises the chapter.

Table 7-2: Relational Practices Experienced and Practiced by Public Servants

Section	Initiating Actor	In negotiation with	Type of Relational Practice	Practice
7.2	Political Directorate	Public Servants	Domain Controlling	Discretionary authority
		Political Directorate	Boundary Maintaining	Distance
	Public Servants	Political Directorate	Domain Surviving	Adaptive incrementalism
7.3	Public Servants	Public Servants	Boundary Maintaining	Disconnection
				Distance
			Boundary Disrupting	Resource sharing
7.4	Public Servants	Community Leaders	Domain Controlling	Bureaucratism
			Boundary Maintaining	Co-optation
				Benevolent elitism
				Information extractivism
			Boundary Disrupting	Enabling partners

7.2 Relational Practices Between Public Servants and the Political Directorate

No politicians participated in the conversations for this research; references to the political directorate are therefore based on descriptions provided by participants. The term political directorate and politician is used interchangeably throughout the thesis; however, the term political directorate is used specifically to refer to the group of politicians responsible for directing government policy, whether at the local or central government level. It is used as a more specific term to distinguish politicians with policy-making responsibility in government from politicians who may be members of the opposition or senior party officials without such authority.

Relational Practices of the Political Directorate Experienced by Public Servants

Public servants described the relational practices of the political directorate which were categorised as domain controlling and boundary maintaining. The two most prominent practices, discretionary authority and distance are presented in the subsection below.

Discretionary Authority and Distance

The political directorate were consistently described as performing the controlling relational practice of discretionary authority and were also identified as performing the boundary maintaining practice of distance. As these practices were related in the ways they affected the experience of public servants in the local development planning process, they are described together below.

Public servants work directly under the authority of the political directorate. Public sector participants described the design and implementation of the governance and planning process, its genesis in the centre of government, and the extent to which central government politicians almost unilaterally determined how and whether the system existed. When talking about their experiences of the governance and planning processes, public servants told stories about the roles played by cabinet ministers and local politicians in the design and implementation of the policies and how these interactions and the knowledge of the interactions influenced their own experiences and behaviours in the process.

As described by participants, the participatory governance framework, the local sustainable development planning processes and the process of local government reform which supported their implementation were determined by and dependent on the discretion of the political directorate. This was not only because as the government they held the legitimate authority to determine or change the policy agenda, but also because there appeared to be limited civil society leadership to provide adequate challenge, or champion decentralised decision making.

The discretion of the political directorate in a democratic system is a feature of the political process, theoretically mediated by elections through which the political directorate receives its mandate from the voting masses, or has it relinquished. However, as participants described the role of politicians, they positioned them as singularly authoritative, independent of the will of the citizenry, acting on no other consideration but their own preferences, whether ideological or politically strategic. This was illustrated by a local government officer who in reflecting on the experience of developing the local sustainable development plan in their parish shared the following:

> I did not understand how wretched the politics was … if the [Member of Parliament] was not so into it, the local level wouldn't move … If the party [at the local government level] is not the one in power, they won't really move … The only time you have smooth sailing … it was the PNP at the national level and the local level. So, the Parish Profile at the beginning was smooth. And the beginning of the [local sustainable development plan] was smooth sailing, until the JLP took over. (S5)

Local government is a highly partisan political environment which had to be navigated by public servants carrying out their roles in the local governance and development planning processes. Public servants experienced the design and implementation of the local planning processes as the navigation of the preferences of politicians and their political party, with their specific experience in the process dependent on which political party was in power at a particular time, and the willingness and ability of the specific politician to lead the agenda. The process was therefore understood as dependent on the political directorate. The introduction of participatory local development planning was not discussed as a response to the demands of civil society but was instead understood as a set of instructions designed at the centre of government for local implementation dependent on the preferences of the politicians in control of the particular local authority and their relationship with those in central government.

As a former senior public servant (S28) who had worked with the local government reform process indicated, the local government reform was not a response to civil society but was a policy-driven process that "harnessed" civil society. The public servant described well-maintained boundaries between the political directorate and civil society, but also between politicians at the central government level and those at the local level. The same public servant reflected that, "the elephant in the room was that the discussion that needed to take place politically, by politicians with politicians did not happen … the effort to broaden the scope of the reform to all stakeholders did not happen" (S28).

Such descriptions positioned central government politicians maintaining distance from their local government counterparts and not fulfilling their commitment made through the Act, to take forward the local governance reform processes. However, participant S28 went on to note that the local government reform did not happen as it had been initially conceived because it would have had to have been "nurtured by central government support". This perspective reflects a reinforcement of the primacy of central government even among those defending the importance of local governance. Centralised authority was understood to be "the culture". Therefore, while identifying the disconnect between central and local government politicians as impeding the local governance process, this was based on the normative acceptance of a balance of power towards the centre of government. As participant S28 explained,

> when you have a society that's culturally biased towards central government and centralized management and centralized driven policies and centralised allocation of resources, if we are going to have reform that has sustainability and credibility we have to hold people's hand and direct their thinking and their behaviour and their attitudes ... we are coming out of a situation of a history of centralised behaviour ... even at the local level when people were talking about local government independence and self-management [they were] themselves behaving like central government—like mini central governments. Because the local political people have an attitude of 'this is what I'm going to do for you' ... very resource-based Godfather behaviour. (S28)

Centralisation was positioned as more than a matter of central government, but as a top-down approach to decision making that was cultural and existed as much at the local government level as at the central government level. An appreciation for this culture of centralisation and political discretion led one community leader to question the entire local sustainable development planning process on the basis that there was no indication that anything had changed in relation to the authority and will of the local politicians,

> It's very ironic that ... a Council is developing a plan for problems that they have allowed to happen. To what extent they have the will and the desire? It's very conflicted ... illegal buildings were set up, that the Parish Council was supposed to be [preventing], when you look at the Municipal policing that's supposed to be happening that is not happening ... it's one thing to

> prepare something [the plan] because you have to do it, but it's another thing to do it because you feel strongly about it. (NS7)

There was therefore a sense that the culture of the local government was such that even though they may be mandated to develop a local sustainable development plan using participatory governance processes, the nature of politics and the lack of will meant that it was unlikely to create real change. However, even as participants described what they referred to as the tribal nature of politics on the island there was also optimism for the future of politics: "maybe another ten years' time. There is going to be a change in the politics, we [are] going to have more newer minds coming in who will know and hear and probably make a change" (S5).

Therefore, while many noted the discretionary authority of the political directorate as a feature of the culture that had driven the processes to date, and which appeared unchanged with the introduction of the new legislation, a number of participants noted that ultimately electors were the real source of political power:

> it's as though we forget that we as the citizens, we as the voters, we are the ones with the power. Too often we assume that the politicians are the ones who are powerful, and we are just here to carry out their will. That is not the case. We are the ones who have the power because we decide who is going to lead this country and we should be more vocal about what we want. We should be more demanding of our leaders and hold them to account when they do not follow through. (S1)

There was an awareness of the potential for change, with a number of public servants indicating a general sense of optimism as being necessary to combat any feelings of frustration.

Relational Practices of Public Servants in Relation to the Political Directorate

Public servants also described what was understood as their response to the relational practices of the political directorate, which was categorised as domain surviving relational practice. This is presented in the subsection below.

Adaptive Incrementalism

Despite the centralising control of the political directorate, public servants positioned themselves as using their available resources to navigate the environment towards the desired outcome of increased citizen engagement in local governance. As participants indicated, though the institutional

environment for participatory local governance was imperfect, and they often felt frustrated, they focused on the important wins that they were able to contribute, such as the legislative and policy framework. Despite its inadequacies, and despite needing the supporting elements of a clearer relationship between local and central government policy and planning systems and consistent political commitment, the existence of the policy framework, was for many participants, an important first step towards creating change. Public servants understood their work, located between the discretion of the political directorate and preferences of the wider society, as being the creation of the institutional documentation, and the embedding of processes that would nudge the policy agenda towards the original policy intentions of participatory governance.

> The Minister [up to 2016] was very strong and he said before I leave this office I must get these laws passed … but that poorly portrayed what local government reform really is … the laws are very important but … the whole effort to broaden this programme of local government reform to all stakeholders didn't happen … the idea of local government as a driver of local economic development, as a primary stakeholder in community involvement, I don't think that has gotten any kind of traction … and the new minister [from 2016] is very centralised, an advocate for local government but very central in his control of that advocacy … they are conflicting but real … [so] in those last three years [2017-2020] my focus was really what can I get done. I became strategic … I said, since the focus in on legislation, let me make sure the legislation is put in place … I didn't see an appetite for the larger picture. (S28)

Civil servants in the Westminster tradition are tools of institutionalisation, usually remain in office as political leaders come and go. They are therefore, theoretically, able to maintain policy knowledge and bureaucratic momentum, continuing patterns created by an initial set of actions (Mintzberg, 1978). Therefore, with jobs designed around promoting participatory governance, public servants involved in community development and local government reform were automatically situated as internal change agents, though operating within political parameters that risked reinforcing the status quo. The small incremental wins towards the vision that had motivated their careers were therefore cherished:

> there is a vision I would have had for my country, a vision where I really genuinely believe that citizen's participation in the management of the local space, whether it be the community or the parish level, that decision making

> should be multi-stakeholder. I genuinely believe that, and so when I started [my job in the 1990s] that was one of the things I said I wanted to contribute to my country. (S16)

However, the small wins were cherished because of the constant frustrations:

> the Local Governance Act, it's such an important piece of legislation … it took 40 years to get the Local Governance Act passed. … So that was 2016, and then from 2016, we're now in 2021– midway 2021, and the Regulations to support the Act are still not completed. … After a while you worry about credibility and that kind of thing. … there is a lot of work to be done. Especially at the Ministerial level … they will tell you at the Ministry it is not that they don't recognise that it needs to be done, but it is just not being done. … there is no push. (S23)

That "push" appeared to happen when the public servant positioned themselves as a champion in the bureaucracy, maintaining focus amidst the changing political directions. One participant reflected on their involvement in obtaining specific inclusions in the Act, and continuing the effort to strengthening the policy framework for participatory governance:

> we started championing the cause, going to the Ministry, [to have the community governance bodies] included in the Act. It didn't go to the full extent we wanted it to, but it went somewhere. … they were going to go to Parliament and elections were coming up and they just put it down in there … then after the Act passed then I realised there … was something [else] that needed to happen … by now we had a Minister that said, he didn't believe in the [the participatory governance framework] … he was very strident at first … we kept engaging him … there are milestones and I keep seeing that we don't reach where we should go … so we need to chip away at it … that is what keeps me going amidst the criticism (S16)

There was an acceptance that there was little option than to take incremental steps towards the change, despite how much time had already passed, and how much more time might be needed, as change would only happen one step at a time. Participants were asked whether a coalition approach to the change could have helped, to operate across ministerial boundaries — to engage allies across the public service. One participant pointed out, that during the time of least political traction, when the Ministry was disbanded, and the portfolio placed under the Office of the Prime

Minister, they had been able to spend time "strategising and learning", and there had been "increased cooperation" and "engagement" across Ministerial portfolios (S28). However, that changed once they were returned to a Minister with portfolio authority. As another participant explained, while other ministries and departments could be engaged to integrate the participatory governance framework into the wider machinery of public administration, that strategy had become secondary to getting the Ministry of Local Government itself on board:

> [we have to] champion the cause with our Ministry first, in recognition of [the fact] that you can try to champion a cause outside of your home, but if your home is not settled you can have a problem … I get the call from my parish managers that nationally we need to be connecting into the Ministries, Departments and agencies, [but] we had to decide which battle we were going to do first; and we decided to settle the house first. (S16)

From the perspective of the public sector participant, they were working in a precarious policy environment, where the work could be redirected at any time by the political administration. This was illustrated by the participant relating how a particular aspect of the participatory governance framework had been invalidated by a Minister's change in policy direction, which affected the ability of the community governance bodies to work across parishes, by removing funding support for their umbrella body and effectively making that body defunct. Public servants who would have previously been part of the process of supporting such bodies, were placed in the position of defending the actions of the Minister in undermining its operation. Public servants learned to adapt, adjust their expectations and focus on actions that may receive traction with the political directorate. The matter-of-fact tone of the participant in response to questions about the umbrella body for the community governance bodies and their placing of responsibility on other actors to fight their own battles, underscored the need for cognitive and emotional resilience in an environment where one had to regularly go back to the drawing board and re-strategise. From this vantage-point public servants were not practicing incrementalism in the sense of Lindblom's (1979, p. 524) "skillful incompleteness", but more in the vein of Portes & Itzigsohn's (1994, p. 506) "rational adaptation to reality" that proposes that investments of time and effort will be directed to a least preferred option, on the basis that it provides the best potential outcome for one's survival.

7.3 Relational Practices Among Public Servants

Three relational practices were identified among public servants, the boundary maintaining relational practices of disconnection and distance, practiced between central government and local government public servants and the boundary disrupting relational practices of resource sharing practiced primarily across organisations at the local government level. These are described below.

Boundary Maintaining Relational Practices - Disconnection and Distance

Public servants related to each other across organisational domains and between the jurisdictional domains of central and local government. Distance describes the relational practices participants described in navigating the boundaries of the jurisdictional domains. Participants who had worked in the Ministry of Local Government appeared to distance themselves from the operation of the governance and planning processes in the parishes, even as they confirmed the role of their Ministry in being responsible for providing policy oversight for those processes. Current and former staff of the Ministry of Local Government also described a disconnection between their responsibilities for local development planning and their roles in supporting citizen to participate in the processes. Ministry of Local Government participants appeared to distance themselves from responsibility for the manner in which the participatory element of the local development planning system had been implemented, invoking the autonomy of local authorities, even as they confirmed the authority of central government. As one participant who had worked in the Ministry in the area of planning expressed in reflecting on the work they had done,

> the powers that be at the time, recognised the importance of crafting a plan for each Parish … the challenge was the … structures of the local authorities. The lack of systems in place, clear business processes. … [and] at the time we were pushing the narrative that the local authorities need[ed] to be autonomous. That was … the policy intent at the time. And so, we couldn't be … holding their hand. (S21)

The "powers that be" referenced by the participant operated at the central government level, indicating an understanding of the initiative being a top-down approach. Participants indicated local government autonomy as governing the relationship between the Ministry of Local Government and the Municipal Corporations at the same time that they expressed their awareness of such autonomy being largely rhetorical in nature, and that in practice "it is more a top-down approach versus a bottom-up approach" (S24), as was indicated by current planning staff. At the same time, participants

who had worked in the area of improving local governance were of the opinion that for local government to achieve independence and self-management there would need to be a "change management process on the ground constant over five to ten years"; that there was a need "to hold the people's hand and direct their thinking and their behaviour and their attitudes"; that the Ministry had to be the "vehicle", a "central resource" for the Parishes. (S28). The invocation of local government autonomy can therefore be interpreted as a device used by central government actors to establish distance, reinforce separation between the levels of government, and deflect responsibility for the manner in which the process of decentralisation had been executed. When decisions were to be taken in the interest of the central government, there appeared little difficulty in their authority being exerted.

When participants from the Ministry of Local Government were asked whether the participatory governance framework was operating in line with the Ministry's expectations and whether there were mechanisms to assess the participatory elements of the local planning process, the response was no, in both accounts, because "the PDCs ... do not report directly to the Ministry. they would report to the SDC" (S24). Although there was confirmation of the role of the Ministry for oversight of the planning functions and for supporting Municipal Corporations to develop and implement their local sustainable development plans, when asked about the extent to which this was being done, Ministry of Local Government participants were unable to identify a role for themselves in assuring the effective functioning of the participatory governance and planning processes on behalf of the citizens. Furthermore, they saw the community governance bodies as accountable to the ministry's agency and not to the citizens of the parish. This sense of the participatory governance framework being accountable upwards to the state and not to the community was best illustrated by the response to the question on why some parishes did not have active parish development committees, "They all report to the SDC". (S24). When asked why a particular parish did not have a parish development committee, it was treated as privileged information, despite the researcher asking as a citizen of the parish in question, with the response being," [that] is a peculiar situation, one which I cannot discuss with you" (S24). The participant subsequently revealed that it was a matter that only the Minister could address. The response to the question of why the Ministry of Local Government had not promoted and publicised the participatory governance framework was also instructive:

> I wouldn't say it's the Ministry of Local Government ... that is to do that, it is more the SDC ... though, if I am to be honest ... if they [the governance bodies] are not active, what grounds would they have to advertise ... to say this is a framework that you can use to put forward your position. (S24)

Clarification was sought on whether the policy direction would not need to be provided by the Ministry, if the participatory governance framework was not operating as it was expected. At that point, the participant acknowledged that there might be a gap in the policy oversight, "that's maybe where the tying up needs to be … there is [no] arm of the Ministry that supports exactly what they [SDC] do" (S24). At the same time that there was centralisation of authority, there was also a hands-off approach, a distancing from the responsibility for executing the change process, which in turn ensured the maintenance of the status quo.

While distance was identified between central and local government levels, disconnection was identified among actors at the central government level with adjacent responsibilities and similar expectations of the participatory processes. Conversations around the regulation of the community governance bodies further illustrated the disconnect between the efforts of public servants and their explicit expectations of the participatory governance processes. A participant involved in the design of the new registration process for community governance bodies was asked about the extent to which the possibility existed for negotiation and partnership with other registrars[10], who were already working with those bodies, the officer responded that, "It may come to that" (S23). While the participant indicated that they were not against discussion, and had actually had informal discussions with other registrars, the sentiment "it may come to that" revealed the extent to which collaboration was considered a last option. The participant continued to point out that in those informal discussions with other registrars a preference had been indicated for a clear separation of responsibilities. This focus on a clearly delimited domain of control while reflecting a reasonable orientation for a traditional bureaucracy, also reinforced siloism and division and undermined the stated intention for promoting the community governance bodies.

The participatory governance and planning processes were not only about improving the quality of democracy through inclusive decision-making, they were also a targeted strategy for national development. The island's National Development Plan: Vision 2030 references the local sustainable development planning process as one of the pathways for its implementation. The National Development Plan specifically speaks to the importance of applying local sustainable development planning in the tourism sector and commits the island to having local sustainable development plans in all parishes by 2030.

> The success of this National Strategy [Sustainable Urban and Rural Development] will be measured by the development and implementation

[10] To operate as a legal entity, participatory governance bodies would normally need to register as a charity or friendly society, and therefore legislation and related registries exist for that purpose. All Parish Development Committees are required to be registered as either a charity or friendly society to receive government funding.

> of local sustainable development plans in all parishes, and improved citizen participation at the local level. By 2030, all parishes will have sustainable development plans. (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2009, p. 257)

To create an appropriate framework for sustainability planning on the island, the national development plan commits island to "fully implement the local sustainable development planning framework" and "improve citizen participation in decision-making through Local Sustainable Development Planning" (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2009, p. 258). The Vision 2030 has also been defined as "the axis around which SDG implementation will be organized" (Planning Institute of Jamaica et al., 2017, p. 2). In discussing the achievement of these expectations for the participatory governance framework and the achievement of Vision 2030 several participants referenced lack of capacity of individual entities and actors in the system as a central problem. However, when pressed, they often revealed the underlying issue to be the absence of active mechanisms for coordination and integration of strategies across sectors. As the participant in the Ministry of Tourism indicated when asked about the level of partnership across Ministries and agencies to achieve the targeted outcomes for community-based tourism when the communities themselves had inadequate access to healthcare facilities, utilities and roads:

> there has to be a partnership ... Tourism can't provide the assurance to our guests, and provide the quality experience without the input of the other agencies ... I don't think we're doing enough to align the Vision 2030 ... in order for Vision 2030 to really succeed, those different working groups of the different Ministries must be happening and being coordinated ... it's there in the planning ... But ... that's strategic planning at a very bureaucratic level ... we could be doing more to energise people, and to really show that this is important ... persons will see more of the connection of what people are doing, how each Ministry's work is impacting the other. (S6)

The participant pointed to the lack of intersectoral coordination, noting that while a coordinating mechanism had been designed, it had not functioned. The matter seemed to be further compounded by poor communication practices across entities. In responding to the apparent lack of intersectoral coordination another participant involved in monitoring implementation of the Vision 2030 advised the following:

> We had some understandings which I've come to learn was not the case. [I thought] that the [names office] was the one responsible for ensuring

> alignment with Vision 2030. I have subsequently learnt … that no such thing was being done. (S14)

On the face of it this would appear to be relatively normal for complex bureaucracies. However, when it is taken into consideration that Vision 2030: The National Development Plan was produced in 2009, and the clarification the participant referenced occurred in 2021, a systemic level of organisational boundary maintaining appeared to have been in operation. This was not simply a case of poor communication and overwhelmed offices, but a complete absence of accountability for intersectoral coordination. After more than a decade of implementation the importance of engaged communication for the integration of local and national development planning, or even alignment of sectoral plans to the national plan was only being recognised, as the participant shared, "one of the things we recognise is that alignment requires … guidance. Telling entities to align without giving them the guidance has been a big problem" (S14).

Though inadequate capacity was raised as the reason issues of coordination and communication emerged, participants were also able to identify what they saw as the poor use of human and technical resources. As the participant expressed in relation to the coordination of central government actors working in the local governance space:

> there are a lot of people tripping over each other in a space competing for the resources available … among government entities … [with] overlapping mandates and not necessarily working together enough … if you speak to one entity they say one thing, if you speak to another entity, they say something else. (S14)

There was an acknowledgement of the need to work across organisational boundaries to better coordinate efforts and available capacities. There was even acknowledgement in the Ministry of Local Government on the need to address internal sources of disconnection, "each Division looks at it from their … particular process … there is a gap right there". (S24). There was however no accountability for such coordination, despite it being implicitly referenced in various elements of the policy framework.

Boundary Disrupting Relational Practice - Resource Sharing

While disconnection and distance characterised relations initiated by central government actors, participants provided a number of experiences of partnership and resource sharing at the local government level. Resource sharing as an interactional approach refers to the ways public servants

used relationships to offset the limited availability of material resources to fulfil their roles. Public servants worked across all possible domains to deliver services to communities. As participants described interactions at the local level, they spoke of the ability to operate outside of the constraints of their limited positional power and to engage in relational improvisation. Public servants at the local level revealed the ways in which they were provided with significant flexibility to do their jobs and were able to determine how they worked with other public servants and with community leaders. They described working creatively with members of the political directorate or other public servants to fulfil responsibilities in the absence of positional power. One participant assigned to a parish described how they were able to undertake community projects in the absence of sufficient funding from the central government head office:

> [I have] meetings with the MP[s] … and I say this is what I have planned, and so what are you going to give me … Once they say … I will do this … I will send my official letter and say remember based on our discussion, now is the time for it … And it is also now a competition against MPs … [there is a sports meet where] the four MPs come out … and … it's now a competition and it is also a bonding for the four of them … they come and we set up a little bar area, and they sit there and they drink … every year we have awards functions for the volunteers … and for the MP who gives me the most money. So again, that's a competition. I play them against each other, and I get my money. (S17)

Another public servant working at the local level related their strategy of reciprocal resource sharing:

> I am the only person in the department … How I really carry out my function is that I try to establish a good relationship with the other agencies. They will assist me with doing a lot of the stuff … I try to keep the relationships going … I try to eliminate a lot of the red tape so that they can call me if they need something, and I can pick up the phone and call them and get assistance … I treat them good, and they treat me back good. (S3)

At the parish level, SDC officers saw the PGF not necessarily as a means of strengthening democracy in the policy process, but as a mechanism to get support needed for the communities in their parishes which have been struggling. They saw themselves as being at the front lines of public service provision and their job as helping to make communities more liveable:

> we're all working to have the citizens of this Parish benefit from all that we do. … So, we work more as a team. As agencies, we share information, I can pick up the phone and call on another agency to say 'hey we need some support here, we're going into this space' … that has helped in terms of getting some of the things that the community groups advocate for. (S18)

7.4 Relational Practices Between Public Servants and Community Leaders

Five relational practices were identified between public servants and community leaders, as initiated by public servants. Bureaucratism was identified as a controlling relational practice, undertaken with the authority of the bureaucracy under the related legislation; co-optation, benevolent elitism, and information extractivism were boundary maintaining relational practices undertaken at the boundary between the government and the communities, and enabling partners was identified as a boundary disrupting practice. These are elaborated below with examples from the conversations.

Domain Controlling Relational Practices -Bureaucratism

Bureaucratism, as used here, refers to the extension of the administrative power of the state into the domain of the voluntary community organisations. While any involvement with state regulated processes requires some engagement in official procedures, bureaucratism characterises the transformation of the voluntary community organisation into a set of process-based state-directed activities. A distinction is therefore made between the systems of bureaucracy that provide effective administration of public services and the use of administration as an instrument of power over the citizenry (Smol'kov, 2000).

Bureaucratism as a relational practice was identified as distinct from the necessary work of the bureaucracy, as participants described relationships between public servants and community leaders which reflected a focus on controlling behaviours more so than on enabling local participation. This behaviour-control orientation was described in discussions on the regulation of the community governance bodies. As described, it did not appear to be governed by the same logic that was used to explain the participatory governance framework as a local development planning mechanism. Public servants indicated that community governance bodies, such as community development committees, needed support in being able to fulfil their expected functions as a permanent community resource

for maintaining representation of geographic spaces and working with citizens to participate in the channels of advocacy upwards to the Municipal Corporation. This was a challenge for the SDC because at the community level, the short-term nature of issues coupled with the movement of residents out of the community tended to undermine the *institutionalis-ability* of the community governance bodies. As a public servant working with the SDC explained, their primary concern was maintaining the functionality of the community governance bodies as structures around which citizen participation in local planning and decision-making could be mobilised.

However, as the Act gives the responsible Minister the authority to regulate the community governance bodies, public servants were actively working on crafting regulations for approval. One noted that the intention of the regulatory framework for the governance bodies was to address the confusion that international development agencies often created in the implementation of their programmes at the local level.

> USAID comes in, Global Affairs comes in, IDB comes in—everybody wants to set up their own little local government body that can respond to their own agenda, so you had a plethora of activities taking place at the local level with all kinds of different approaches. So that was total confusion. So, the SDC was going to be placed in its role as registrar to provide some streamlining. (S28)

As the officer indicates, another challenge faced at the local level was the creation of multiple types of governance bodies to fulfil the community organisation requirements for donor funding. This further supported the need to streamline the approach to creating governance bodies that could fulfil both community advocacy and development project management functions. However, as the process being considered was described, it appeared that the focus was on increasing the administrative burden for the community governance bodies. The regulatory function was to be a mechanism to give community governance bodies legal recognition and ensure that they maintained standards of operation set by the state. The motivation for the registration of local governance bodes appeared not to be to encourage participation in the local planning processes. Instead of the administrative discipline being directed at the state and international development agencies that needed to streamline their interactions with the communities, the regulatory processes were designed with the administrative burden directed at the communities. And community governance bodies would be required to maintain adherence to the regulations whether or not they were managing internationally funded projects. Entities would also risk deregistration if they were unable to maintain administrative requirements. Registration of community governance bodies would involve:

> they submit the application form, then we do what we call an inspection, where we actually want to see if all the documents that they have given us ... match up to what they say is happening on the ground. ... verify that how they say they operate, that's actually happening. ... There are 10 key documents that we require ... we have templates ... and the groups are expected to complete them ... The aim is to have the groups that are registered of a certain level of competence ... maintaining the standards of a legally registered group, it can be onerous sometimes, and so we'd want to ensure that the group that accepts this responsibility is of a certain competence. (S23)

Competence as a community advocacy body would be determined by their competence at managing paperwork. When discussing what would be different under the new registration requirements and comparing it to the assessments that were undertaken as part of the facilitation function, the participant indicated the assessment was "pretty much the review of documents and the conversation with groups". Whereas "the audit takes on so much ... especially the financial aspect". What came across in the conversation was that while the SDC would maintain the less rigorous assessments as a feature of their facilitation role, there was now a need for community governance bodies to prove themselves sufficiently competent to be included in the participatory governance process. This would be the focus of the audit role. The discussion on competence to participate in the participatory process was also interesting as no similar proof of competence was required for state entities to fulfil their role in the participatory process.

There was an acknowledgement by participants that the proposed requirements for community groups were onerous, and that the actual value for the groups themselves was rather limited, as groups would still need to conduct a separate entity registration to operate legally as a charity or any other form of enterprise. National registries already existed for charities, benevolent societies and cooperatives. The SDC had also previously developed listings for all community governance bodies based on the work that their parish officers conducted in communities across the island. Each community-based organisation, community development committee, development area committee and parish development committee, in order to be recognised as such, already operated under an agreed constitution, and was assessed every two years by the local SDC office. What was therefore being developed as a registration function was an additional level of bureaucratic control of these entities that would allow the state, through the SDC, to designate them as having achieved a particular competence standard to earn them the right to participate in local development planning. The participant did indicate that the whole matter of multiple registration was something that was

"under review" with the Ministry of Local Government. There was therefore still an opportunity to ensure that the bodies were not being unduly overwhelmed.

From the conversation it appeared that the community groups had become a series of requirements to be fulfilled and templates to be completed. The value of the groups to the community became less of a focus, and their performance would be assessed on their ability to meet administrative standards set by central government actors as opposed to their ability to mobilise the community to actively participate in local development planning. However, at the same time the work performed by public servants was described in a manner that framed it as vocational, transcending the administrative nature of the processes that the participant described. From the perspective of the public servant, working with community governance bodies was not an administrative exercise but work requiring commitment and passion,

> Governance too, is not an easy area. I believe that you really have to have a love of it. ... There has to be passion, there has to be drive ... Adult learning can sometimes be far more difficult than teaching younger persons. They need constant reinforcement and support and depending on the passion and the drive of the officer, you get different responses. (S23)

There therefore appeared to be a convergence of paternalism and bureaucratism in the work of public servants in designing the participatory processes for the engagement of communities in local development planning.

Boundary Maintaining Relational Practices-Co-optation and Benevolent Elitism

Co-optation and benevolent elitism, though identified as two separate relational practices, are described together here as they appeared to reinforce each other. The assignment to the community of responsibilities ordinarily the purview of the state is referred to here as co-optation. Community governance bodies were often simultaneously placed as having responsibility for community development and incapable of delivering it. As the participants described, such relations appeared to relieve the state of accountability for the development and implementation of local sustainable development plans, which became the responsibility of the Parish Development Committee. However, this co-optation took place alongside the positioning of communities in the participatory governance framework, not as capable partners in the development process, but as groups in need of the guidance and direction of the more capable citizens who populated the public service. This latter practice is referred to here as benevolent elitism.

In a parish, the Municipal Corporation and the principal community governance body, the parish development committee, are expected to lead the development and implementation of the local sustainable development plan in partnership. However, public sector participants would often position parish development committees as having primary responsibility. From the description of the central government participants, a functioning parish development committee was expected to operate almost as an extension of the state machinery,

> the parish development committees are required to continuously guide implementation of these plans, execution of the different components, to see ... what areas or medium they can get funding to execute the respective components. (S24)

This allowed the participatory mechanism to be used by the state as a means for accessing donor funding and having the community take responsibility for development work such as creating community access to potable water or roadways, activities which would traditionally be considered the responsibility of the local state apparatus.

However, other public servants indicated that parish development committees did not have the capacity to meet the expectations created for them. This was an issue raised by several public servants when discussing the ability of community governance bodies to work alongside the Municipal Corporation in governing the Parish. The overriding consideration appeared to be that the communities targeted to participate in the participatory governance framework, particularly those located in rural areas and lower socioeconomic levels of society (the majority of communities across the island) needed support to build their competence to organise and present themselves in the manner that would allow the public servants and political directorate in the parish to listen to them. Community leaders and community groups were considered to be in need of support from public servants to develop the skills necessary to advocate for the arms of the state to support the development of their communities. Public sector participants indicated that SDC provides hands-on capacity building that "literally take[s] the groups through various stages of development, from establishment to maintenance" (S23) so that they are able to build this capacity, "we give them the training and the advocacy skill to speak on behalf of the community they serve. ... [to] look at the whole issues affecting the community, from education to water, to child abuse" (S17).

Communities did not start out as equal partners in local development planning, they had to be groomed by public servants to learn how to "speak" on their behalf. As questions on the role of community groups in the participatory governance and planning process was discussed with participants in central and local government their limited capacity to participate in policy and planning

processes with the Municipal Corporation or to hold them accountable for implementation of the plans was consistently raised. The community governance bodies were being identified as responsible for working with the Municipal Corporation to guide and direct the local development of their communities but were evaluated as generally incapable of fulfilling that role, "most of the PDCs that we have across the island are still relatively weak, in terms of personnel, management structure, and their full understanding of what their roles and responsibilities are" (S25).

This assessment made by the central government officer with responsibility for oversight of the local governance function, was generally confirmed by local SDC officers, one of which responded that the capacity for holding the Municipal Corporation accountable was a level of capacity that their PDC had not yet been able to attain, "we are not at that point … we are still struggling with the PDC. And the PDC has challenges, real challenges as we speak" (S18).

Other public servants identified the problem as partially based in the capacity of individuals who attended the meetings of the community governance bodies:

> when I get a forum, I tell off my teachers and my nurses … I say it is we who cause Jamaica to be what it is … When the farmer or the normal man (sic) comes to the meeting, he's selected as the Chairman of this group, he's trained in all sorts of things by the SDC. His capacity is built, and [he reaches] up there and [starts to] advocate and get things done, and then eventually he will [become] a Councillor. You are going to say … 'that man (sic) can't represent me'. But you did not participate or come and share your education to build this space you are in, to be able to represent and advocate at another level so that your community can be better off. Sometimes when I hear the educated speak on radio [and] on TV, and they are giving all their nice ideas [of] what should happen, and I'm 'so why didn't you go to your DAC meeting or your PDC meeting or your CDC meeting to share that? Since you know what to do, why didn't you share it there?' (S17)

There was an understanding of the issue as based in the calibre of that persons representing the community. What would help development was having those with the educational background and socio-economic standing which would allow them to effectively communicate with state actors in the local development planning process,

> the middle-class persons … can make the change that needs to be made and hold our politicians accountable. But the little man (sic) whose self-esteem [is not at] that level is going to back off when they start [to] roll thunder. So,

> when you look on the groups that can stand up to … the agencies and walk the walk and talk the talk with them … these are the groups that move forward, and the community move[s] forward. The other groups now, the [SDC] officer has to be there to guide and push and sometimes talk on their behalf … [a] group that has professionals in it or retired civil servants, those groups make a difference because you can speak with authority. … we can give you the Act and you know how to read it and analyse it and can defend it. You'd have to one-to-one read it through and explain [it] to the normal man (sic), and he might not even get it, and still say something different. So, it is very critical for the middle class and the upper class to be part of these groups. Very critical, or we are not going to be moving as fast as we want to go. (S17)

This is an example of benevolent elitism that was reflected in conversations with public servants (and community leaders). The language used by the public servant could be interpreted as elitist, but the motivation is clearly benevolent, as the public servant expressed an emotional and professional investment in the development of the parish. The sentiment was echoed in statements made by other public servants speaking about community members. The public servant was therefore understood to be repeating a narrative generally accepted across society that being in the middle or upper classes meant that one had developed or had access to a capacity that the normal man could not be expected to possess. The public servant's reference to the need for the participation of the middle and upper classes in the participatory process, although reinforcing social and professional elitism, also gave an indication of the emancipatory work they believed that such inclusion could do on behalf of the wider community.

There was therefore the perception that those with the educational and economic means and exposure to development offered more to the local development planning process. This was reinforced by an officer from a Municipal Corporation who indicated, "we welcome returning residents … because they know what a proper municipality should run like. They know what a proper community-base should be" (S2). Such experiential elites reflected a resource for the community, and for the municipality the issue was how to have those elite members more involved.

There was also a tension between the positioning of community governance bodies as community organising and advocacy groups as opposed to units of local governance. As community advocacy groups, they would only need to exist where they were needed, where community members were disadvantaged, and with the involvement of those who could make a difference, those perceived

as influential and powerful members of the community. However, if they were understood to be institutionalised units of local governance, community governance bodies would be expected to represent each community regardless of the socioeconomic profile of the community members. This was the position of one public servant working in the area of national development planning:

> community development right now is focussed on communities that they think are problems … only marginalised communities seem to be recognised as communities? … So, when you live in a marginalised community efforts are made for you to understand your DAC, for you to understand your PDC, your CDC. When you live in middle class communities there is this perception that you don't live in a community for some reason, and that community development is not important to you or affects you. And so, because of where I live, there is no communication around any of those things … I always say to them that clearly, I don't live in a community because … they don't treat me like it is relevant to me. (S14)

This focus reinforces the benevolent elitism of the participatory governance framework. It is practiced as work done by the middle class to help communities that have not yet benefitted from development. This was reinforced by the fact that public servants responsible for managing the operation of the participatory governance and planning process were unlikely themselves to be involved in it as citizens. Only one of the public servants who participated in this research was an active member of the community governance body where they resided, and when asked what percent of their colleagues they believed were equally involved, responded, "No percent" (S17).

Some participants pointed to the fact that they did not have community governance bodies where they resided. SDC officers acknowledged that some communities were not represented in the participatory governance framework and indicated that more affluent communities did not need the advocacy support the community governance bodies were positioned to provide. Non-involvement of communities was understood, therefore, not as a matter of SDC targeting their resources to less affluent communities, but as a consequence of members of wealthier communities not requiring the participatory governance process to access resources and achieve community development goals. As an officer indicated, "the more well-off communities are more divorced from the process as they work within their citizen associations and neighbourhood watch meetings and often the [SDC] Community Development Officers are not engaged" (S15).

The explanation here is that communities which are considered middle class did not require the support of the SDC and did not request it. Therefore, the SDC go where they are most needed,

which happened to be communities with relatively significant development needs, and less community members with access to influence or the educational and socioeconomic status to advocate for their needs in a manner that would ensure a suitable response from state agencies and local politicians.

> The power brokers live in the [middle class] communities. They are friends. ... The MPs are their friends. They go to school together. They don't need [the SDC] ... they get results at their citizen association level and the community level. ... in Kingston, the MPs, the Councillors they do a lot of the work at the community level, they directly interface with them. (S16)

The participatory governance framework from this perspective was not about equitable democratic processes of local development, but about how to advocate access to available resources so that communities could fulfil their responsibility for their own development. However, the ability to advocate for access to development resources was more readily available to those with educational and socioeconomic status, those who did not need the participatory governance framework.

Boundary Maintaining Relational Practice - Information Extractivism

Information extractivism refers to the practice of state actors who used the participatory processes as a mechanism to extract data from communities without that extraction explicitly being channelled into benefitting the communities. The SDC collected data from communities to create community profiles and plans that were then used to inform the parish's local sustainable development plan. This allowed the state to not only involve communities in a planning process, but also extract valuable planning data. These community profiles, which also included data on the community organisations, became a resource for the state in a number of different ways, as one SDC officer described.

> we are told that every agency must try and seek funding for themselves. ... and the profiles [are] what we make most of our money from ... every quarter we update the listings, and we sell these listings ... we wouldn't sell a partner that information. But that is where we make some money from, to continue updating and making it relevant. (S17)

All local government public servants who responded to questions on the level of community involvement in local development planning indicated having experienced relatively high levels of community involvement in the planning phase of the development of the plan. Community groups were mobilised to participate in working group and visioning sessions. However, in two of the three

parishes included in this study, after their participation in the initial visioning and consultation process, the ongoing relevance of the plans to the lives of community members appeared to be less significant. The third parish was finalising their plan development process when this research was undertaken. It is therefore left to be seen whether the level of community participation in the plan implementation phase remains as high as in the information extraction phase.

The relationship between the state and the communities was understood as extractive, as in most cases plan documents were produced based on information provided by the communities, but once the information was captured it was then left to the state to manage that information however they deemed appropriate, including its sale to third parties. The plan document, not the implementation of the change reflected in the plan, became the product of the process. This came across clearly in one SDC officer's description of the process:

> they [the communities] were all there at the meetings and in the discussions and they also helped in collating and gathering information. … when the document was completed, again it was shared … in the document you see where they would have had pictures of different consultations. And I think that persons seeing themselves in those pictures meant a lot, to say that 'they valued me enough to put me in the final document' – that 'my information was indeed valuable' … for people, things move fast. Some persons by now, probably would have forgotten the sustainable development plan and even that they were a part of the process. … it is not that the [Municipal Corporation] is taking up the document all the time and showing persons … They would have forgotten that they actually participated in the process. … the man (sic) on the street will not hear about the local sustainable development plan. (S20)

It appeared the SDC officer was right in thinking that persons would not have recalled participating. This was confirmed by the leader of a community governance body in the parish who when asked about the involvement of community governance bodies and the citizens more generally in the process indicated that:

> we are the end of the chain … from my experience and my level of engagement [I] don't think that there is the level of awareness on that that there should be … there wasn't the inclusion throughout the process. So, whilst there should have been that integration of voices and consultation, I don't think that if you went to people today … they would have the

> awareness they should have. ... I don't think that they feel very much heard and included at this point. (NS2)

In this example, the role executed by the state could be understood as disempowering for the community, or at least reinforcing their powerlessness, as the community is used to legitimise a state-dominated planning process. However, even where the involvement of the citizenry in the plan development process might be considered extensive, public servants in the Municipal Corporation were not accountable for their use of the data in the planning process. This was revealed in a conversation with a director of planning for a parish, who after discussing their preferred elements of local development, was asked whether these had not been addressed in the local sustainable development plan against which development applications could be assessed and development projects promoted. The participant in response indicated that "I haven't read through the entire LSDP ... I don't want to say no, and it is actually there in the LSDP" (S12).

This does not mean that the Municipal Corporations disregarded the local sustainable development plans, but that there was no accountability to the community for its use in the local development process, and no requirement for ongoing engagement. As one SDC officer however indicated, the issue may be one of insufficient communication rather than intentional absence of responsibility:

> some of the actions that are being taken now in the communities are as a result of the sustainable development plan. ... maybe greater PR could be done to say to persons, maybe a sign could be put up to say, "this is as a result of the sustainable development plan being produced within this space". (S20)

Boundary Disrupting Relational Practice - Enabling Partners

Though a number of public servants labelled the work they did with communities as facilitatory, most of their descriptions revealed practices of benevolent elitism. Facilitation, or the disrupting relational practice I describe here as enabling partners, acknowledges the value the actor being facilitated brings to the relationship. Such interactions were described by public servants. In their stories of enabling partners public servants described interactions of facilitating, helping and supporting when referring to their work with the communities during the plan development process as opposed to the language of directing. In one example, a public servant recounted their participation in a community focus

group, led by central government technocrats, as part of the parish's local sustainable development planning process. The public servant described their contribution to those sessions as,

> I just sat in the workshop; I didn't really talk. I allowed persons to talk. I told them that it was not my show, this is your show. But if they needed support I could back them up … I try to not overshadow the community persons. I let them talk. … I always try to support them a lot because I know the work that they do is voluntary. They are not being paid for it at all. So just to be there, I would do that for them, and provide whatever answers they need. (S3)

The public servant told other stories about the ways in which they worked with the community, indicating an appreciation for the capabilities of community members, and described their work as a public servant as being responsible for supporting the expression of those capabilities:

> they called me and invited me to Bahamas for the CEDEMA Conference and allowed me to bring two persons from the community. I get a lot of those opportunities to expose people. … a lot of those opportunities will come to me, and I can pass it on to persons. My job allows me to do that. (S3)

With an awareness of the practices of nepotism and clientelism, the public servant was quick to note that when provided with such opportunities it was important to be "fair" and not preference the relatives of work colleagues over the community development partners.

Another public servant that described practices of enabling partners was more explicit in their reference to the importance of acknowledging the value that the community brings to the relationship. As they described the types of projects they worked on with rural communities in the parish, they made the point that the preferences of communities have to be respected. Despite resources being scarce, and a significant part of the public servant's time taken up with identifying grant funders and writing project proposals, they communicated understanding and respect for communities whose decisions were not in line with their own. There was an appreciation that ultimately it was up to the community to decide whether they wanted to work with a donor or not. In telling the story the public servant reaffirmed the importance of being respectful and relatable when interacting with the community,

> [the funders] were willing to give young men, youth farmers funding, but it came with the caveat that it must embrace gays and lesbians … And the community said [no] … But [ordinarily] the groups … are more than willing

> to try, and they're always willing to learn, they're eager to learn, even with their limitations. ... they are not stupid, don't treat them as if they are stupid. Don't come flouting language that is just not relatable. ... they are willing and capable, if given the chance. (S18)

The acknowledgement of the value and capabilities of communities differentiate such relational practices from those of benevolent elitism. It was enablement, as one public servant indicated, it was the efforts that went “outside of training and letting them know how to manage a community organisation” (S8). Interactions based on teaching, directing, guiding, often positioned the community as lacking, and positioned the public servant as the knowing doer. Interactions that enabled community members as partners acknowledged that both parties, the state and the community, had something to offer to the relationship. The relationship was based neither on extraction nor on giving, but was one of mutual respect, in which the capability of community members was reaffirmed in the process.

7.5 SUMMARY

This chapter presented findings on the relational practices of public servants in the design and implementation of local sustainable development planning and participatory governance processes. The processes were understood as designed and implemented in domains of central and local government, the state and community, across individual organisations, and involving public servants and the political directorate at both levels.

The experiences and practices described by participants indicated patterns of relating between public servants and members of the political directorate, among public servants, and between public servants and communities, and reflected four types of relational practices: controlling, surviving, boundary maintaining, and boundary disrupting.

Public servants, particularly those at the central government level, mainly performed surviving and maintaining relational practices to fulfil their roles in the processes. The processes were carried out in a highly partisan political environment which public servants navigated by using *adaptive incrementalism* to survive the constraints imposed by the political directorate by modifying their expectations and adjusting their achievement strategies. Many of the relational practices among public servants were understood as part of the bureaucratic logic of public administrations. However,

central government public servants practiced primarily boundary maintaining relational practices with colleagues. Conversations with public servants appeared to acknowledge the institutional environment as unsupportive of boundary disrupting relational practices and though they did not describe practicing them, they identified them as necessary. Boundary disrupting practices among public servants were practiced almost exclusively in the local government domain.

Having explored, in this chapter, the relational practices of public servants in the participatory governance and local development planning processes, the next chapter explores the relational practices of community leaders in the same processes.

CHAPTER EIGHT

RELATIONAL PRACTICES OF COMMUNITY LEADERS

8.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter continues the exploration of conversation transcripts with the 27 public servants and five community leaders to answer the question W*hat are the relational practices and experiences of public servants and community leaders involved in the local development planning processes?* While the previous chapter focused on the practices and experiences of public servants, this chapter focuses on the practices and experiences of community leaders, as indicated Table 8-1. Although only five community leaders participated in the conversation, as in the previous chapter, the relational practices identified are informed by participants in all domains. As also indicated by the table, this chapter is organised to present the findings on the relational practices of community leaders in relation to public servants, other community leaders (the wider community) and the political directorate. Section 8.5, not referenced in the table, summarises the chapter.

Table 8-1 :Relational Practices Experienced and Practiced by Community Leaders

Section	Initiating Actor	Relating to	Type of Relational Practice	Practice
8.2	Community Leaders	Public Servants	Domain Surviving	Participatory prudence
				Reverse co-optation
			Boundary Disrupting	Enabling partners
				Accessing influence
				Information exchange
8.3	Community Leaders	Community	Boundary Maintaining	Benevolent elitism
				Resource conflict
8.4	Political directorate	Community Leaders	Domain Controlling	Discretionary authority
			Domain Surviving	Reverse exploitation

8.2 RELATIONAL PRACTICES BETWEEN COMMUNITY LEADERS AND PUBLIC SERVANTS

Between community leaders and public servants, five relational practices were identified, two categorised as surviving practices, and three categorised as boundary disrupting practices. Participatory prudence and reverse co-optation as domain relational practices took place in the domain of the community, but in relationships in which community leaders and members were

positioned as subordinate. The boundary relational practices identified were all disrupting and reflected the navigation of boundaries between the state and communities in ways that sought to redistribute power. These are elaborated below with examples from the conversations. In describing the relational practices references are made to both community leaders and community members, the latter used in reference to descriptions that were applied to the community generally.

Domain Surviving Relational Practices

Two relational practices are described under this subheading: participatory prudence and reverse co-optation.

Participatory Prudence

The relational practice of participatory prudence reflects the ability of community members to assess the intentions and practices of the state against their best interests as individuals and the needs of their communities to decide whether or how to engage in the participatory governance process. Participatory prudence underscores the *voluntary* nature of the participation of community leaders and other community members in the participatory governance and local development planning processes. Public servants had specific roles and responsibilities in governance and planning processes for which they were compensated: it was their job. For community members, not only was there no legal requirement for their participation, there was also no established remuneration, and often no means for reimbursement of expenses to participate in regular meetings of the participatory governance entities.

Community participation was discussed by participants as a matter of individual prerogative. Although community leaders and public servants noted the importance for community members to see the practical benefits of volunteering their time and effort, they tended to refer to low levels of citizen participation in local planning processes as an indication of a reduced sense of responsibility. As a community leader spoke in defence of the efforts of the SDC to mobilise communities around the participatory governance process:

> volunteerism is dying, and the [community] organisations are not as active as they were ... the volunteerism, it's just very difficult, and they [the SDC] are not getting the traction [with the communities]. (NS7)

Another community leader, who immigrated to the island as an adult, shared their belief that the problem was with a general culture towards charity and volunteerism,

> We don't really have in Jamaica a spirit of charity and volunteerism the way I am used to. People often look at the work I do and think I must be gaining from it. (NS2)

Public servants, who though not themselves engaged in the participatory governance processes as citizens, complained about the low participation rates in communities,

> The citizens, they really don't take any responsibility. They believe that everything falls on the MCs [Municipal Corporations], and if something does not get implemented it is the MCs fault and ... where the MC asks for a community consultation persons won't come ... nobody shows up, and when the plan is published persons complain and say that they never had an input. ... when in truth and in fact 'you were asked, and you just never showed up'. (S26)

There was however an acknowledgement that the state had a role to play in encouraging persons by making them aware of the channels available to them to participate in decision-making for their communities,

> A lot of them they don't know. The regular man (sic) doesn't know that this form of framework exists ... most of us don't know. So, we just say well the politician is putting forward something for us. ... if we do anything we are more likely to just say alright, let us get a placard and go out there. But in terms of active engagement, active consultation ... in terms of writing, putting forward our positions, most persons don't know that they can take such a step, or how they can collaborate to put forward [their position]. (S24)

Though it appeared the officer was acknowledging the failure of the state to support citizen engagement, possibly the realisation of the implication of the statement caused the participant to shift the responsibility for citizen participation from the state to the community. Instead of the state not sufficiently promoting the participatory governance framework, the problem became community members being uninterested and not taking their responsibilities as citizens sufficiently seriously,

> apart from maybe lack of awareness, lack of education, in some cases, it is lack of interest ... maybe I am a part of a community, and I am seeing that it is in a deteriorated state ... it is my responsibility as a community member to say how I can make this ... better. (S24)

While conceding that the public sector had a role in mobilising the community, public servants were inclined to position community members as ultimately responsible for their level of participation. As one central government participant noted:

> persons need to want to participate more. … we try to just go with a blank slate and to hear the issues and to try and work with you as best as possible … We can't … always listen to what people have to say. Because sometimes you just have to take that hard line, and what's good for the greater good. But we need more engagement, and true engagement of our people. … [but] they need to want it. (S6)

There was also a realisation that since "we can't always listen to what people have to say", this would likely affect the way that community members engage,

> when you invite them [citizens to community consultations], as part of the engagement, who turns up? Maybe out of a population of 2,000 or more, 5 persons come, 4 persons come, 3 persons come. And they say 'well you are going to do what you want to do anyway, so just do what you want to do, you don't need to hear my [voice]' … they don't take a position to say … let the records show that I actually said this … they just say you are not going to do anything so let me not even say anything. Or let me not waste my time to come. (S24)

Though public servants and community leaders both referenced the 'death' of volunteerism, most community leaders identified what appeared to be the larger issue of what was referred to as disrespect for volunteerism by the state. Community leaders pointed out that the use of meetings as an engagement mechanism was counterproductive to the participatory governance process. The physical meeting in the community centre, a place for the community to gather and participate in training workshops and lectures, has historically been the way the SDC engages communities (Burke, 1952; C. Johnson, 1982). Community leaders however proposed that approach was no longer practical, or reflective of the way that most community members preferred, or could afford, to spend their time. One community leader made the point that the low turnout rate to meetings was not due to lack of interest on the part of community members, but lack of resources,

> the problem is economic. How many people can afford 500-1000 dollars to attend meetings once a month to participate? … I have the highest respect for volunteers in my parish because they are donating their time and money

> to participate in governance. ... I don't tolerate any disrespect. In this case there is no mechanism for them to be refunded of the taxi fares and all that stuff. Until we can do that ... we need to use technology to support the development initiatives we are dealing with. (NS1)

For these community members, the issue was not the death of volunteerism, but a system designed by public servants that did not take into account the material realities of community members and had not evolved with the available technology. Attending meetings was not the way that many community members wanted to participate, as reinforced by other community leaders,

> Persons are willing to listen and want to find out what is happening. ... But if they are asked ... to share in a workday or so, people will volunteer, but not–they don't have that commitment to say, "I have to go to meetings". ... they don't see it as necessary ... They prefer that persons come back from the meeting and tell them what is happening. (NS8)

> People don't these days want to sit in an hour-long community meeting ... Particularly young people ... You can't possibly expect them to come out to your weekly or monthly community meeting ... We need to find a new way of transmitting information and getting things done. (NS2)

Still, some community leaders understood meeting attendance as an investment of time and effort that reflected an individual's commitment to the community, and as such that community leader believed that those who did not participate were "passive members". (NS8)

However, the issue was not just about attending meetings. Community leaders noted there were other ways that communities experienced the disrespect of the state. As a community leader reflected on what they called the indifference they felt was the worst challenge they faced in trying to advance the work of their community governance entity,

> there is a certain amount of indifference, and indifference can be almost worse than roadblocks. ... the culture around volunteerism and community work isn't that well-promoted. It isn't that well-respected, or looked upon as anything to be celebrated, and so there's a certain amount of indifference ... you hardly ever find a person will come to you to help, to say "well you know we're doing this, so we want to bring you in so you can gain too". That kind of attitude is never really a part of the equation. (NS2)

What this community leader appeared to be asking for was for public servants in the parish to perform more enabling partner relational practices. Participatory prudence can therefore be understood as citizens' response to the state's approach to participatory governance. That is, the indifference of the state was met with passive engagement by community members. If locally made decisions could be overturned by the central government, if the state maintained no accountability to the community for how they used the results of the planning processes, and if there were few tangible opportunities for communities to create a difference, what incentive existed for community members to invest their time and efforts in the participatory governance processes?

Participatory prudence practiced by the community leaders, emerged as a response to the controlling bureaucratic practices of the state. The state was understood as indifferent and disrespectful to the needs and realities of the communities, and therefore communities responded with the power they had available to them, they managed the way they participated in the process. As the community leader explained,

> the SDC has its own mandate and we have our own mandate and I am very conscious of the fact that whilst we report to them we have to be autonomous ... we can't be too enveloped to the point where people see us as one entity ... we are very closely related to the SDC and they support our work, they govern our work, but ... there needs to be a level of autonomy ... in terms of the governance structure, and the work, and the conditions, and the hindrances, and the bureaucracy, there has to be a revision because we are volunteers, but yet, we are volunteers who are almost working like we are ... part of a Ministry or an agency. (NS2)

A year after having that conversation, the community leader advised that they had given up their position in the participatory governance entity because, "there needs to be a review of [the participatory governance body's] role, effectiveness, function and relationship with the SDC". The community leader had therefore decided to make use of their prerogative to participate in the governance process with the state and decided it would be prudent to stop such participation until a review had been conducted.

Despite the reference by another community leader to the passivity of community members, there was evidence, from the range of stories told by both public servants and community leaders, that community members made rational calculations about their participation in the governance processes and determined how best to engage with the work of participatory governance bodies,

based on the related costs. As a public servant noted, reflecting on the process of developing the local sustainable development plan for his parish,

> trying to get people to buy in ... the people have realised ... we thought it was only educated people talking about plans being made and being shelved. At the local level, they say 'people come to us and talk about this great grand plan and 30 years pass and we don't see anything, so you guys coming with this thing, we're not interested'. We had to go through the route to convince them, sway them to just participate, because we did not realise that the people were that stressed and were just giving up ... (S5)

Both the decision to participate and to not participate could therefore be understood as emancipatory ways of relating to the state: to either take advantage of the systems available to benefit their communities or to not engage in a pretence of participatory governance for which there would be little benefit to the community. These were not binary positions but were contextual and provided a way of engaging with the system at a variety of levels. Therefore, it was evident from the conversations that the community members were able to make calculations about their participation and chose to participate in ways that provided the best returns for them and their communities.

Reverse Co-optation

Reverse co-optation refers to the ability of community leaders to use the co-optation of the state to the advantage of the community, with the full awareness of the political strategising that was taking place. Like public servants, community leaders also had to deal with the almost absolute power of the political directorate. They however experienced political discretion in different ways, depending on the particular politicians they had to work with,

> the councillors and the members of parliament are still doing their thing ... they hear about our local sustainable development plan, but to say that they use that as a reference in anything at all would be stretching the truth ... (NS1)

The community leader quoted above, while acknowledging their prerogative to participate, was prepared to find the appropriate central government actors to work with if the political directorate at the local government level was not amenable or capable. This person was also quite aware of the quality of the relationship between local and central government and was therefore willing to span the boundary between the two,

> the decisions are not made locally. The decisions are made in Kingston and handed down to the local people here … It's a lottery system between the Ministry of Finance and the various Ministries. … the people down here very rarely get a chance to have any input on any budget, especially [the] capital budget … I am forcefully advocating that it is better we abort this project right now than to continue with these gaps in the system because … I am not going to be associated with it if we get a sham or we are playing a little game. (NS1)

At the time of the conversation the community leader was preparing for a meeting with officers at the central government level and had previously facilitated a meeting between the Mayor of the parish and senior public servants in central government. Based on their *access to influence*, the community leader was able and willing to bridge the boundaries between the local and central government levels.

State actors considered the implementation of the parish's development plans a significant responsibility of the participatory governance bodies. This co-optation of the participatory governance groups to take responsibility for work that in many cases reflected the generally understood obligations of the state, such as the provision of roads and water, was seen positively by both local public servants and community leaders. There was an empowerment of community groups that came from them being a mechanism through which local government actors could access donor funding. If the state could see the community as instrumental to accessing resources, then the community could use that to their advantage,

> many of our councillors were of the view that [the participatory governance bodies] were here to undermine them and usurp their authority. But over time they have seen the usefulness of these groups. … most of the donors or funders, if it's not coming through a community group, you can't get it. And so, they now see that they have to somehow align themselves with the group, to have the group rubber stamp it sometimes to say, 'hey we know about it, and we are part of it'. (S18)

From the perspective of the public servant, it is in the interest of the community to be able to use the available leverage to forge a meaningful relationship with their political representatives. It was about understanding the value of the relationship for the other party, particularly when the other party had greater position power. Having a mechanism that provided leverage for communities

created equity in the relationship between community and politician – and therefore between the community and the state.

> with time the [politicians] have embraced it– the participatory framework. And we have actually said to them, it would be useful if you visit the community groups, and share your thoughts and ideas, and have them share theirs. (S18)

Community leaders also commented on the fact that the new relationship could prove more beneficial to local politicians if they were inclined to see the communities in this more instrumental light,

> the Councillors of the Municipal Corporation feel that the [Parish Development Committee] is encroaching on their power, taking away some of their status. What they don't realise is that if you work with the PDC, if you work with the community organisation, maybe they will have to use [a] bulldozer to take you out of power. (NS3)

The community leader quoted above was encouraging the strategic use of the participatory governance bodies by local politicians—to create relationships with communities and solidify their political position, thereby making it difficult for any competing politician to remove them from power.

Some of the empowerment that community leaders received appeared personal rather than collective. For one community leader their positioning by public servants and politicians as equal, appeared to be valued as a reflection of due recognition and regard:

> [on] the Local Sustainable Development Committee ... my voice carries a lot of weight. The respect that is given to me–some of the time little tears fall when I see the kind of respect pouring out from persons like the Custos, the Chief of Police … the Fire Chief, everybody. When I am at the platform, they are listening, [not just to me], but the wisdom [I have to share]. And … when I meet with the Minister ... at that level … the respect is there, nationally, locally. … history will be written that [full name] is a part of [those] signatures that put the Parish Development Committees, within the Parish, within the island, embedded in the Constitution of Jamaica. (NS3)

For this community leader, the process was not experienced as co-optation but as inclusion. The show of respect they received and the elevation of their status as they were recognised by, and

among those they regarded highly, oriented them to embrace state co-optation. For other community leaders, the close relationship with the state was also seen as important for community success.

> We [the Development Area Committee] can't function without them [SDC]. And so, we have now to ensure that we operate within their mandate. ... we have to work with ... what they need us to do. ... If we just go by ourselves, then if success comes, perhaps it would have been better if we had collaborated with those bodies. (NS8)

The bureaucratism and control by the state was not only acknowledged by community leaders but appeared to be accepted, to a point. For the community leaders, despite the meetings, reporting expectations, and development project responsibilisation, the processes provided power through the creation of strategic relationships.

While the state engaged in a form of co-optation, that co-optation was embraced by community leaders for their own emancipatory practice. Therefore, while the participatory governance framework was used by public servants and politicians as a mechanism to co-opt communities and use them to shift responsibility for local development and as a mechanism to access international development funding, community leaders leaned into these relationships to extract the resources necessary for the communities they represented.

There could be an argument, from a governmentality perspective, that reverse co-optation does not actually exist. Making community leaders feel that they have power in the system could be a strategy to maintain the status quo. By giving them positions of status and giving them access to relationships with individuals who hold power in the society, community leaders would be incentivised to reinforce the prevailing balance of power. Although this could be a legitimate way to interpret the relationship between the state and community leaders, there is another interpretation based on Creole island history and context. The importance of relationships in a relatively small postcolonial island society is not lost on community leaders. The reality of the distribution of power, globally and nationally, forces them to be pragmatic and take a moderate view towards what change and how much change is possible within a given period of time:

> with the greatest of intention and the will ... When you take a deep look at it and get into every little thing, we are a very poor country. ... and we have become poorer since last year. ... the 2030 plan is going to work out to a 2040 plan. So, to avoid frustration it is always good to be realistic. ... whatever I can do in the meantime to improve the quality of life, even a little

> bit in our … development areas, until better comes, that's the way it is going to be. (NS1)

Boundary Disrupting Relational Practices

Three relational practices are described under this sub-heading: enabling partners, accessing influence and information exchange. The first two are described together.

Enabling Partners and Accessing Influence

Enabling partners and accessing influence, though identified as two separate relational practices, are described together here as they were seen to reinforce each other when deployed as practices by the community. Community governance bodies obtained a strategic position to support their communities through their role in local sustainable development planning provided with. However, the value of that positioning was only realised if the individuals leading those bodies were able to establish strong relationships with public servants and the political directorate. If they were able to establish strong relationships, community leaders were able to act more effectively on behalf of communities and were less likely to have state agencies act indifferently towards them. However, community governance bodies not only accessed the influence of the public sector to achieve their objectives, depending on their membership, they were also able to provide them with influence. As a local government public servant recounted the support that he received from the local community leadership in engaging central government actors in the development of the parish's local sustainable development plan,

> we had to move to the technical level … in … all the agencies, to convince them to buy into our idea … I guess because it didn't come through them to us, they felt like … the bottom-up approach shouldn't take place … it's like we were going up the ladder, to try gently and nicely [to] knock on the door … luckily for us we had … persons of influence … these were people with clout [who] helped to move in like a bulldozer and start knocking down … if they didn't get their way with the technocrats, it would move over to the politicians … we started to knock the walls down, little by little. (S5)

Relationships between local government public servants and the wider community meant that they could work together in obtaining involvement of, or approvals from public servants and politicians at the central government level. Community leaders were also able to support local government public servants in directing local politicians. While the officer indicated that most local

politicians had "international exposure" and were amenable to the local sustainable development planning process, they noted that if relations with local politicians were to become a challenge, they knew that they could call on, "the movers and shakers to influence them" (S5).

In referencing the parish development committee, senior public servants in the Municipal Corporation were therefore able to refer to the relationship as a "partnership" and as "supportive" (S4). The relationship with community leaders was not only valuable because of their ability to ease relations with central government, but also in their ability to provide access to material support. As one public servant noted when referring to the support received from the parish development committee to pursue a short course in China,

> as a governmental organisation we cannot get certain funding … when I went to China, the Council didn't pay a dime, the PDC paid the plane fare to China and paid for my hotel and gave me my per diem because they were able to attract the funding as an NGO. … each has a critical role to play. (S4)

Working together meant valuing what each respective group had to offer to the relationship. The parish development committee chair was aware that their ability to provide support to the Municipal Corporation contributed to the quality of the relationship they were able to cultivate between the two bodies,

> They [the Municipal Corporation] have been very responsive, because of my contacts … I am just making life a little easier. I have a lot of contacts … It is just to help, to serve the people that these contacts are cultivated. (NS1).

There was an understanding of the imperfect ways in which the government operated, and any power available to community leaders to navigate the imperfect system was welcomed. The community leader explained how the cultivation of influential contacts proved useful by recounting an issue that had arisen because the Municipal Corporation had given approval to the housing agency to place a sewerage system beside an existing residential community. The community had been promised a consultation and it had not materialised. The members of the existing residential community sought the intervention of the community leader, and he "contacted [the head of the central government agency]." (NS1).

The community leader felt supported and empowered by the system, not because the system and the actors were necessarily supportive, but because as the community leader they understood the system, its weaknesses and strengths, and knew how to work with and around them. There was no contradiction between government agencies not abiding by the rules, and the community leader

using their contacts and friendships to obtain responsiveness from state actors. As an individual who invoked a belief in governance and a rights-based development approach, the community leader understood their approach as the best way to obtain justice from the existing system,

> there is a way … to having the authorities recognise your rights. … the most important thing is your rights. If you have no understanding or appreciation of the meaning of your rights, then you are a lost soul. This can have an effect on development. I am creating awareness … so that everyone can be held more accountable. (NS1)

When community leaders had positions in the public service, their access to information and influential contacts made a significant difference for their community organisations,

> It is my understanding … of the Government, why I was able to get for example support from UAF [Universal Access Fund], from JSIF [Jamaica Social Investment Fund], in refurbishing the building—It is my information … as a public servant … that would have helped me to ensure that when the Government is spending money on a community access point, the money is being spent properly … So yes, it's really my knowledge and experience as a public service person that would help me a lot with respect to the development … many persons are not aware of JSIF, but I use them to refurbish our building … there's UAF, which they are now paying our internet connection, which is expensive by the way, they pay it on a monthly basis. (NS7)

Becoming embedded in the participatory governance framework can provide community leaders with valuable resources to support their communities. In addition to gaining knowledge of projects, and resources that might be available from the public sector to help their community members, they also have access to people and the opportunity to form and make use of valuable relationships.

Not all community leaders had such access, but those who did made use of it. The community leadership position by itself did not provide access, it was simply a position from which to work. It was the relationships and access that the leaders were then able to cultivate that made the difference. Community leaders used the levels of access they had and worked where and with whom they needed to. There was an awareness of the operating environment and the options available. It was therefore

about understanding when to engage, who to engage and how to engage, to obtain the best possible outcomes for their organisations and the change-making effort of which they were a part.

Information Exchange

Though information exchange is considered by some to exist on the lower level of citizen participation (Arnstein, 2019/2019; Bowen, 2005) individuals described having access to information on state plans and projects as valuable and potentially disruptive to the status quo. In referring to information exchange and not only access, I go beyond the notion of community groups passively receiving information from the state, to actively seeking information, actively supplying information and holding the state accountable for its use.

Therefore, while the participatory governance framework provided a mechanism for public servants to extract data from communities to use as a planning resource and as a revenue source for agencies, communities were also able to use it as a mechanism to access resources for the benefit of the community. Speaking specifically of the role of the parish development committee, one community leader noted –

> I find that the information that is there and the resources that are there to help the people often don't reach the people just because there isn't that bridge of communication. ... we are that bridge between those services, those resources, that help, that means of development, and the people. (NS2)

What comes across is the limited means that community members appear to have in accessing information on state services and resources that should be available to them as citizens of their parish. The community leader also seemed to understand that participation and inclusion in decision making processes was not the primary concern of citizens, rather information about opportunities was. They noted this in responding to a question about how communities feel about not being involved in decision making around major development projects in their communities. They noted that at the end of the day what people wanted were opportunities and therefore, whether they were consulted or not, it was the knowledge of the opportunities that would become available that was most pertinent to them.

> people are always hopeful that anything new that comes, they will be able to be a part of it. Most of the time it's about jobs, that they will be able to get a job there. ... that some way they will be able to benefit economically,

> in a way that isn't just two weeks of work. That they will have long-term sustainable employment. So, with every development that comes, there's a degree of optimism and hope. (NS2)

Although participation and inclusion would be greatly appreciated, knowing what the opportunities were and how to access them was more valuable. Therefore, while the process of information extraction by the state could be seen as reinforcing community disempowerment, the ability of the community to extract information from the state on available opportunities returned some of that power to them. Community leaders used the mechanism of the participatory governance framework to position themselves as public sector insiders, to acquire information and contacts that they could use for the benefit of their communities.

There were also other ways in which community leaders used the information accessible through the participatory governance process. An SDC parish manager shared a story of how information exchange had the ability to empower communities. What might have been intended as a box-ticking consultation exercise for a state agency provided a community with access to information that they were then able to use to hold the state accountable through acts of civil disobedience. The example showed that while the participatory governance framework could be used by state agencies to facilitate the fulfilment of consultation process requirements, the community could also obtain value from such state-community interactions,

> It was an actual, physical demonstration … a number of persons were arrested for it, but they said, 'this is another Paul Bogle moment, because we have heard before that we're going to get the road, this is the money allocated for it and now you're telling us that no'. … as part of that [local sustainable development plan] … and the visioning we would have had [with state agencies] … [but now] here comes this new discussion … so people got incensed about it … So, the framework has allowed for informed participation and interpretation of what is to take place and allow them to be more critical in analysing and accepting what ought to come. … Which has allowed them a voice in the discussion which under normal circumstances you just see a bulldozer come in to clear the space and you say, 'is what going on over there?'. … It gives them an opportunity to question, not to challenge per se, but to question and to want to learn more and want to be part of … [planning] their future. (S18)

Although the point was made that challenging state authority was not the intention of the communities, they were willing and able to demand answers to their questions, particularly when they felt unjustly dealt with. The ability to access state information provided a means of empowering communities by allowing them to hold public servants and politicians accountable for the information shared and the commitments given.

> One community leader pointed to the ways in which the participatory governance framework, as an information exchange mechanism facilitated not only communication between the community and the state, but intra-parish communication, enabling the Parish Development Committee to better hold the state accountable: "they [the CDCs and DACs] bring all the information into the PDC so that it can be brought to the attention of the Municipal Corporation ... making sure that all the communities are serviced" (NS1).

For this community leader, community members were not passive suppliers or receivers of information. Nor was the exchange of information only about providing data on state services and resources. It was about ensuring that community members knew their rights and the standards of service to which they were entitled. The process provided a means of getting community members to have a seat at the table. For that community leader, information was a first step in having community members understand what they should expect from the state because "people don't have enough information" (NS1). For community leaders, being part of the development planning processes therefore meant that they could prepare the community for any expected development and help the community establish clear expectations of the state,

> at the end of the day, when this plan comes ... when the opportunity comes ... All these people were part of the [the process] to pull this local sustainable development plan and the tourism development plan as well. We are prepared. (NS3)

Having access to the information was considered a first and crucial step. Community leaders were also appreciative of the relationships between the community and the state created through the participatory governance and planning processes. As part of the ongoing process of state-community interaction, the SDC established interagency committees in each parish, which allowed all service providers of the state to meet regularly with the community leadership in the parish,

> the interagency representatives have learnt a lot and they are more aware of the concerns and the effect of their services and how they perform their services. Because I make no apology when I bring up these things. … I am not afraid to send a letter to the head office, if I find that there is any infringement of the rights of people, or service can be improved or if they are focussing on the wrong things. (NS1)

The community leader used the deliberative spaces provided by the SDC as an opportunity for advocacy, even as they believed that if left up to the state, such spaces would be used for agency self-promotion. Therefore, they saw an opportunity in the system, not designed for them, but which they could take advantage of for the benefit of their community. However, even though there was appreciation, there was also frustration, and episodes of disillusionment, as indicated in the reflection of the community leader on a particular incident with a state entity,

> we were working with them in this parish on a series of training for young people … when they got a call from Kingston that they must drop what they were doing and start to train about BPO. … You get 50 people together and do the assessment … and because head office says stop what you are doing– You don't even go back to these people and say have a meeting … So therefore, although we have every development agency promoting this bottom-up theory, in reality … too many decisions are taken [in Kingston]. (NS1)

The community leader was aware of the need to be vigilant when dealing with the state and understood their position under the 2016 Local Governance legislation as empowering them to do exactly that. While the state held power as managers of the planning process, community leaders and community members were still able to use their participation in that process to access information about state resources, services, and plans. They were also prepared to use the information to hold the state accountable, even if that meant inciting civil disobedience.

8.3 Relational Practices Between Community Leaders and the Community

Between community leaders and the community two practices dominated the descriptions provided by participants, both of which were categorised as boundary maintaining.

Boundary Maintaining Relational Practices

Two relational practices are described under this subheading: benevolent elitism and resource conflict. However, resource conflict reflects the ways public servants described the relational practices among community members, and not how community leaders referred to their relations with the community.

Benevolent Elitism

The benevolent elitism identified among public servants was not particular to that group. A version of that was also identified in the conversations with and about community leaders. As noted in chapter seven, benevolent elitism emerged in the context of an understanding of the wider environment and the factors that affected community competitiveness in that environment. As such, one community leader considered the capacity of the leader at the parish level as a possible challenge when thinking about the ability of the parish to successfully navigate the development and implementation of its local sustainable development plan,

> the guy who is the leader, nice guy and passionate and thing, but I don't know that he would be respected by people generally, based on the things that he ... just based on his own standing. [He] is just a little man ... and I'm not being discriminatory or anything, but I don't know that he has the capacity ... if I should use him, in that crucial position, to assess our position, I would say we have a problem ... In order to manage the Council, you have to be very strong, not disrespectful or anything, but you have to be very strong ... I'm sorry for the PDC ... You need people who have the know-how, not just the passion but the know-how and what development looks like. (NS7)

The community leader was aware that in order to lead the development of the parish certain skills were needed, which he did not see in the leader at that time. For this leader development as an end and not a process. Development as an end (economic growth) was only achievable under the leadership of those who had the requisite knowledge and experience of what development looks like.

At the community level not all expressions of elitism were understood as well-meaning. As one parish manager described the more affluent residents in a community mostly made up of former members of the diaspora returned to the island after several decades abroad. As described by the parish manager, it was an elitism that emphasised division rather than benevolence, resulting in the returning residents not being integrated into the participatory governance framework,

> the returnees are of the view that 'I have gone to a first world country, and I am exposed to this, and I am telling you that this is how it is to be done, and I will not support it if it's not done this way, and if I'm not in charge' … a lot of them see themselves as having the means. They don't have to interact with "them over there so" … they do have the means to give support and … a number of them have. But for others it a condescending behaviour. (S18)

The division in and across communities was seen to affect the way in which the participatory governance framework was able to function. The Parish Development Committees also ran the risk of being taken over by special interests, who were able to direct the participatory governance entities on the basis of the influence they gained from their socioeconomic status in the community—the position was potentially powerful for those who had the relational capital. A number of participants gave examples of Parish Development Communities overrun by business interests, and one spoke to the underlying factors that likely allowed individuals and groups to have such an influence,

> some people are very influential … [there is] educational influence … classism, and you have colourism too … when you [go around] into the PDC and you see the colours … We still have that culture of colourism. And who we listen to. And those factors are still there, maybe not as great as before but they are still lingering. Classism, colourism, all of that still exists. And it impacts every different level of society and what gets done and what is prioritised, and whether we have the plan. (S19)

Differences in the socioeconomic status of districts within a community was assumed by public servants to preclude effective collaboration. There was an acknowledgement of social divisions which affected the ability of all members of a community working together towards a common vision for the island. One SDC officer, who in responding to a comment on citizens being able to see themselves as part of a wider community working together for a common good, used an example of a locally well-known middle-class community and its adjoining low status, low socioeconomic neighbourhood to reinforce the point that islanders had not yet reached a point of collective visioning,

> we don't see Jamaica like that … Look at a community like Barbican … a Barbican CDC means that you would have had to have representatives coming from Grants Pen[11]… They are invited, but when they come how

[11] Grants Pen is a community with low socio-economic status and relatively high levels of violence that borders the 'middle-class' community of Barbican.

> would they be seen, how would they be treated, would you find an executive that [includes them]? are we there yet? (S16)

There appeared not only an acknowledgement of division, but an acceptance that community representatives in a participatory governance forum would be treated according to the socioeconomic status of the districts they represented. And the participatory governance mechanism was not designed to address that feature of the wider culture. The existence of this division meant that partnerships of co-creation and co-governance was not a feature of the participatory governance process, either between the state and community groups, or among community groups themselves. As a veteran civil society leader noted in personal conversation, integration and true partnership did not happen because those at the helm of civil society organisations were unwilling to share power with community members. Most leaders were "paternalistic towards the community" and did not think community members knew what they wanted. While acknowledging that paternalism was a feature across the society at large, observable in spaces dominated by the state and in spaces dominated by civil society, the civil society leader was of the opinion that "it is more ingrained in the leadership of the groups themselves who are interfacing with the community".

The awareness of the division created by classism as a general feature of the society and the basis of most cross-network interactions was reinforced by a community leader who in noting the problem of classism, appeared to accept relations based on superiority when they were sufficiently validated,

> I think our issue is class. ...persons with a little education will use it almost as a stick, with some people ... there are many things that came out of colonialism that are good, and then there is that remnant of colonialism that is not so good ... the adoption of an attitude and a demeanour [of superiority] that doesn't actually come with any superior intelligence or academic qualifications. (NS2)

There was therefore, across the society, and evident among leaders at the community level, a sense of earned superiority which could be expected to inform the ways in which community leaders related to representatives of the state as well as the members of the communities they led. Benevolent elitism reflected a way of working across the domains of leader and led, that reinforced the values of superiority and class dominance under the guise of leading local development.

Resource Conflict

Resource conflict emerged as a practice not described by community leaders, but one referenced by public servants about communities generally, particularly when asked about the challenges related to participatory development planning. Public servants appeared to perceive community groups as having a tendency towards conflict. As indicated above, the community organisations were often, if not primarily, used as a vehicle for development funding, however, such motivation for community organisation did not always support effective community collaboration.

> what I have noted with the groups that I've worked with, who have gotten several projects, and you would have called them model groups/ model communities, is that over time they literally implode. ... because while we get the groups to get good grants, they somehow descend into conflict amongst the members at times, in how to manage the projects ... [and] the funding that they have received, and it sometimes creates animosity within the groups, and– all the challenges that could possibly come with managing projects that they don't themselves always have the skills to manage. (S18)

> resistance to collaboration. ... and it boils down to lack of trust. And I think that goes back to our colonial past. We do not trust each other. ... lack of trust causes a lot of resistance in communities. Members in the same community working together ... they are mostly about 'what will I get out of it'... and 'why we need to have so many people in this'. ... the capacity for collaboration is on the lower end. (S7)

> we still have this "me, me, me" type of thing in terms of working as a group ... for most projects that were geared towards community we have a lot of failures here in this Parish, once money starts coming into play, war just breaks out and sometimes these projects fail. (S5)

The tendency of community groups to descend into conflict was identified by public servants as one of the challenges faced in working with community groups and underscored the perceived need for the role of the state in community capacity building. Community conflict was, however, not an issue raised by community leaders themselves.

8.4 RELATIONAL PRACTICES OF THE POLITICAL DIRECTORATE

As indicated in the previous chapter, no politicians participated in this research. However, the role of the political directorate in the process is such that participants could not describe their experiences and practices without reference to them. Two relational practices were associated with the political directorate, the controlling practice of discretionary authority and the surviving practice of reverse exploitation. These are described below.

Discretionary Authority

Most public sector participants, though acknowledging awareness of the *perceptions* of partisanship and the potential of the participatory governance framework to be used to serve political ends, indicated their *expectation* of the governance framework to operate as a non-partisan mechanism. This caused one participant, a local government officer, to comment on the participation they observed in the development of the local sustainable development plan in their parish,

> based on observation ... those who they have coming to ... the [parish development committee] meetings are the same people you see on the politician mobile ride. So, you ask the question, what percentage of the parish citizens are really a part of the process...who are we really talking to? (S5)

More than one participant, including an officer of the SDC raised the issue of that agency, being perceived as a partisan political tool, and others recounted conversations with politicians who questioned the local governance mechanism as a potential tool for undermining their party's powerbase in the parish. The participatory governance framework emerged, in conversations, to be perceived as a mechanism distrusted by the party-political and the non-partisan alike. Most participants who acknowledged these perceptions indicated that they did not believe them to be warranted. They however indicated an understanding of the reason the perception emerged, and the implications this had on the way public servants and politicians interfaced with the participatory governance framework as a policy development and implementation mechanism at the local government level.

The SDC officer noted that the perception of that agency as a partisan tool, affected the quality and depth of interorganisational relationships. This meant that in the absence of a requirement to implement policies through the participatory governance framework, other government entities established parallel consultative mechanisms at the local level. Some of these sought to integrate the

participatory mechanisms by including the Parish Development Committee Chair as a member, and others did not attempt any such integration. The ability of the participatory governance framework to be used to direct sustainable development in the parish, which would require integrating the development policy agenda at all five levels of the governance framework, was therefore impeded by the extent to which central government policy actors saw the participatory governance framework as a viable policy tool. The challenge of perception faced by those managing the participatory governance framework was reinforced by a former senior officer in the Ministry of Local Government who recounted that,

> The whole history around [parish development committees] is fraught with suspicion by both the Government and its opposition. … [At] the legislative sub-committee of Parliament [to review the 2016 Local Governance Act for approval] … the Chair … said to me 'I am going to approve this but all you are doing is creating a parallel government … all you are doing is creating a window for the opposition to have these people agitate' … And in many instances, former chairpersons of [parish development committees] have become caretakers and have run for seats, so that has provided more suspicion about the role of [parish development committees] and civil society. (S28)

As indicated by the concern shared by the politician, the difficulty with the participatory governance entities, and civil society more generally, is their potential to agitate in a small and highly competitive political space. Politicians may therefore see civil society actors as potential adversaries, if they do not establish themselves as allies. It is for this reason, as another participant indicated, some politicians actively court some community leaders, or accuse the participatory governance framework of harbouring their opposition if they lose their seat in a constituency.

While the rhetoric of citizen inclusion and participatory democracy was repeated by the Jamaican political directorate, there was no real shifting of the balance of power from central to local government, and no political motivation for such a shift (K. L. Miller, 2017; Schoburgh, 2018). The existence of a pre-independence institutional architecture that favoured centralised planning allowed the rhetoric and the apparent legitimation of local governance in laws and policies to operate simultaneously with central government control. As one senior officer in the Ministry of Local Government indicated, though the 2016 legislation mandated Municipal Corporations to develop local sustainable development plans, which should have been informed by the national spatial plan, and which should in turn have informed the development orders for a parish,

> unfortunately, for the Municipal Corporations, what has happened is that … you have the development orders completed before any [local sustainable] development plan at all … So, in terms of the framework, it is not as synchronised as it ought to have been. (S24)

This lack of synchronicity delegitimised the participatory planning process proposed by the Act. The development order is a colonial-era legal instrument which was allowed to maintain precedence over the local sustainable development plan, despite the National Development Plan-Vision 2030 elaborating the steps towards a new development planning approach (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2009). Therefore, in the midst of perceived change, there was a maintenance of the status quo, as the new legislation was promoted as able to perform inclusion and recognition of citizen voice in the planning process but did not ensure it in actuality. So, while there was a performance of local participation, through the establishment of local committees and the holding of consultations, meetings, and processes to develop the local sustainable development plan, the balance of power remained the same. As one Ministry representative indicated,

> most times [it is] not what comes up from their level [that informs decisions] … from a policy level the decision would have been taken … most of the times what informs the local implementation is what is decided at a national level. (S24)

In small, personalised societies political and ideological sympathies can be relatively easy to ascertain (G. E. Mills, 1970). A high degree of political exposure coupled with the highly competitive and personalistic nature of the political system in Jamaica (Stone, 1978b) also means that perceived political alliances can affect an individual's (and by extension their community's) ability to access resources and economic opportunities, despite efforts to maintain the perception of political neutrality:

> [the PDC chair is a] non-partisan spokesperson. But they know. … they know where you are aligned to, in terms of political. They are not looking that you are out there now as an independent person. They don't care about that part of you any at all. Despite how they see you performing out there independently, deep down inside they don't care about that. They find some ways and means to squeeze your system. (NS3)

It was also noted that there had previously been a National Association of Parish Development Committees (NAPDEC), which was created in 2007 to "represent and promote the interests of all …

PDCs" (Social Development Commission, 2015, p. 41). As an umbrella entity, comprised of executives of all the Parish Development Committees across the island, it provided a united voice through which Parish Development Committees could interface with the state, and provided a space for their leaders to share financial, technical and organisational knowledge and learning. NAPDEC was however disbanded in 2018, dissolved when the newly installed Minister instructed that the entity should no longer be funded by the state, and that funds would instead by channelled directly to the individual Parish Development Committees. Efforts to speak to former members of the organisation were unsuccessful.

Participants familiar with NAPDEC indicated their belief that the function was one that needed to be re-established, and they were intent on resurrecting it on their own terms,

> [now] the Ministry of Local Government and the SDC take the place of NAPDEC. ... We as a group would have met up more often ... to converse and exchange ideas, had it not been for Covid. We were heading that way. (NS2)

> [prior to the pandemic] we were moving to ... have a body put in place just like NAPDEC used to function. ... We need to put that national body together so that it can function like NAPDEC. ... so that we can have this one voice, so that we could meet, and when we are talking, we are talking as the 14 Parishes. (NS3)

To ensure that the system of local government was never again dissolved as it was in the 1980s, local government was enshrined in the Constitution following the promulgation of the Act. However, the political directorate, was vested with authority over the operation of the participatory governance framework, as designed,

> The Minister may make regulations providing for the establishment, constitution and functions of Parish Development Committees, Development Area Committees and Community Development Committees, and otherwise with respect thereto.(Local Governance Act, 2016, sec. 22 (4))

This means that the political party with Parliamentary majority defines the legitimate establishment, constitution and functions of what are expected to be community representative bodies. The participatory governance framework, as designed, exists at the discretion of the political directorate. Therefore, even as local governance is supported by the international development

community, and is maintained in part by that support, the local government Minister could stop or change any aspect of the system they did not agree with, similar to the way NAPDEC appears to have been unilaterally discontinued.

Reverse Exploitation

Reverse exploitation here refers to a practice of the political directorate in which apparently tokenistic commitments are made as a means of accessing necessary international funding. This is interpreted here as a surviving relational practice in the context of the domain of international political relations, in which politicians hold a relatively subordinate position. It is labelled reverse exploitation as the political representatives of the state, and the communities they represent, have few options in obtaining the resources they need to address the situation of development, a situation that is proposed to have been created by the exploitation of Global North (Rodney, 1981; Storr, 2010; E. E. Williams, 1944), the funders of development.

The local sustainable development planning process and the participatory governance framework that is expected to support it were promoted as mechanisms for citizen engagement in local planning and decision making (Ministry of Local Government, 1993, 2003), but were operationalised as mechanisms for providing communities with access to development funding. At the national level, politicians and public servants adapted the local development focus to align with the international development policy agenda and priorities. This enabled communities to access funding for local development, channelled through a number of different multilaterally funded development loan projects. Local project teams could also bid on smaller bilateral grant-funded projects. Community organisation was therefore not only a mechanism for advocating for public services, it was also a mechanism for accessing development funding, as organisation was often a criterion used by donors and the project management teams responsible for distributing funds.

Public sector participants pointed out the ways in which the international political agenda was engaged to optimise access to international development funding. However, one public sector participant opined that being forced to follow the international funding agenda had the positive effect of providing momentum for important policy areas, as in the case of local government reform, but often resulted in unfinished projects as funding priorities and focus shifted faster than projects could be completed.

> what helped with the LSDP, was Local Government Reform … After that … National Security … it is like the thrust changes and the money shifts … it is

> Gender Equality now, I think that is where the money was being spent before Covid … so it is National Security and Gender Equality … we have finished with Local Government [Reform] now it is Gender Equality so that is where the money is going … funding is cut off for Local Government [Reform] … so whatever projects you had to finish up are left unfinished. (S5)

However, this shift of funding did not have to affect local government, if state actors knew how to integrate the international agenda with their own. In one instance, a local government participant referenced the alignment of the local sustainable development plan with international development priorities,

> the violence against women and girls … gender equality … we are doing SDGs so often … I can speak that language … the staff here can speak that language. It is something that we really take seriously in the Parish. (S2)

However, in a prior conversation with a member of the staff to which they referred, a preference for the state to go beyond the apparent tokenism, contradicted the sincerity with which such inclusions had been made to the local sustainable development plan,

> We only say that we are gender-neutral or we are gender-aware because it looks good on paper. And because we need financing and other kinds of support from international entities and as a prerequisite for them to engage us, we need to … say that we are considering these things in our programmes and policies. It is just there as decoration. (S1)

It made practical sense to engage with the international agenda to ensure access to funding, even when it meant operating parallel structures to the participatory governance framework. This was revealed by a participant who indicated one reason the Community Development Committees and Development Area Committees may not have been targeted for engagement in the roll-out of the community tourism programme,

> The clusters… the funding agencies are now targeting clusters, that's what they're saying. So, World Bank, the IDB, they're promoting clusters, and cluster development. And so, forming a cluster and even calling yourself a cluster…the thing is, I am aware of buzzwords, but you have to exploit them. In order to benefit, the communities have to know how to exploit the buzzwords and move forward. (S7)

The state operates within the political and economic context of the Global South, where reliance on international aid sources affects most small island states. The concern is well known in the international development literature wherein small island developing states depend on international funding (Overton et al., 2019) and adapt policy priorities to take advantage of the particular thematic focus of those offering financing opportunities (S.-A. Robinson, 2019; Scobie, 2016). Both Schoburgh (2007) and Pugh (2003a, 2005) make reference to the manipulation of the international governance agenda by anglophone Caribbean politicians. Interestingly, as one participant shared, the communities were at times less willing than the state to bend to the international political agenda,

> we're good at getting the grants … I don't get a budget to do much, so … my staff have to know how to write projects. And you create relationship with your donors … you look at what they have … We know what exists in the space … But … if [the communities] realize and recognize that [an LGBT related objective] is part of the thing … I've had one incident … And the community said [no]. (S18)

Though, it must be noted that Community Development Committees are not necessarily democratic organisations (Dodman, 2004; M. A. Thomas, 2015) and it is difficult to know how representative the thinking of the leadership of the committee is, relative to the wider community. It is, therefore, quite possible, that such organisations are playing a role in the continued marginalisation of LGBTQ+ individuals.

While, as the example provided above indicates, that communities do maintain their agency, and do not accept funding supported by policies they find politically offensive, they are still placed in a situation of having to look for funding that is unoffensive. In which case, the value of the community governance bodies lies more in their ability to support access to such funding, than in their ability to support democratic political practice from the community level.

The participatory governance process, initiated as an element of Manleyist ideology (Ledgister, 2014) with the expressed intention of increasing citizen participation in the democratic process (Boxill & Unnithan, 1995) had evolved, with the focus of the international development community on local government reform and local economic development, into a mechanism for managing competition for scarce resources (Schoburgh, 2016). This, coupled with the traditional positioning of local government as a mechanism for facilitating those with party political ambitions (Schoburgh, 2007) reinforce the perception of the participatory governance framework as a partisan mechanism.

8.5 SUMMARY

This chapter presented findings to answer the second part of RQ-B, focussing on the relational practices and experiences of community leaders involved in the local development planning and participatory governance processes. The environment in which community leaders operated was characterised by the domain controlling and surviving relational practices of the political directorate and the boundary maintaining practices of the public sector. In response, community leaders used the participatory governance framework to disrupt boundaries, using the opportunities and access afforded by the processes to benefit their communities; and surviving the domain controlling and boundary maintaining tendencies of the state by only volunteering their time and efforts when it was worthwhile. Where public servants and some community leaders saw lack of commitment and the death of volunteerism, other community leaders saw a response to disrespect and indifference of public servants and the systems of the state.

The next chapter will explore the ways in which the narratives of Creole islandness are understood to mediate the relational practices and experiences of public servants and community leaders in the local development planning and participatory governance processes.

CHAPTER NINE

NARRATIVES OF CREOLE ISLANDNESS AS REPERTOIRES OF RELATIONS

9.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter addresses RQ-C, the third and final research question, by discussing how the narratives of Creole islandness discussed in chapter six help to explain the relational practices of participants presented in chapters seven and eight.

The purpose of this thesis is to understand how narratives of Creole islandness—narratives of identity, place and relations in a postcolonial postslavery plantation island society—inform the relational practices of public servants and community leaders in local development planning and participatory governance processes in Jamaica. It is based on the understanding of institutions as products of culture and social relations, subject to history and available public narratives, and small islands as relational settings that amplify social phenomena.

Each chapter of the thesis explores elements of this relationship between history, culture, and islander relations. Chapters two and three were used to explore the history of the Creole island and the implication on culture and identity, from which the Creole identity theme of strategising material and psychological survival emerged as central. Chapters four and five outlined the conceptual framework and the approach to research, identifying an understanding of the ways that history, narratives, and cultural knowledge were understood to have institutional effects, and identifying Jamaica and the local development planning and participatory governance processes as the case study to explore those effects. Chapter six addressed RQ-A, the first research question, identified Jamaican identity narratives related to *achievement*, *connection,* and *gratitude,* and related them to the Creole island identity themes identified in chapter two. Chapters seven and eight responded to RQ-B, the second research question, and identified the relational practices of Jamaican public servants and community leaders in three parishes and the central government, involved in the design and implementation of local sustainable development planning processes and the participatory governance framework expected to support those processes. From those chapters, four sets of relational practices were identified, domain-controlling, domain-surviving, boundary-maintaining, and boundary-disrupting.

In responding to RQ-C this chapter presents Creole islandness narratives as a basis for understanding the relational practices of participants. Section 9.2 provides an interpretation of the practices and experiences of public servants identified in chapter seven through the lens of the

narratives identified in previous chapters, and section 9.3 does the same with the practices and experiences of community leaders identified in chapter eight. Section 9.4 revisits the conceptual framework presented in chapter four to identify the ways in which cultural narratives are understood to inform relational practices between public servants and community leaders in the local development planning processes in Jamaica; proposes a relationship between narrative emphasis across participants and narrative dominance in institutional domains, suggests why particular narratives remain dominant in particular domains, and discusses how narratives and relational practices may become self-reinforcing to maintain the status quo. Section 9.5 summarises the chapter.

9.2 Interpreting the Relational Practices of Public Servants

In this section, I use the academic literature on institutional change and Caribbean public administration, as well as the findings from chapter six, to interpret the relational practices of public servants identified in chapter seven.

Public servants at the local government level practiced a repertoire of boundary maintaining and boundary disrupting relational practices with each other and with the community. Benevolent elitism practiced by public servants in relation to the community reflected a sense that status and professionalism were indications of the competence available to public servants to provide direction and leadership to communities. The attainment of professional status, considered elite relative to the community, placed them in a position of social authority and also established an obligation to provide guidance and direction. Therefore, the relational practice of benevolent elitism could be understood as aligned with Jamaican identity narratives related to achievement and gratitude.

Table 9-1 identifies the relational practices that were coded for public servants and indicates the number of instances each was coded. The total of 26 indicates the number of conversations coded and means that of the 32 conversations analysed six did not provide any descriptions of public servant relational practices based on the coding schema developed. The table indicates that boundary maintaining relational practices appear to represent significant elements of the cultural repertoire of public servants. The table indicates that nonstate participants contributed few descriptions of the practices of public servants, but those who did described controlling and boundary maintaining practices more than disrupting practices. However, numerically (and even more proportionally) local government public servants were more likely to describe disrupting practices than their central government counterparts.

Table 9-1: Frequency of Relational Practices of Public Servants

		In-domain practices		Boundary practices	
		Controlling	Surviving	Maintaining	Disrupting
		Bureaucratism	Adaptive incrementalism	Benevolent elitism (10) Distance (10) Co-optation (8) Information Extractivism (6) Disconnection (5)	Resource sharing (6) Enabling partners (4)
Nonstate	3	1	0	2	1
State (total)	23	6	4	19	9
State (central)	*13*	*4*	*4*	*11*	*4*
State (local)	*10*	*2*	*0*	*8*	*5*
T=	26	7	4	21	10

Though local development planning and participatory governance processes are used as focal points for this thesis, the research aim is concerned with the ways actors relate to each other in those processes. With this focus, two tensions can be identified from the findings. The first is between maintaining and disrupting relations between public servants reflected in practices of distance (and disconnection) and resource sharing, the second is the tension between maintaining and disrupting relations between public servants and community leaders, reflected in practices of benevolent elitism and enabling partners. These are discussed in the two subsections below.

Relational Practices between Public Servants – Tensions between Distance and Resource Sharing

The descriptions provided by all participants highlighted the extent to which bureaucratic silos produced functional and relational distance between public servants at the central government level. While such distance can be understood as part of the bureaucratic nature of government, the response of individuals to opportunities for boundary negotiation indicated a potential role of culture, in addition to structure, in influencing such orientations. If understood through the lens of the Creole island identity theme of *strategising material and psychological survival*, relational practices of distance as practiced by public servants can be understood as protecting existing levels of power and status to protect survival. From this perspective, practices of distance and disconnection characterised by limited integration of processes and limited communication could be understood as implicit strategies of material and psychological survival which defended against potential disempowerment and frustration. This interpretation is also informed by references of central government participants to their subordination and the limits of their flexibility within a wider public service, an environment they described as particularly unsupportive. Their descriptions of the domain of central government

underscored a focus on clearly defining the scope of work over which they had control and protecting the power they had within the constraints of their subordination.

This interpretation is also supported by the finding in chapter six that public servants were more likely to identify politicians as a problem for the development process, with central government public servants most likely to identify government as a problem than as a solution when discussing the achievement of the island's development goals. This also helps to understand the reason descriptions among central government participants included more surviving and maintaining relational practices than their local government counterparts.

Brown (2014) partially addresses this issue in their exploration of the concept of professional hurt. They describe a professional environment in the public sector of the anglophone Caribbean islands in which the ease with which public sector leaders may be disrespected and humiliated by the political directorate or more senior public sector leaders produces tendencies towards self-protection and risk aversion. This was reinforced by a participant who in response to a question on the usefulness of engaging public sector allies across ministerial boundaries in expanding the use of the participatory governance framework responded that not all who might claim allyship were necessarily allies. The response reflected the extent to which self-protection was an accessible cultural tool for organisational survival.

The picture painted by participants, as well as by Brown (2014) is of a professional environment with little or no psychological safety available to senior public servants, and a high level of political discretion. Such an environment does not encourage the movement of central government public servants from a traditional risk-averse bureaucratic stereotype to the creative, innovative, and boundary spanning public policy manager promoted by the new public governance literature (Schnell & Gerard, 2022; van Meerkerk & Edelenbos, 2021). This effect is magnified by the politicised nature of the participatory governance and planning processes. Central government public servants are unlikely to operate outside of what they know to be the specific parameters provided by their Minister.

Timeus (2019) suggests that boundary maintenance tends to occur where institutional actors wish to avoid or reduce complexity. Additionally, Torfing et al. (2019) propose that the new public management reforms, which have informed the approach to public sector governance in Jamaica for the past three decades, do more to reinforce siloism than promote collaboration. It is therefore acknowledged that as traditional bureaucracies are primarily organised and operated on the basis of authority assigned to offices and the individuals who inhabit (Weber, 2015), and therefore will promote an orientation towards control, or *power over*. It is also acknowledged that the adoption of

Anglo-American public sector management practices into the Creole island public administration likely compounded rather than addressed issues of bureaucratic performance by reinforcing siloism. However, conversations with public servants revealed a prominence in the language of control which suggests that there could be more to maintaining relations of power than considerations of bureaucratic rationality.

Public servants provided descriptions of the process environment in which they operated that suggested notable levels of professional insecurity, likely strengthening an orientation of risk aversion. A part of the risk-averse survivalist orientation would appear to be the need to preserve the professional status associated with one's job, which within the framework of the ideology of education (Austin-Broos, 1983) provides personal and social valuation. The maintenance of boundaries that reinforce differences in status could therefore be understood as part of that orientation. The language used by participants tended to privilege authority over collaboration and co-creation, both when referring to communities and when referring to other public servants. Public servants positioned themselves as training, providing guidance, and sharing information. References were made to the difficulties of *teaching adults* who do not take *telling* as easily as children. This expectation of deference to authority would be expected to further undermine the emergence of more collaborative practices and reinforce the understanding of a tendency toward a status-related controlling orientation in the central government domain.

Resource sharing as boundary disrupting practices related to collaboration across organisational domains was described mainly by local government public servants, including central government public servants assigned at the parish level. At the local level, public servants worked with greater autonomy and emphasised the benefits of collaboration as a means of accessing resources and producing positive outcomes for communities. Such collaboration was a source of power rather than a threat to it, increasing the power position of individuals. Among local government public servants with limited access to material resources, their relationships were their primary source of power, and a primary means available to fulfil their professional responsibilities.

Relational Practices between Public Servants and Community Leaders – Tensions between Benevolent Elitism and Enabling Partners

Although public servants at the local government level were more likely than their central government counterparts to engage in practices that disrupted institutional boundaries, such disrupting practices were less frequently described at the boundaries between the state and the community. It is also notable that almost all boundary disrupting practices were described by participants working in two

parishes, with boundary disrupting practices between the state and community described by actors in a one parish. A practice of enabling partners therefore appears to be part of a shared culture in one of the three parishes, existing alongside boundary maintaining practices such as benevolent elitism and co-optation. It was however still one of the least described practices.

Public servants practicing benevolent elitism as part of their role in the local development planning process can be understood as acknowledging what was valued in the society and the best way to negotiate access to resources. There was an acceptance that supporting communities to advocate for public services and economic opportunities was a key aspect of their role. That is, it was their job to help communities obtain services from other government agencies and the international donor community. Therefore, the local development environment was understood as one of intense competition for limited resources, and therefore, communities would need to compete, through their advocacy, for access to those resources. The work of the SDC and therefore a primary role of the participatory governance framework was to empower communities (Social Development Commission, 2020a) that were in a relatively disadvantaged situation to be better able to compete in the market for development resources. The ability of a community to speak on its own behalf, to have a voice that would be listened to by the political directorate and other government agencies determined the ability of that community to compete in the market for development resources. The practices of benevolent elitism, like the practices of distance and disconnection that protected positional power in central government, can be understood as a response to a generally unsupportive environment in which communities could be left behind if they did not have the power to make their voices heard.

Each individual operates in multiple domains. Among participants, one local government public servant also had a role as a community leader, though for the purpose of the research the focus was placed on their local government role. One of the community leaders had a professional role as a central government officer, though for the purpose of the conversation, the focus was on their community leader role. Therefore, though participants, for the purpose of the research, were assigned to specific domains, it is acknowledged that they operated in different domains based on the many roles they had in society. This point is made in the light of perspectives on island culture and elite hegemony put forward by Patterson (2019) and Austin-Broos (1983, 1984).

Being heard was in part dependent on one's ability to speak the same language as public servants and politicians, who would be expected to represent the so-called middle-class. Being able to speak the language also meant displaying the confidence necessary to maintain one's position in the face of the "thunder" that could be rolled by politicians. Public servants could not change the way that politicians operated, but they could equip communities to effectively negotiate with them. Capacity building as part of the participatory governance and planning process was therefore seen,

through the lens of public servants, as an enabling of community members to interface with the political directorate and lead the social and economic development of their communities—a process that was facilitated by an acknowledgement of the currency of education and socio-economic positioning. The capacities required by disadvantaged communities were already available to those with education, wealth, and experience and needed to be built among "normal" community members.

That public servants used socio-economic status and educational levels as distinguishing factors of a community's ability to effectively participate in the local development planning processes may appear to perpetuate the "myths of professionalism" (C. Johnson, 1982, p. 8), which assumes the superior position of the educated, skilled public servant in relation to the "normal" community member. However, both public servants and community leaders were aware of the wider social context within which they operated and in which education and social status increased the probability of being heard, being able to defend one's position, and therefore being able to access resources for one's community. Relations of bureaucratism, like benevolent elitism, were therefore as much about training community governance bodies to perform organisational competence as they were about performing public sector control of those community governance bodies. Within a competitive environment, public servants would be able to assess a community's worthiness to access development resources through their ability to meet the requirements of the regulatory processes required by the state. The status and professionalism cultivated in their relations within the public sector domain was a resource available to public servants to use to provide direction and leadership within the community domain. This was an opportunity for public servants to show *gratitude* for the professional status and position they had attained in relation to the communities. Their professional status placed them in a position of social authority, but also established an obligation for them to provide guidance and direction to support the achievement of others. Therefore, the relational practice of benevolent elitism could be understood as aligned with the Jamaican identity narratives related to achievement and gratitude.

A primary purpose of local development planning processes was to help communities access development resources. While this did not preclude public servants from practicing more enabling partnerships, the greatest emphasis, particularly in describing the experience, was on structuring community organisations to operate as viable economic units to access business development funding available through multilateral development financing programs. That this required making significant demands on communities to advocate on their behalf with public sector entities and politicians and to prove the organisational effectiveness of their registered community organisations was framed as a form of community empowerment. The focus on the ability of communities to compete for limited development resources and not on the capacity and accountability of state entities such as the

Municipal Corporation and the Council of local politicians to more effectively support local participation in the development process raises the question of the viability and social justice implications of such *empowerment* efforts without a parallel *depowerment* of the actors who control access to those development resources.

The relational practices of public servants indicate a strong tendency towards boundary maintaining. Although the practices were not universal, the relative frequency identified would appear to be in keeping with writers who have characterised the Caribbean public sector as having a pro-colonial middle class command and control orientation (E. Jones & Schoburgh, 2004; Lindsay, 1975; D. Marshall, 2015), which tend to result in outcomes supporting the conclusion that those public administrations lack the competences necessary to effectively operate the colonially inherited institutions of the state (G. E. Mills, 1970; Patterson, 2019). However, the conversations with public servants revealed that the pro-colonial middle-class command and control orientation was not thought of as a choice in how individuals behaved but a response to an understanding of the wider social system in which they operated.

Public servants, in understanding the wider social system, engaged strategies they believed would provide them with the best outcomes, whether that meant being strategic in their relationships with the political directorate or in positioning communities to obtain resources in the local governance system. Public servants operated in the network of relationships that structured the public sector in a way that would not undermine their position in the system. They used the available mechanisms as best as they were able to advance the participatory governance process despite the frustrations of policy changes and the unstable local participatory governance infrastructure created by the inability of the political directorate at the central and local levels to agree on how to share power between the two levels of government.

9.3 Interpreting the Relational Practices of Community Leaders

In this section, I use the literature on political culture as well as findings from previous chapters to interpret the relational practices of community leaders (and communities generally). While the relational practices of public servants described by participants tended to focus on boundary maintaining, as indicated in Table 9-2, community leaders tended toward relational practices of domain surviving and boundary disrupting. The findings, however, appear to indicate that public narratives that supported survival *within* the social and political institutional systems also helped to maintain relations of control. The findings also indicate that the local development planning and

participatory governance processes fulfil an important function for resource redistribution more than they support civic engagement in local sustainable development planning. I discuss this as a feature of Creole islandness and the ongoing relevance of the effort of emancipation.

Table 9-2: Frequency of Relational Practices of Community Leaders

		In domain practices	Boundary practices	
		Surviving:	Maintaining:	Disrupting
		Participatory prudence (11) Reverse co-optation (6)	Benevolent elitism	Accessing influence (5) Information exchange (3) Enabling partners (1)
Nonstate	5	5	2	4
State (total)	11	8	3	4
State (central)	*6*	*4*	*2*	*1*
State (local)	*5*	*4*	*1*	*3*
T=	16	13	5	8

The participatory governance and planning processes evolved over four decades, on the basis of political and administrative initiatives, to become a mechanism for providing communities with the means to steer and take ownership of local sustainable development. The participatory governance framework, with its component elements of participatory governance entities, allowed communities to access material and knowledge resources to advance the development of their communities (Ministry of Local Government, 2003; Social Development Commission, 2015, 2020a). However, the objective of supporting community advocacy and community access to resources to support local sustainable development competed with the objective of political control and the bureaucratising tendencies of the public sector. Any achievement of the intent of the participatory governance and planning processes therefore required community leaders to have the ability to work in and around the systems designed on the basis of state control and bureaucratic logic, resulting in community leaders engaging in emancipatory and boundary crossing relational practices.

Whereas public servants tended to engage in controlling practices, as explored in chapter seven, boundary disrupting was the relational practice most frequently identified among community leaders. This reflects the relative power position they held in their interactions with the state in the participatory governance framework, but also underscores the ways in which the absence of positional power encouraged the creative use of relationships and collaborative action to access the material resources needed to support development in their communities.

The types of relational practice identified are not peculiar to the environment under study, and controlling, surviving, maintaining, and disrupting practices would be expected to exist in all spaces of unequal power relations. However, what is proposed is that the manner in which the relational practice is performed, in the context of the participatory governance and planning

processes, is informed by narratives of Creole islandness. The narratives of Creole islandness provided participants with cultural resources to navigate and interpret experiences in participatory governance and planning processes.

Domain surviving relational practices are emancipatory practices in the Creole island context, reflecting cultural knowledge informed by existence under historically oppressing regimes. Surviving as emancipation is in part informed by the stories of Anansi, the trickster God of Akan culture (E. Z. Marshall, 2001). It is a pragmatic approach to emancipation that acknowledges the intense power asymmetries and is therefore not aimed at changing the systems of oppression but at using the available knowledge of the system to displace the pressure experienced. The emancipatory philosophy of Anansi allows for the creation of hope in a system characterised by constraint and oppression through the subversive use of available resources, often the elements of the system (Araya, 2014; Seaga, 2005). However, as Thomas (2015, p. 9) makes the point, such emancipatory work can include the use of tactics that "are neither sustainable nor immediately democratic" but are considered justified in their intent to obtain justice from an unjust system.

Surviving the social and political institutional systems by employing emancipatory tactics is considered a general feature of Jamaican society, engaged by all levels and in all domains, supporting the relatively powerless to meet their needs while navigating inequitable and unjust power relations (Marshall, 2001; Thomas, 2015). Such emancipatory tactics are based on a philosophical orientation that rejects fatalism by engaging "non-traditional subversion that guarantees hope in a hopeless system" (Araya, 2014, p. 50). Community leaders who participated in this research indicated their dissatisfaction with the relations of power, but the majority continued to engage with the processes, maintaining a sense of optimism and hopefulness. Community leaders negotiated relationships that allowed them to get the most out of state-designed processes, identifying the gaps and spaces within the system that they could manoeuvre to address the needs of their communities. Being in a position of relatively less material power, they used their access and cultivated relationships that allowed them to achieve their desired outcomes despite the constraints or *roadblocks* that were created by those with *power over* them (Pansardi & Bindi, 2021). Through their participation in these processes, they continued to legitimise the existing systems of power, even as they refashioned relationships within those systems, not dissimilar to the way their ancestors improvised their existences "within the interstices of the very violent exercise of power" by the colonial elite on the island (Crichlow & Northover, 2009, p. 214).

Only one of the five community leaders engaged in conversation indicated that they were unable to continue working with the participatory governance framework. The community leader who gave up their position on the basis that they thought the system too dysfunctional, had only lived on

the island for twelve years. One interpretation would be that though they had been raised by Jamaican parents, having not been raised in the cultural/relational setting of the island environment, they had not developed the requisite cultural competence (Patterson, 2014): Like language, learning a culture as an adult is different from being born into it (Bicchieri, 2006). Therefore, unlike other community leaders, they did not have access to the cultural tools (Baldwin, 1992; Lizardo, 2017; Swidler, 1986) necessary to navigate the Creole institutions on which the participatory governance and planning processes had been designed. Knowledge of emancipatory tactics and their application is embedded in public culture, the narratives, vocabularies, and frames (Lizardo, 2017) — and are popularly referenced as Anansiism (E. Z. Marshall, 2001; Wynter & Oats, 2018), and in the narrative templates of rebellion and commemorations of marronage (Dacres, 2009; Mackie, 2005). In the island environment, this emancipatory knowledge is internalised, accessed, and applied to interactions where positional power is not available, to produce emancipatory relational practices.

The practice of benevolent elitism reflects the unsustainability of much of the emancipatory knowledge embedded in the island culture, and that emancipatory knowledge is usually aimed at changing an individual's (or group's) situation or relative position in the relational system, and not at changing the system (Haderer, 2022). Blüdhorn et al (2022, pp. 4–5) note the "complicities, ambiguities and reconfigurations" produced by the logic of an emancipatory politics embedded in a neoliberal democratic philosophy. The emancipation that Blüdhorn et al (2022) reference takes a different form and scale from the emancipatory tactics informed by Anansiism. They focus their argument on the fight across the Global North for equality to participate in the imperial mode of living. However, the logic is the same, emancipation is aimed at obtaining "inclusion, greater equality and more democracy" from those perceived as maintaining the systems of oppression.

From the perspective of Patterson's (1982) thesis of slavery as social death and manumission/emancipation as social rebirth, emancipation means that the Creole, without an authoritative precolonial referent is socially birthed into a system in which, "Their desires, aspirations, and conceptions of what it is to be human are defined beforehand by structures, cultures, and symbols [of coloniality]" (Maldonado-Torres & Cavooris, 2017, p. 111). Under the colonial matrix of power, the mechanisms which support emancipation are found in the systems of domination, inferiorisation, and oppression. Blühdorn et al. (2022, p. 9) reflecting a post-progressivist perspective, note that this paradox undermines the notion that "emancipation is unambiguously positive, normatively desirable, progressive, and universal". The paradox of an emancipation based on Enlightenment the promises of modernity (Blühdorn et al., 2022) and the attendant imperial mode of living (Brand & Wissen, 2018b) has been that while many have achieved "empowerment, freedom and social security" others continue to remain "excluded from the promises of individual emancipation and social modernisation

… [and] the benefits of emancipation-cum-neoliberalism … materialise only because of the exclusion and exploitation of others" (Blühdorn et al., 2022, p. 8).

The relational practices performed by community leaders emerged from the same cultural repertoire as the relational practices performed by public servants, illustrated in the engagement of both in benevolent elitism. The difference that was observed in their relational practices was based on their relative power positioning.

9.4 RELATIONAL PRACTICES REFLECT CULTURAL REPERTOIRES AND NARRATIVE RESOURCES

This section combines the findings from public servants and community leaders and analyses them against the Jamaican identity narratives identified in chapter six. The findings suggest that Creole islandness narratives explain the relational practices and experiences of public servants and community leaders involved in local development planning and participatory governance processes by providing the cultural repertoire (scripts and schemas) that implicitly inform relational practices in each domain.

Chapter six identified three themes of Jamaican identity and three definitions of island development with differences in how they were emphasised in each category of participants. Table 9-3 and Table 9-4 show the emphasis of participants for each identity theme and definition of development. The aggregated findings in Table 9-3 indicate an inverse difference between state and nonstate participants in the most and least emphasised themes in conversation. However, Table 9-4 which disaggregates the findings across subcategories of state and nonstate participants shows nuance between the identity themes emphasised. When talking about the Jamaican identity, community leaders mostly emphasised *connection*, central government participants mostly emphasised *gratitude*, and local government participants mostly emphasised *achievement*. For three of the six themes, identity as *connection* (medium emphasis*)*, development as *state of mind* (medium emphasis), development as *inclusion and social justice* (most emphasis), and the level of emphasis expressed by central and local government participants was similar. Meanwhile, community leaders and diaspora members were in agreement in their level of emphasis on two of the six themes, development as *economic growth* and identity as *gratitude*. Though each group emphasised different identity themes, with the exception of a*chievement*, which was emphasised by both local government and diaspora participants, Jamaican identity as *connection* and island development as *inclusion and social justice* emerged as narrative resources with shared accessibility between both categories of state participants and community leaders.

Table 9-3: Emphasis in Conversations with Public Servants and Community Leaders - Aggregated

Topic	Narrative Themes	Emphasis: State	Emphasis: Nonstate
Jamaican Identity	Achievement	↔	↔
	Connection	↑	↓
	Gratitude	↓	↑
Development Definition	State of Mind	↔	↔
	Economic Growth & Infrastructure Expansion	↓	↑
	Inclusion and Social Justice	↑	↓

Legend: ↑ =most emphasised ↔ =medium emphasis ↓ =least emphasised

Table 9-4: Emphasis in Conversations with Public Servants and Community Leaders- Disaggregated

Topic	Narrative Themes	Emphasis: Central Government	Local Government	Community Leaders	Diaspora
Jamaican Identity	Achievement		↑	↓	↑
	Connection	↔	↔	↑	↓
	Gratitude	↑	↓	↔	↔
Development Definition	State of Mind	↔	↔	↓	↔
	Economic Growth & Infrastructure Expansion	↔	↓	↑	↑
	Inclusion and Social Justice	↑	↑	↔	↓

Legend: ↑ =most emphasised ↔ =medium emphasis ↓ =least emphasised

Therefore, beyond the specific themes identified, the findings point to patterns of emphasis in domains, indicating similar levels of narrative accessibility at the central and local level of the public sector, with lower convergence of narratives between state and nonstate groups. These findings are qualified by the small size of the sample and the case-based design of the research. A larger sample will be needed to generalise findings outside the network of participants used for this study.

Patterns in relational practices between categories of participants were also identified in chapters seven and eight. Although several of the domain controlling and boundary maintaining relational practices described by participants were explainable as a function of the bureaucratic tendencies of public administrations, the fact that no boundary disrupting practices were described as practiced by or for central government public servants was revealing. This was particularly so in light of several participants from the central government identifying the importance of collaboration

and integration. As indicated in Table 9-5, of the 32 individuals who participated in the conversations, 29 provided descriptions that were coded as relational practices. 17 participants described practices that I classified as domain-surviving, 18 described boundary disrupting practices, and 26 described boundary maintaining practices. Central government public servants also described a 'culture of centralisation' across the island; however, based on the descriptions provided by all participants, if such a culture exists, it is mainly among those at the centre of government. Resource sharing and enabling partner practices, though not widespread, was described by different participants in two of the three parishes included in this study. Though I later elaborate on the concept of domain and narrative dominance, for the discussion in this subsection what is being highlighted is the pattern of relations, specifically that boundary disrupting practices were most prominent in the domains of local government and the community.

Table 9-5: Relational Practices Among Public Servants and Community Leaders

Initiating Actors	In-domain Practices		Boundary Practices	
	Controlling *directing the actions of others*	Surviving *pursuing goals despite constraints*	Maintaining *reinforcing the prevailing distribution of power*	Disrupting *modifying the distribution of power*
Participants Coded (N=29)	7	17	26	18
Public Servants (Central)	Bureaucratism	Adaptive incrementalism (4)	Distance (10) Disconnection (5)	
Public Servants (Local)			Information Extractivism (6) Benevolent elitism (10) Co-optation (8)	Resource sharing (6) Enabling partners (4)
Community Leaders		Participatory prudence (11) Reverse co-optation (6)	Benevolent elitism (5)	Accessing influence (5) Information Exchange (3) Enabling partners (1)

The findings indicate that the narrative patterns that emerged among participants could be related to the domain (central/local, public sector/community) from which they interacted with the local development planning and participatory governance processes. The answer to RQ-C, 'How do narratives of Creole islandness explain the relational practices of islanders?', is therefore that as domains are narratively constructed and maintained, narratives of connection and gratitude appeared to reinforce boundary maintaining practices, while narratives of achievement and connection appeared to reinforce boundary disrupting practices.

If the discussion in chapter six is accepted, which establishes the relationship between the Jamaican identity of *achievement*, *connection*, and *gratitude* with the Creole island identity themes identified in chapter two, this pattern of narrative emphasis in conversations can be interpreted as a pattern of Creole identity narratives across domains. Therefore, though narratives of *connection* were referenced by all categories of participants, that central government participants emphasised *gratitude* and local government participants emphasised *achievement* could be indicative of narrative accessibility in their respective domains. That is, while all themes, understood as public narratives or cultural scripts related to *achievement*, *connection,* and *gratitude,* were available to all participants, particular themes were more resonant in specific domains.

The greater emphasis on *gratitude* among central government participants could be indicative of an acknowledgement and appreciation of their acquired social and professional status in the context of national and personal history. That *connection* was more resonant among community leaders could be indicative of an acknowledgement and appreciation of relational resources and the psychological support that comes from being connected. That *achievement* was more resonant among local government participants could be indicative of their recognition and appreciation of the socioeconomic struggle that is part of the daily reality of the majority of the population. The domain emphasis of different themes, though needing a larger sample to generalise across the population, provides insight into the network of actors engaged in this study, and provides a basis for hypothesising how cultural scripts may dominate particular domains across the island.

The findings support the thesis that, while cultural narratives may be accessible across domains, they can have stronger impacts in one domain compared to another (Lizardo, 2017), as a function of the institutional infrastructure regulating the domain (Hinings et al., 2017). The nature of domain regulation determines the extent to which narratives, as cultural resources, govern relational practices. In such cases, narrative resources are not only accessible but are understood to be necessary to successfully navigate the domain. In the case of the public sector, the institutional infrastructure is maintained by performance management mechanisms and the ritualised relationships between public servants and the political directorate, which support the maintenance

of the status quo by signalling to public servants the orientations that ensure professional success. Every domain will have actors with roles that maintain the institutional infrastructure and reinforce relational practices in that domain (Hinings et al., 2017). For the domains that are the focus of this research, the roles and practices covered in this study represent only a fraction of the many roles and practices that maintain those domains. Therefore, more research would be needed to produce an inventory of the elements of the institutional infrastructure in the domain that reinforce relational practices (Hinings et al., 2017).

The findings indicate that the relational practices of participants in the processes under discussion can be explained by the domain dominance of particular Creole islandness narratives. That is, narratives of gratitude are associated with relational practices of boundary-maintaining, and narratives of achievement and connection are associated with relational practices of boundary-disrupting.

People Cross Boundaries and Narratives Maintain Them

In making the point that particular Creole islandness narratives dominate specific domains, it is, however, acknowledged that domains are not fully bounded. Individuals operate across domains, and narratives are able to cross with them. However, based on the patterns emerging from the conversations and as established in the literature, narratives dominate particular domains because they structure them (Bevir & Rhodes, 2010; Wagenaar, 2011). This proposal means that for Jamaica, in the public sector domain, for example, where narratives of *achievement*, *connection*, and *gratitude* play a role in maintaining the domain, being a successful public servant means operating according to the prevailing cultural narratives.

In discussing the island of Jamaica, Patterson (2019) proposes that there are three Jamaicas, instead of "the one, out of many", as suggested by the national motto. As indicated in chapter three, it is a repeated thesis that the "out of many, one people" adopted as the island's motto was a middle-class strategy used to secure its Creole hegemony and undermine the rising black nationalism that was considered to more accurately reflect the cultural and racial profile of the majority population (Bogues, 2002; Thame, 2017). Patterson (2019, p. 323) supports this thesis, identifying the group which the national motto seeks to describe as "the hegemonic elite [of] … professional bourgeois blacks, mixed-race 'brownings' … and a sprinkling of economically dominant whites, brownish Chinese and Jews, and Middle Easterners" who share economic, cultural, political and social commonalities. The other two Jamaicas Patterson (2019, p. 323) identifies are: "the basal Afro-Jamaican neopeasantry

and working class" and "the alienated lumpenproletariat ... in the rural canefield shanties and smoldering 'dead- yards' of the urban slums".

Austin-Broos (1983, 1984) applies a similar analysis, describing two instead of three Jamaicas. She proposes that two different cultures are distinguishable across two socioeconomic domains. Understanding culture as collective practice, Austin-Broos (1983, p. 231), in her study across two communities, identifies "The values of egalitarianism and gamesmanship in the 'Anancy' tradition" among working class men, and "achievement and hierarchy" among the middle-class men. However, based on the conceptual framework used in this thesis, culture is understood not as collectively held values confined to socioeconomic domains but as shared knowledge that emerges from the accumulated experiences in and of a particular environment (Cerulo et al., 2021b). This knowledge, held consciously and unconsciously (Cerulo et al., 2021b; Lizardo, 2017), is maintained by multiple public narratives that operate as resources individuals use to craft their ontological narratives (McLean, Boggs, et al., 2020; McLean & Syed, 2015; Somers, 1994) and negotiate their interactions (Hyvärinen, 2008, 2016, 2020). I elaborate this aspect of the conceptual framework, in relation to the identification of multiple Jamaicas and cultural domains, to underscore the point that a number of central government participants for this research referenced their humble upbringing and contextualised their Jamaican identity in their socialisation in rural entrepreneurial and working-class households and communities. Therefore, in discussing domains and narrative dominance, particularly with reference to hegemonic narratives, it is important to take into account socio-geographical mobility and the ability of people and narratives to circulate and become entangled on the island.

This thesis proposes that if there are multiple Jamaicas, it is because there are multiple narratives that have emerged from multiple experiences on the island, and those narratives are available to all as cultural resources. Conversations with research participants indicated that, in the same way that the post-emancipation middle class grew out of the rural peasantry, so have modern "professional bourgeois blacks" grown out of the "basal Afro-Jamaican neopeasantry and working class" (Patterson, 2019, p. 323). The availability of cultural scripts of *achievement*, *connection,* and *gratitude* ensures that opportunities are found (legal and otherwise) for individuals to navigate their socioeconomic situations in fulfilment of their aspirations to *smaddiness*, and to share in the economic, cultural, political and social promise of the Creole nationalist ideology. The term smaddiness is Jamaican Creole and would be translated into English as "somebodiness". However, as Mills (2010) writes, the direct translation of the term and its variations (smadditise, smaddification, etc) (See also Hickling, 2021; H. N. Johnson, 2007; Nettleford, 1982) does not sufficiently capture the meaning of the word as it is used in the context of Creole identification and lived experience.

I understand the aspiration to smaddiness as related to Patterson's (1982) concept of social rebirth. Although legal emancipation was granted to the enslaved in 1838, postslavery efforts for individual and national self-determination have been driven by a desire for economic, political, and mental freedom. This is the basis of Creole island emancipatory politics (M. A. Thomas, 2015). It is a lived, aspirational, and tactical politics with a strong focus on material and psychological survival. Emancipation as lived aspirational practice can be understood in the context of Patterson's (1982) analysis of freedom and slave societies and his observation that, "The movement from freedman to fully accepted freeman was usually an intergenerational process that took as long as, and often longer than, the movement from enslavement to manumission" (1982, p. 294). For Patterson (1982, p. 293) slavery was "social death" and manumission, or emancipation was "symbolic rebirth". Therefore, legal emancipation is insufficient and requires a concomitant rebirth into social life. This is the aspirational emancipatory motivation that is observable in the narratives that emerged during this research. Emancipation from this perspective is the restoration of dignity and esteem. It is a restoration that addresses the fact that the Creole island was born out of a process of global racial capitalism (J. S. Lewis, 2022; Maldonado-Torres, 2007) and that subjects were reproduced in the postslavery era from commodity to labour, not labour as work, but labour as being and worth. Smadditisation therefore lies at the base of the achievement motivation and is invoked to oppose the *thingification* (Césaire, 2000) of the Creole. The aspiration to smaddiness is a need to confirm valuation as a worthy and deserving human being.

For those who are able to achieve smaddiness, particularly through the opportunities offered through migration, there is therefore a strong sense of gratitude and an obligation to give back. The ideology of education which Austin-Broos (1983) identified as operating on the island to fuel the achievement drive and contain class conflict is only able to maintain its hegemony through the system justifying beliefs and actions (Haack & Sieweke, 2018; Jost, 2019) of those the ideology attempts to dominate. While the pre-independence period racialised success and opportunities, the ideology of education (Austin-Broos, 1983) and the out of many, ethnic oneness motto (Kelly, 2019) have produced a "black bourgeoisie" (Robotham, 2000) whose existence reinforces the status quo by providing examples of how the institutional systems can be used to attain individual benefit. The ideology of education establishes the island as a meritocracy, defines a pathway for adherents to move from positions of subordination to become socially dominant, and provides a means of justifying subordination where it exists (Austin-Broos, 1983). In this way, the ideology of education exists in the "vocabulary and narratives" of the postcolony to reinforce institutional relationships of "domination and subordination" (Mbembe, 1992, p. 4). This could also explain why, in conversations on the

trajectory of social change, participants did not implicate the institutions of society, but the manner in which those institutions were operated to ensure access.

As indicated in chapter six, perspectives on development were not mutually exclusive but were variably emphasised by participants operating in the different domains of community, local government, and central government. Community leaders emphasised *economic growth* and development as a *state of mind*, while public servants emphasised *inclusion* and a *state of mind*. This would appear to reflect the notion Thomas (1999, p. 527) attributes to Don Robotham, that "when the economy is in bad shape, 'official types' are preoccupied with culture, and 'ordinary folk' are preoccupied with the economy and their inability to make a decent living".

The participants in this study could be understood as representative of Patterson's (2019) "hegemonic elite", in their role as mid-level and senior public servants, which put them directly in the service of the political class. Therefore, the hegemony and ideological domination identified by Austin-Broos (1983) would be maintained by those who themselves had risen from among the class of the 'dominated'. Although they acknowledged themselves as beneficiaries of the available systems of social and economic mobility on the island and as such expressed a sense of obligation to service, they positioned the voting masses as the more powerful actors, considering themselves as public servants constrained by the direction of the elected politicians.

That participants understood themselves as having benefitted from family guidance and access to educational opportunities could be considered reflective of Austin-Broos' (1983, 1994) heritable identity and education ideology. Education and family values allowed individuals to attain leadership positions in the public sector and in the community and, in turn, allowed them to support the development and implementation of policies for the benefit of the general society. Therefore, though they participated in maintaining the traditional systems of power, as people for whom the system had so far worked, they retained a belief in the potential of the system. Therefore, they positioned themselves in conversations as working towards providing opportunities to help others (and their future selves).

Therefore, though individuals can cross domain boundaries, the ability to cross those boundaries may provide the motivation to maintain them. Those who benefited from the status quo, the adherence to the ideology of education, would be motivated to maintain it, in part, because it worked for them. The ideology of education, as human achievement, is a smadditising ideology, based on the idea that any deficiency lies in the individual, not in the system. Therefore, the hegemony of the middle class that Austin-Broos (1983) refers to is reinforced as the middle class is expanded from below, likely proving, from their perspective, the validity of the ideology.

The System Maintenance Effect of Emancipatory Practice

As indicated in Table 9-5, of the four categories of relational practices, boundary maintaining practices were the most frequently described by public servants and community leaders. However, the fact that boundary maintaining relational practices were frequent among public servants is not a surprising finding, as a considerable proportion of institutional work is devoted to boundary maintenance (Topal, 2015; Zilber, 2009). However, in the context of the explicit commitment to move from a centralised to a decentralised and participatory development planning framework, the proportion of boundary maintaining relational practices was interesting to note. The participatory local development planning processes are predicated on partnership and collaboration, as indicated by the local sustainable development planning framework and parish plans (Environmental Action Programme, 2001; Manchester Parish Council & Manchester Parish Development Committee, 2008; Trelawny Municipal Council, 2018). Participatory governance processes for local sustainable development planning therefore not only imply partnership and collaboration, they require it. This finding of a high proportion of *boundary maintaining* practices among participants raises two issues, which are addressed in this subsection. The first is the importance of *boundary disrupting* relational practices for participatory governance and planning. The second is the implication of *domain surviving* relational practices as emancipatory tactics (M. A. Thomas, 2015).

Among the conversations analysed, *boundary disrupting* practices that were initiated by public servants were undertaken at the local government level and mostly with other public servants. Among the 29 coded conversations, there were only four descriptions of public servant-initiated *boundary disrupting* interactions with communities. Boundary disrupting relational practices reflect practices of collaboration which are important for the implementation of multistakeholder policies and plans (Ansell et al., 2017). The lower proportion of these practices should, therefore, make it unsurprising that the implementation of development plans was identified by most participants as a problem. Although the availability of financial resources was often identified as the reason for implementation challenges, the inability to identify and coordinate available resources and cooperatively solve problems was also raised. Participants were aware of the importance of collaboration and expressed their disappointment with the low levels of collaboration, sectoral integration, and interorganisational communication.

The findings therefore raise the issue of the ways individuals dealt with constraints encountered in implementing the processes. Participants were aware of the practices needed to support successful participatory planning processes, but they primarily participated in maintaining the status quo, participating in *domain surviving* practices in response to system constraints. Although the emancipatory nature of *domain surviving* relational practices described by participants meant that

structurally and subjectively subordinated actors felt able to pursue their own goals in an environment of constraint, such practices also supported the maintenance of the status quo by displacing potentially creative disruption. As Topal (2015) proposes, productive change is likely to occur only when either a dominant actor is willing to relinquish their power or when a subordinate actor is able to create disruption that forces change. *Domain surviving* relational practices undermine the latter by orienting subordinate actors who disagree with the dominant frame to intentionally refrain from disruption by finding ways to work around or *work with* the status quo. This likely occurs due to the perceived (and actual) cost of explicit resistance (Liviatan & Jost, 2011), and is therefore less a reflection of the motivations of subordinate actors and more a reflection of their relationship with those in positions of power.

In the case of Jamaica, emancipation narratives, as discussed in chapter eight, by maintaining the ideology of education and not disrupting the status quo, can inadvertently reinforce the institutions of the so-called hegemonic elite. Patterson (2019) suggests that, despite the diversity of the hegemonic elite, their ascription to the national motto denies the complexity of modern blackness (D. A. Thomas, 2002) and continues to legitimise the maintenance of the inherited institutions designed to exclude the mass of the population. In her definition of modern blackness, Thomas (2002) builds on Gray's (2003b, 2003a, 2004) description of the subversive social power of what the latter refers to as the Jamaican lumpenproletariat in the presence of political domination. The masses maintain social power through their mastery in the performance of music, athletics, and honorific fundamentalism (Gray, 2004). To this, D.A. Thomas (2002) adds transnationalism and an embrace of capitalist modernity. The control of popular culture and engagement with global capitalist consumerism become an integrated mechanism for the traditionally marginalised to assert their identity of modern blackness and to smadditise. The engagement of the masses with global cultural capitalism becomes a strategy of material and psychological survival to resist the constraints of the local hegemonic ideology of education described by Austin-Broos (1983). That is, to subvert the control of the hegemonic elite though not disrupting the power position of the elite, the masses engage in the practice of modern blackness, which reflects an adaptation to the systems of capitalism.

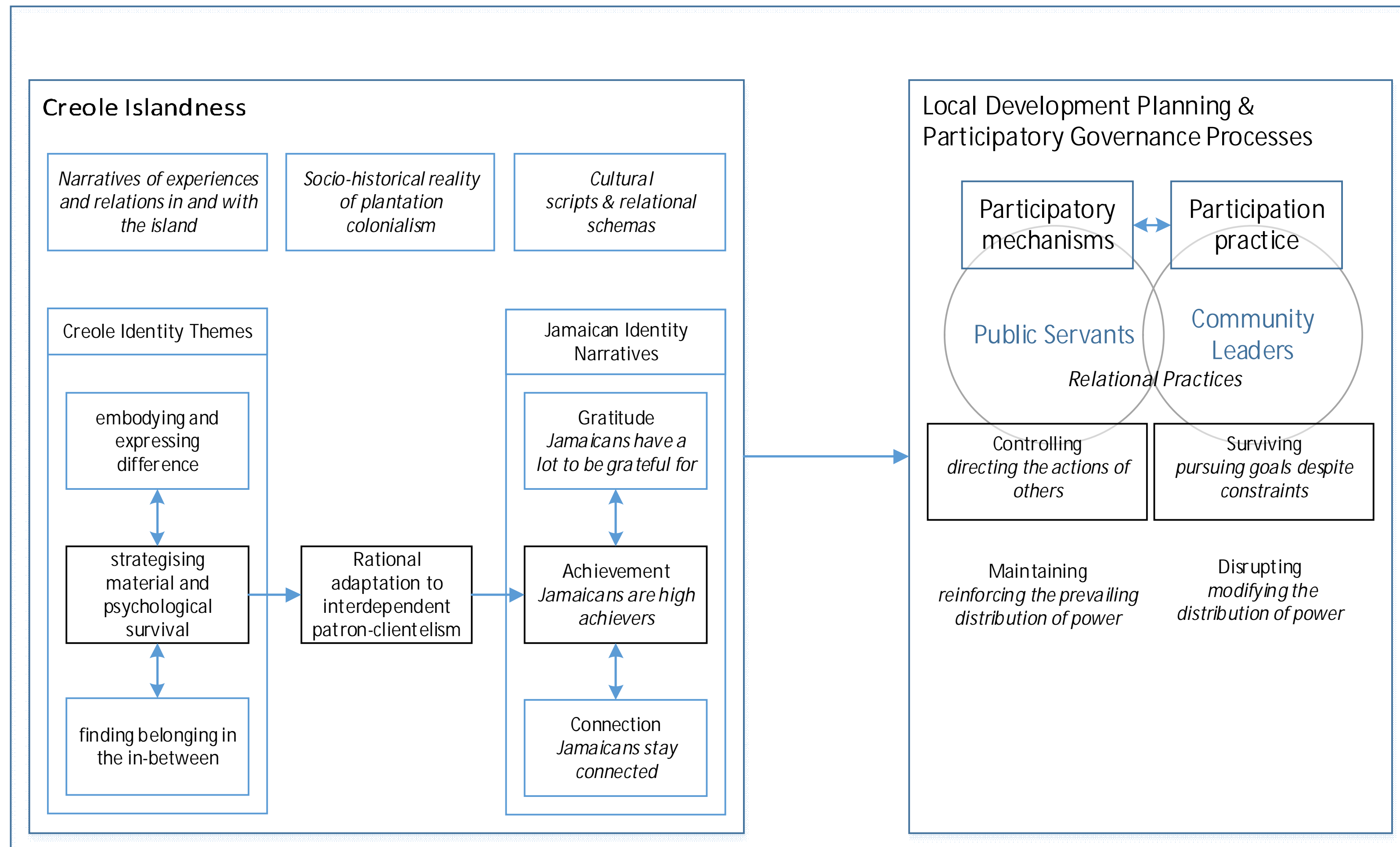
Therefore, as Patterson (2019, p. 338) notes, despite the apparent social power and transnational cultural cachet of the masses, the political and economic institutions of Jamaica remain controlled by the hegemonic elite, which appears unable to "break from the institutional tentacles of the past". The hegemonic elite becomes a self-perpetuating institution, reinforced through the ranks of the voting masses capable of crossing the boundaries created by the hegemonic ideology of achievement and education that aligns class, education, and merit (Austin-Broos, 1983, 1994). The institution of the middle class as defined in the society therefore undermines the possibility of the

break from the past that Patterson (2019, p. 338) proposes, as the middle class is legitimised by its association with the standards of the past in its professional and intellectual status. Emancipatory *domain surviving* practices while providing actors with the means to endure constraining relations, whether between the political directorate and public servants, or between the hegemonic elite and the masses, inadvertently maintain those relationships by not directly challenging them.

The final RQ asks *How do narratives of Creole islandness explain relational practices of public servants and community leaders in local development planning and participatory governance processes?* The answer emerging from this thesis is that the relational practices identified followed a pattern traceable along the narrative emphasis in different domains. It is also possible that relational practices were informed by the cultural repertoire provided by the Creole islandness narratives identified in this research. As indicated in chapter six, emerging from the conversations around identity was a narrative of acceptance of the hegemonic ideal, based in the ideology of education. This acceptance reflected an appreciation that the social condition of emancipation, smadditisation, could only be achieved by working *with* and *not against* the institutional systems. This acceptance is understood as engagement with the ideology of education and the institutions of the hegemonic elite, which help to maintain boundaries and allow the "educated and empowered middle and upper classes [to] pay lip service [to change]", while maintaining "business as usual" (Robinson-Walcott, 2020, p. 28).

As explored in chapter five, the multilevel interdependencies that maintain the political culture of the island depend on the maintenance of the boundaries to stabilise relations and reinforce the differences between domains. Following Edie (1984) and Reno (2020), these relationships are understood to be based on a historic relational schema of multilevel patron-clientelism. The conceptual framework presented in chapter two can be revised here to depict the ways in which the relational schema of patron-clientelism mediates the participatory governance and planning processes by informing the relational practices among the actors involved. The cultural repertoire (scripts and schemas) is based on the narratives of Creole islandness. The metanarratives of modernity and human value (ideology of education) inform the public and ontological narratives of *achievement*, *connection*, and *gratitude*, which are an important part of the cultural toolkit used to negotiate relational practices in the Creole island context.

Figure 9-1: Narratives of Creole Islandness and Relational Practices



9.5 Power and Empowerment in the Local Development Planning Processes

As indicated in the methodology chapter, the intention of this study was not to evaluate the processes of local development planning and participatory governance, but to use them as spaces of relations to understand specific practices of Creole islandness. In exploring the relationship between Creole island narratives and relational practices among islanders, any social institution or phenomenon could have been used. For this thesis, the area of local development planning and participatory governance was selected in part due to my familiarity with the processes and awareness of the proposed importance of participatory policy making in the development process. The participatory governance framework introduced in Jamaica allows community leaders and local government actors to work together to develop and execute plans with and on behalf of their communities and provides a mechanism for central government actors to interface with subnational jurisdictions in the design and implementation of national plans and policies. Exploring relational practices and cultural narratives of community leaders, local government actors responsible for administering subnational jurisdictions, and central government actors responsible for national development planning was considered useful for understanding how narratives of Creole islandness are implicated in the way those processes are practiced and experienced.

Therefore, the research was not designed to evaluate local development planning processes and the participatory governance framework, but to understand the ways in which public servants and community leaders related to each other as they used the mechanisms. The legislation, processes, and planning mechanisms were understood as tools at the disposal of governance actors. The research was designed to focus on what people did with the mechanisms, not on what the mechanisms represented. However, in conducting the research, I observed the ways in which the mechanisms in their design reinforced the status quo. Even though there was an intention to empower communities, and some community leaders did express a belief that the legislative and constitutional changes provided them with authority to influence the planning process on behalf of their communities, the system as designed appeared to contradict its stated intentions. With an understanding that the design of the mechanisms determines how they are used by actors, I briefly discuss how the mechanisms as designed reflect the unequal distribution of power between the state and community groups and impede coordination, collaboration, and accountability. I then discuss the potential for approaching the design of such processes as intentionality in relational practices.

Depowerment and Disrupting the Status Quo

There are three sets of state responsibilities to manage the participatory governance process. There is the SDC, which is the state entity responsible for the establishment and maintenance of the participatory governance framework. There is the Municipal Corporation, which is responsible for the process of developing the local sustainable development plans and which should thereafter use those plans as part of its mandate to manage development in the parish. There is also the Ministry of Local Government, under which both SDC and all municipal corporations fall. The Ministry of Local Government is expected to maintain the policy and regulatory framework under which all these activities take place. The participants who provided insight into the processes of participatory governance and planning commented on challenges they experienced, related to the extent to which actors are held to account for executing their responsibilities; and the extent to which actors have access to the material, financial, and knowledge resources to undertake their role. Related to both these issues is, however, the distribution of power in the processes.

Pugh (2005) proposes that the supremacy of the pre-Independence status quo planning architecture is maintained in anglophone Caribbean islands because the related policy instruments confer ultimate power to the political directorate with relatively little accountability. By extension, such policy instruments also empower those public servant-led institutions responsible for regulating those instruments. The introduction of the participatory governance framework with its expected role in local sustainable development planning processes has not impacted the supremacy of the central decision-making functions, which are the responsibility of the political directorate and central government regulators. The state, through the implementation of the legislation and the attendant bureaucratic structures, is able to respond to the demand to embed local government in the Constitution and the role of participatory governance entities in legislation, but without any real shift in the balance of power. This asymmetric balance of power relieves powerful actors of accountability and maintains their control over resources which determine the functioning of the processes. Despite the legislation and related rhetoric, the dominance of the central government hierarchy remains, and the balance of power is maintained in favour of the status quo.

The role of the international development community is also involved in maintaining these power asymmetries. Development funding is facilitated through international financing mechanisms that favour community governance bodies (Blackburn, 2014; Grove, 2014). However, such alignment does not necessarily lead to good governance or policy change, as the performance of community governance is achievable without meaningful participation or policy commitment (Rao & Ibáñez, 2005). Funding is channelled to purportedly organised communities whose structure and organisation are more likely to reflect administrative investments and beneficent leadership as opposed to the

collective will of the community (Blackburn, 2014; Rao & Ibáñez, 2005). Although this supports successful project outcomes, sustained community empowerment is unlikely to result (Rao & Ibáñez, 2005).

As Blackburn (2014) has noted in their own study of disaster management in Jamaica, discursive and structural empowerment through changes in narratives and systems of mutual accountability is necessary between local and central government to support a practice of empowered participation. Nominal empowerment through the creation of roles and processes that do not address the power imbalance "maintain[s] an asymmetry of power and knowledge in favour of the centre that constitutes a core limiting factor to community-level empowerment and agency" (Blackburn, 2014, p. 109). The lack of coherence between institutional levels and the absence of accountability undermines participation and entrenches power asymmetries at all levels (Blackburn, 2014).

Before the introduction of the Act, the absence of a legislative framework was identified as the reason communities did not have a stronger voice in the development planning processes (M. A. Thomas, 2015). The creation of the legal and institutional framework that would legitimise the role of communities in the planning process was identified as the solution to address the power imbalance (Bowen, 2005; M. A. Thomas, 2015). However, based on conversations with participants, the introduction of the Act has not appeared to have sufficiently redistributed power. Considering the limited performance of the Act as a community empowerment mechanism, the literature on decolonialism (Mitchell et al., 2018) and sustainable development (Monkelbaan, 2019) would suggest that what might be needed are mechanisms of depowerment. Depowerment differs from disempowerment as its target is the traditionally dominant groups who hold a disproportionate amount of power. Disempowerment, on the other hand, is invoked to highlight the ways in which social and economic systems reinforce disbenefits for the traditionally marginalised (Nagar & Raju, 2003). The discourse on depowerment addresses the issue of correcting the balance of power by expanding on the introduction of empowerment mechanisms to include the explicit acknowledgement of power inequalities and relinquishment of specific discretionary powers by those in authority (Hoppe, 2011b, 2011a). Relinquishment of power does not mean an abdication of responsibility, but a negotiation of the sharing of responsibility in the execution of power. Such depowerment would create equity in the power relationship, enable possibilities for the disruption of normative rules, and create space for productive conflict and challenge (Mitchell et al., 2018; Topal, 2015). In the absence of such depowerment or power balancing, the dominant/subordinate power dynamics are maintained, and the possibilities for structural change are undermined (Nagar & Raju, 2003). Therefore, the conversations held with participants and the limited results that the legislated

local development planning and participatory governance processes have been able to achieve would suggest the need for a review of the current relationship framework.

Relational Practice Planning in Institutional Process Design

The experiences of state and nonstate actors in the local development planning and participatory governance processes in Jamaica appear to replicate the experiences regularly reflected in the literature as the experience of local participatory processes throughout the world (Font et al., 2018; Hoppe, 2011a; Yetano et al., 2010). However, on closer inspection, there are differences at the level of the motivating factors and the relational practices. Therefore, this thesis proposes that although the problems of local development planning and participatory governance in Jamaica may appear similar to what obtains in other jurisdictions, understanding how the Creole island context informs the way these problems manifest is important for finding the right solutions.

The characteristics of inequality and size (Warrington & Milne, 2018) are basic realities that govern interactions in the socio-political environment of the Creole island. Inequality as an inheritance of plantation slavery and a characteristic of the postcolony (Mbembe, 1992) can be understood to have an impact on relational value, while size has the potential to impact relational distance (Corbett & Veenendaal, 2017, 2019; Veenendaal, 2019). For the postcolonial island state, individual and, therefore, relational value is always contingent (C. W. Mills, 2010). The power dynamics between the postcolony and the metropole are reinterpreted and performed in the island between those who are seen to possess power and those who are without. Those who ascend to spaces of power adopt the role of the dominant in relation to the less powerful subaltern. Those marginalised due to poverty, education, or geographic location on the island take on a dual identity as those who have continued to experience the worst effects of colonialism and those who must be 'developed' to support their emergence from their condition, which Kamugisha (2007) refers to as the coloniality of Caribbean citizenship. Therefore, although the issue of inequality is not particular to the Creole island context, the basis on which inequality is performed and legitimised may be.

As Pugh (2005) notes, the systems of planning in the anglophone Caribbean significantly reflect the manipulation by local political elites of planning instruments and discourses of the Global North. This manipulation is evident in the ability of the political directorate to claim the legitimacy benefits from the multiple international projects that support participatory governance and local development planning, without changing the historically hierarchical and exclusive design of the institutional structures through which they maintain power. In that way, the political directorate can be understood as employing their own version of emancipatory tactics in relation to the international

political community. As Thomas (2015) points out, emancipatory political tactics are not the reserve of any particular group or level of society. As emerged from participants, such tactics can be understood as being practiced by all. In the case of the local development planning and participatory governance processes, examples of manoeuvres by the political directorate, public servants, and community leaders were identified as each used aspects of the system to their benefit. The political directorate manipulated the international order by appearing to accept the policies and principles aligned with the funding mechanisms. Public servants took advantage of the gaps and spaces in the existing framework to advance the projects and initiatives they believed in, even as they deflected responsibilities for the results of those actions, and community leaders used relationships to overcome the deficiencies and inequalities maintained within the system.

In conversations about local development planning and participatory governance processes, participants often raised the issue of actors' ability to operate according to the design of the processes. Capacity issues were identified as process legitimacy issues, as they were concerned with the extent to which processes could meet the promised results considering the limited technical and financial capacity available. Participants questioned the capacity of municipal corporations to lead and implement local sustainable development planning processes, community governance bodies to fully engage in the process and hold municipal corporations accountable, or central and local government levels to align or integrate parish plans with the National Development Plan. Aligned to the capacity issue was the resource issue. The inadequacy of the available human, technical and financial resources was consistently identified as a constraint on the ability of municipal corporations to manage the implementation of the local sustainable development plan. However, what also emerged in a number of conversations was the issue of coordination and collaboration, the absence of which undermined the effective use of available capacity.

Participants generally described dealing with these capacity issues by managing the way they related with other actors in the system. For those in central government, this translated to mainly *boundary maintaining* and *domain controlling* practices. However, participants at the central government level pointed to the deficit of collaboration and integration which had not been designed into the processes but were left to individuals to negotiate. Therefore, there was a gap in the processes, particularly at the central government level, where *boundary disrupting* relational practices were not facilitated there in the ways they were facilitated at the local level.

At the local government level, some *boundary disrupting* relational practices were institutionally encouraged through the establishment of inter-agency networks facilitated by the SDC, which, through quarterly meetings allowed community leaders to gain access to public servants and public servants to work across institutional boundaries to deliver services to communities. Although

participants indicated that similar mechanisms had been designed at the central government level, both central government and community leaders indicated that, having been asked to participate in such networks, no meetings had been held in several years. Participants also indicated the absence of networks that allowed community leaders and public servants to work in parishes as part of the local sustainable development planning process.

Furthermore, the relational distance between public servants and communities appeared to create another challenge. Community governance bodies exist in relatively high numbers, with an average of three community-based organisations per community, and more than 70% of communities with an active Community Development Committee (Social Development Commission, 2020b). However, those numbers are deceptive as many groups were either not particularly active or representative, with the minimum standard to be labelled as an active entity being to have had a meeting in the last six months(Social Development Commission, 2020b). Additionally, based on an analysis of unpublished data provided by the SDC, only about 17% of currently targeted participatory governance entities had a form of legal registration. It was also instructive that among the state actors involved in process regulation who participated in conversations for this research, only one was actively involved in a Community Development Committee (CDC) as a member. Two others indicated that they acted as a resource for their CDC but did not attend meetings, and another had recently attended a meeting of a community-based organisation (CBO) in their community and was considering becoming a member. There was a sense that for many public servants, the processes being designed and managed were for others, not for public servants and their families.

As participants identified limited capacity and resources as a challenge for local development planning, I reflected on the relational practices that the participants themselves reported had made a difference and how possibly rethinking the relationships between public servants and communities could potentially expand community capacity. If more relationships were designed around providing access to information resources and access to influence, if more personal relationships were cultivated to support interorganisational collaborations, if community members were engaged as partners rather than people in need of development, both state and community capacity would be strengthened. The difference between citizens of a small island and those of larger polities is that there is little reason for those in the former to talk about competition for dominance between the state and society, as it is through the state that resources are accessed by the society (Veenendaal, 2020b). In a postcolonial small island political environment, there is no effort by the society to shackle the state (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2022), because the boundaries between the state and society are much less distinct (Rodrigues Sanches et al., 2022; Veenendaal, 2020b). Acemoglu & Robinson (2022) propose that well-functioning democracies emerge when the state as Leviathan can be sufficiently

shackled by society. However, in a small island state where a significant proportion of society represents the state, as its employees (Bertram & Poirine, 2018; Veenendaal & Corbett, 2020) the issue of potential imbalance in capacity between state and society may need rethinking. The issue may be less about shacking the state, and more about approaching governance from a less adversarial and more collaborative perspective, what Stout and Love (2019) refer to as integrative or collaborative governance. Integrative governance relies on the humanising of the state and its repositioning as a producer and facilitator of social relations, with an approach to governance that is cooperative and "accommodates constructive and creative conflict" (Stout & Love, 2019, p. 137). This reflects a move from relations based on 'power over' to one designed as 'power-with' (Pansardi & Bindi, 2021; Stout & Love, 2019).

Despite the language of shackling, Acemoglu & Robinson (2022) make the related point that society must be as capable as the state in its ability to participate in the determination of social policies and institutional rights and obligations to prevent the state from becoming oligarchic or authoritarian. Such a proposition can be understood as an endorsement of the move from power over to power within the relations between the state and society. Hoppe (2011a, 2011b) argues that participatory decision-making processes that do not provide the equal ability of all stakeholders to influence both the problem definition and possible solutions do not optimise the potential for collective learning necessary to address the problems of the Anthropocene. In concordance with those arguments, this thesis identifies the discretionary authority of the political directorate as an inhibitor of fulfilling the commitment of the Act and the expectations for participatory local development planning in Jamaica to operate as a tool for achieving national sustainable development (Planning Institute of Jamaica, 2009). The thesis also identifies the extent to which some state actors may need to be empowered to be more creative and *boundary disrupting* in their relational practices. The state is not a unitary whole, and depowering and empowering may be needed at different levels to encourage relational practices that are capable of producing long-term benefit.

9.6 SUMMARY

This chapter responded to RQ-C, *How do narratives of Creole islandness inform the relational practices of public servants and community leaders*, by reviewing the findings of chapters seven and eight against the Jamaican identity narratives identified in chapter six. The findings suggested that Creole islandness narratives explained relational practices and experiences of public servants and community

leaders involved in local development planning and participatory governance processes by providing the cultural repertoire (scripts and schemas) that implicitly inform relational practices in each domain.

Building on the discussions from chapters seven and eight, the chapter identified relationships between domains (central/local, public sector/community) and narrative themes from chapters six, seven and eight, and proposed that these relationships between domains and narrative themes could be understood through a deeper cultural analysis. The analysis indicated an iterative relationship between cultural narratives and institutional domains in maintaining the status quo. The chapter identified the ways in which narratives of achievement and gratitude potentially structure the public sector domain, and the ways in which narratives of emancipation and a *smaddiness-preserving* orientation supported domain surviving relational practices which potentially undermined or forestalled boundary disrupting relational practices.

The next chapter concludes the thesis. In that chapter I discuss the extent to which the research findings have responded to the initial questions and the wider research aim. I conclude that chapter with an identification of the contribution the research has made to scholarship on islandness and development studies and provide a final word based on the perspective gained from the research.

CHAPTER TEN
CONCLUSION

10.1 NARRATIVES OF CREOLE ISLANDNESS AND RELATIONAL PRACTICES

The aim of this thesis was to explore the ways in which narratives of Creole islandness implicate relations among islanders. It did this by taking a case study approach to capture the descriptions of relational practices among a network of actors in the local development planning and participatory governance processes in Jamaica. The research was designed around the concepts of islandness, Creole, and narratives as cultural resources. The research accepted social phenomena as relational and the world as postcolonial. Based on the analysis of identity narratives and relational practices, the findings underscored that narratives of Creole islandness, as cultural repertoires informed by the history of experiences on the island, structure and maintain institutional domains, indicating potential relationships between available public narratives and relational practices. In this chapter, I summarise the key discussion points, reflect on the research process, and identify the contributions made by this research to the existing body of knowledge.

Creole Islandness

The thesis positioned the island and the islandness as important variables in understanding the Creole experience. Islandness is a product of "the multiple ways through which relations among inhabitants, and between islands and their dwellers are practiced" (Vannini & Taggart, 2013, p. 236). Islandness is the product of people creating places out of island spaces through an ever changing and ever evolving process of interaction and sensemaking (Davidson & Milligan, 2004). This is the lens through which this research engaged with the subject of islandness — as the product of a specific story, or sets of stories, between islanders about their island and about themselves as island inhabitants. It is about the island space as a place of relations and histories that produce stories of being and belonging, and a particular island *atmosphere*. It is also about understanding borders and nations as the result of an imperialist system of organising the world (Saurin, 2006), the institutionalisation of an epistemology of otherness based on dominance and exploitation, and how these transform island spaces into places of specific kinds of relationships between and among the people that end up there (Vannini & Taggart, 2013).

As a space about which stories are generated and a space within which stories emerge and are preserved, the island becomes a narrative space (Ryan et al., 2016), and through narratives it is

transformed from space into place (Agnew, 2011; Low, 2016). The Creole island is a relational setting (Somers, 1994) transformed by its positioning in the web of colonial relations to produce colonial experiences. The Creole island as a relational setting is a place of relational patterns of domination, exploitation, and violence which produces narratives of resistance (H. M. Beckles, 1992; Dunkley, 2013); adaptation(C. Hall, 1993; Olwig, 2002); and forms of relational practice falling between those two poles. Creole islandness is the result of the historical experience of plantation colonialism and the stratification of human value in the postcolonial island space, which produce narratives of relations and being that reflect these tensions of adaptation and resistance.

To answer the first research question, the thesis established that narratives of Creole islandness reflect fragmentation, are multiple and paradoxical but with a consistent subtext of resilience in the face of violences (physical and psychological) and vulnerabilities, survived through strategic resistances and adaptations (Boswell, 2013; Degia, 2018; Philpot et al., 2015). There are themes of in-betweenness — of being neither and both at the same time, embedded in a narrative of impurity reframed as hybridisation (Boswell, 2005, 2006; Eriksen, 2020; S. Hall, 2015). A reframing that has evolved into a valorisation of difference (Murdoch, 2017; van der Werf et al., 2018). Within the islandness discourse all islanders are considered to understand themselves as different, with their sense of uniqueness being a significant aspect of their island identity (Burholt et al., 2013). However, Creole islandness narratives of difference and distinction are not simply metaphorical, but historically produced and embodied (Mohammed, 1998). The Creole cosmo-ontology is therefore based in the difference in human value and relative position to/in the historic and metaphorical plantation (Clukey & Wells, 2016). It is these experiences of embodying difference; surviving materially and psychologically; and, finding belonging in the in-between which produce the narratives of Creole islandness.

Cultural Repertoires and Political Practice

One of the reasons participatory decision-making was selected as a point of focus for this research was because of its expected role in sustainable development policy making (S. Graham & Graham, 2019; United Nations, 2015). There is also the normative proposal that increasing opportunities for citizen participation in decision-making improves the quality of democracy (Fung, 2015; Wampler, 2012). However, increasing citizen participation in policy making requires more than increasing opportunities and legislating mechanisms. The usefulness of participatory mechanisms is determined by the degree to which citizens consider themselves able to exert power in decision-making (Hoppe, 2011b; Vráblíková, 2013), with the nature of democratic institutions determined by the citizens'

understanding of who holds power and how it is exerted (Parvin, 2018). Discussions about democracy and participation must, therefore, take into account the cultural and historical context of citizen-state relations and the related place-based practices of power (Cornwall & Shankland, 2013; Robins et al., 2008). This means that increasing opportunities for participation without changing cultural and institutional norms is unlikely, by itself, to improve democracy.

This thesis therefore agrees with Patterson (2019) in his acceptance of Acemoglu et al's (2001) conclusion on the importance of institutions for the well-being of societies, and the role of colonial history in informing the institutions of postcolonial states. However, Patterson (2019) understands Creole islands that have not operated inherited colonial institutions to national benefit as having failed to learn how to operate those institutions. In the case of Jamaica, Patterson (2019) suggests that there is explicit knowledge of the institutions necessary to support an effective democracy, but no implicit knowledge of how to ensure they function effectively—the distinction between knowledge that and knowledge how. This thesis proposes a different interpretation. It proposes that Creole island institutions are produced from the negotiation of relational practices informed by the traditional beliefs, desires, and dilemmas of citizens operating in their various state and nonstate roles using the available cultural tools and repertoires (Bevir & Rhodes, 2010, 2016; Swidler, 1986, 2001). That is, Creole islandness narratives guide social learning, build implicit culture knowledge, and govern the relational dynamics that produce Creole island institutions. Therefore, to counter Patterson's (2019) perspective, in this thesis, I suggest that as a society's institutions function on the basis of the implicit cultural knowledge shared among its communities, it is that implicit knowledge which should be explored and understood, as opposed to a focus on the knowledge that they are proposed to lack.

Creole Decoloniality

Although Euro-American conceptions of modernity reproduce coloniality by maintaining the principles of conquest, exploitation, accumulation, and racialised hierarchies of human value, these principles are not the sole preserve of those residing in the spaces of colonial power. Decision-makers in postcolonial nations support the maintenance of the colonial matrix of power through the choices they make on behalf of the state and its people (Gautier et al., 2022; Kamugisha, 2019). This colonial complicity must, however, be understood within the context of global coloniality and the mythology of decolonisation (Grosfoguel, 2002). As Grosfoguel (2002) contends, the knowledges of the postcolonial subject is "situated within the axis of the colonial difference produced by the coloniality of power in the modern/colonial world-system" (2002, p. 208). It therefore becomes important to locate the sources of knowledge being used by state and nonstate leaders, keeping in mind that the

global system which they must navigate on behalf of the state is anchored in the colonial matrix of power. Within an international political system founded on the principles of coloniality, the nation-state must be understood as what Grosfoguel (2011, p. 24) refers to as a "political institutional form … of the modern/colonial capitalist/patriarchal world-system". Colonial complicity therefore accompanies compliance with an international political system designed around unequal and racialised systems of power.

Mignolo (2007, 2011) proposes delinking and dewesternisation as decolonial options, reflecting Fanon's call to "not pay tribute to Europe by creating states, institutions, and societies which draw their inspiration from her … [but instead] seek the response elsewhere than in Europe … [to] work out new concepts and try to set afoot a new man (sic)" (Fanon, 1963, pp. 315–316). Decoloniality, thus conceived, is the undoing of and transcendence from the ways of knowing and being based on the colonial episteme (Maldonado-Torres, 2007) and the imperial mode of living (Brand & Wissen, 2018a). However, any notion of dewesternisation engages with the myth of the existence of a pure and coherent western and Eurocentric knowledge and practice (Dirlik, 2005; Sylvester, 1999; Viramontes, 2022) As a decolonial alternative to dewesternisation Goodchild (2022) proposes the integration of epistemologies to produce a third way. In this way, decoloniality and delinking become less about dewesternisation and more about creating new knowledges, which, though informed by existing knowledges, transcends them. That is, if coloniality is domination, exploitation, accumulation and universalism, decoloniality becomes co-creation, sharing, subsistence and pluriversality.

This thesis was informed by this understanding of the relationship between coloniality and modernity and the need for decoloniality as a trajectory of change. The Caribbean, as the initial location of new world "discovery" and a region of Creole islands, has had a long history of exposure to modern Western colonialism and an equally long history of opposition to coloniality (Maldonado-Torres & Cavooris, 2017). It is this history that informs the traditional beliefs and practices of the islands, and therefore, narratives of Creole islandness are made up of narratives of coloniality intertwined with narratives of anticoloniality. Therefore, many of the networks of relations that produce the institutions of the Creole island state are governed by the relational logic of coloniality, despite the presence of anticolonial contestation (R. Brown, 2014; E. Jones et al., 2015; D. Marshall, 2015).

Decoloniality in the Creole context is, however, a different discourse than decoloniality in a Settler-colonial context (Corntassel, 2012; L. T. Smith, 2012). Decolonisation in the settler-colonial context is about acknowledgement of and respect for Indigenous ways of knowing and being that challenge the Settler dominance practically, legally, and philosophically (Salmon, 2000; Tuck & Yang, 2012). Creole decoloniality, however, has no recourse to a precolonial precedent to legitimate

anticoloniality. There is no Indigenous precolonial epistemology to which Creole islanders can return. There is, however, the availability of all knowledges out of which to fashion a new way of knowing and being (Grosfoguel, 2011). Fashioning new knowledge requires understanding existing knowledge, and this was the aim of this research: understanding narratives of Creole islandness and the ways in which they manifest in the relational practices of islanders. This thesis proposes that Creole islands as places of relational patterns informed by a history of colonialism are the compressed and amplified reflection of humanity under coloniality. Thus, they represent:

> a new humanity, where languages, races, religions, customs, ways of being from all over the world were brutally uprooted and transplanted in an environment where they had to reinvent life … [with a] cultural character [that] bears both the marks of this world and elements of its negation. (Bernabé et al., 1990, pp. 891–892)

Being neither one thing nor the other, Creole islands are also spaces of possibility, "an open specificity" (Bernabé et al., 1990, p. 892), which enable the "re-making [of] selves and places under new and different conditions" (Crichlow & Northover, 2009, p. 213). This thesis by exploring narratives of Creole islandness and identifying specific opportunities for intentional disruptive anti-and decolonial relational practices makes a contribution towards defining a practice of Creole delinking.

10.2 Contribution of Research

By exploring relations among public servants and community leaders involved in local development planning and participatory governance processes, this research engaged with the relationship between historicity, identity and local development practices. Such an exploration provides a basis for understanding how individuals, operating within the context of historically contingent cultural narratives, make use of policies and processes to accomplish development outcomes.

The focus on islands was a key component of this research. Through its focus on the island as space and place of relational amplification, the thesis contributes to both the islandness and development studies discourses. In addition to exploring the characteristic of amplification by compression (ABC) as a socio-cultural function of islands, this research contributes to the island studies field by operationalising a classification of islandness based on narratives of colonial history, through the definition and exposition of the concept of *Creole islandness*.

Much has been elaborated on islandness (Baldacchino, 2018b; Conkling, 2007; Edmond & Smith, 2003; Hay, 2006; R. E. Jackson, 2008; Kelman, 2018; Soares & McCusker, 2011; Vannini & Taggart, 2013), as well as on Creole identity (see Bolland, 1998; Brathwaite, 1971; Glissant, 2011; Nettleford, 1990; Stewart, 2016; Vaughan, 2005). However, with the exception of Cohen & Sheringham (2013), the relationship between these two concepts have been treated as incidental rather than contingent. This thesis situates the postcolonial island and the socio-cultural narratives which emerge within it as the basis for the experience of a particular type of islandness. The thesis adopts the perspective that islandness is formed through relations in and with the island—relations defined by the intergenerationally transmitted stories of islander experiences and relations. These stories are reproduced as relational scripts, forming part of the islander's cultural repertoire which they use to navigate, and provide meaning to new experiences. These historically contingent relational repertories are maintained by the intergenerational narratives which emerge to explain the history and experiences of islanders in and with the island. By conceptualising Creole islandness narratives as a particular experience of islandness informed by colonial historical dynamics, this thesis proposes an approach to analysing islandness which relates islandness narratives to relational practices and provides a framework for comparing Creole islands and contrasting experiences between Creole islands and islands with colonial histories of autochthony or Settler colonialism.

Development in the postcolony is a primary focus of government and civil society alike (Hinds, 2019). Creole island development, as in most postcolonial nation states, is the product of power relations and decision-making structures that have been derived from and interpreted within the context of the Creole island political culture (E. Jones, 1981; Lindsay, 1975). The Creole island society is structured from the "inequitable relations of power under colonialism [which] continue to shape contemporary social relations" (Jaffe, 2016, p. 47), with anti-poor elitist bias expressed either in the policies themselves or the manner of implementation (Kelly, 2019; Klak, 1992; Sobhee, 2004). However, most studies focus on the macro relations or leadership tendencies (E. Jones et al., 2015; D. Marshall, 2015) which contribute to these inequitable results.

Using Jamaica as an example of a Creole island, I focused on a network of actors involved in the local development planning and participatory governance processes–public servants and community leaders. These actors participated in the research as development actors contributing to change processes based on their assigned roles. Participants were acknowledged as development and governance actors undertaking their roles as part of local democratic practices in a specific cultural context. The thesis therefore builds on prior work that investigates democracy and governance in small societies (Anckar, 2008; Corbett & Veenendaal, 2016, 2017; Veenendaal & Corbett, 2015), by examining the practices of these public servants and community leaders in the fulfilment of their roles

to each other as they implement policies and processes to achieve development and improved governance in a postcolonial small island cultural context. Although the data generated by this research are specific to the spaces and individuals that participated, the insights produced can inform considerations to strengthen administrative democracy and policy processes in Creole island jurisdictions. As such, this research adds to defining Creole island public administration and state community relational practices as a distinct area of study. Although there is a widespread acceptance of public services in the anglophone Caribbean as culturally implicated by its colonial history, this has not been systematically addressed in the design of public sector change programmes. Instead, such changes have sought to more closely model the Westminster institutions on which political and public administrative practice are understood to be based (Bissessar, 2015; Girvan, 2015; E. Jones et al., 2015; Osei, 2007). Therefore, this thesis contributes to understanding postcolonial and Creole island public administration practices as a distinct area of study.

The thesis applied the lens of *state as cultural practice* (Bevir & Rhodes, 2010) to the Creole island context to engage with the elements of history, institutions and power relations that Acemoglu & Robinson (2022) propose contribute to understanding how development occurs within a society. Therefore, this research contributes to the current discussion on the relationship between culture and institutions. It also proposes that such relationships can be productively studied on Creole islands based on the ability of small islands to operate as spaces of amplification (Percy et al., 2018) and for the Creole island as processual of modernity (Mintz, 1996; Trouillot, 2002) to provide insight into the socio-cultural implications of modernity.

> [Creole] history … is the tragedy and the glory of encounter of the entire non-Western world with the West … under conditions that would prevent its awful novelty from being recognized for what it was: a modernity that predated the modern. If that is indeed the way the world is becoming, then [Creole] peoples already know about it. (Mintz, 1996, p. 305)

10.3 Further Research

As a case study that focused on a relatively small network of actors, this study was designed with a narrow scope. Therefore, the findings are limited in their generalisability beyond the network of actors involved in the study. As only three of the 14 subnational jurisdictions on the island were included in the study, there is the possibility that a larger sample could provide a wider range of relational

practices and therefore expand on these findings. Furthermore, since data for this study were collected through online conversations, additional data collection in the field using observation and multiple participant interactions could potentially provide a deeper level of understanding of the environment and the experiences of participants (J. Mills & Birks, 2014; Stewart-Withers et al., 2014). However, not being able to collect data in the field was mitigated by reviewing prior research on the participatory governance framework (Dodman, 2004; M. A. Thomas, 2015) and my own familiarity with the institutional environment under study. Additionally, member-checking through formal and informal follow-up with participants (Harvey, 2015) helped clarify issues and allowed me to double check interpretations during the analysis phase. However, an ethnographic process-based study that generated thick descriptions of relational practices could expand on the framework developed (Schensul et al. 2016).

Further, only two categories of actors, public servants, and community leaders, participated in this research. Although insightful and sufficient for the purposes of this study, which focused on the implications of cultural narratives on relational practices, the approach could be expanded with a focus on analysing the processes as the experience and practice of relationships. Such an approach would require the inclusion of the political directorate and non-executive members of community governance bodies. Their experiences and relational practices would need to be captured to obtain a complete understanding of the way all relational practices integrate to produce process results. Understanding processes from all stakeholder perspectives and gaining insight into the different sets of narratives each group of actors takes into the interactions would provide depth to understanding the network of relational practices that support the local development planning process.

This research produced two frameworks that could be elaborated on and tested in further research. First it generated a framework for understanding narratives of Creole islandness through the development of three narrative themes of Creole island identity which were used to understand the descriptions of Jamaican identity provided by participants. The research also generated a framework of relational practices based on interactions and experiences described by state and nonstate actors involved in planning and governance processes. Both of these frameworks will need to be further tested and elaborated through application in other Creole island institutional contexts.

While there have been several studies on Caribbean public administration (Lodge et al., 2015; G. E. Mills, 1970; Minto-Coy & Berman, 2015; Walker, 2002), thinking about Creole island public administration as a distinct area of study would move away from understanding the political practices of these islands as colonial mimicry (Corbett & Veenendaal, 2016; Girvan, 2015; Quinn, 2015). Further theory building around Creole island public service practice could highlight the different ways these islands have used their cultural inheritances to fashion unique public administration practice. This

would incorporate work done in this thesis on state-community relational practices, with work that has been done on small island democracies, which have highlighted the relationship between size, clientelism and democratic stability (Rodrigues Sanches et al., 2022; Veenendaal & Corbett, 2020).

10.4 FINAL WORD

This thesis attempted to create an understanding of how narratives of Creole islandness 'show up' in the relational dynamics between public servants and the citizens involved in local development planning. In so doing, I attempted to gain a deeper understanding of the relationship between the Creole experience and island culture and what, if anything, that culture meant to individuals as part of their own identities. I then attempted to understand the variety of perspectives of both state and nonstate actors involved in the same processes and the extent to which their narratives of self and other emerged in their description of experiences and relational practices. However, in identifying patterns of narratives and relational practices I am also aware that culture and identity are subject to change. Like the narratives that inform them, they respond to the environment, new experiences and new stories.

Acemoglu & Robinson (2022) propose that there is a dynamic and iterative relationship between culture and political institutions, and that the emergence of a well-functioning democracy requires the right balance of power between the state and its citizens. Almond and Verba (1972, p. 504) projected that there was a greater likelihood of newly de-colonised nations being democratic as opposed to totalitarian if they were able to develop a "civic culture … a sense of common political identity … common affective commitment to the political system … and a sense of political community". However, such discussions on the development of democracy in former colonised spaces appear to inadequately address the potentially lasting effects of colonial institutions on governance and society. The emergence of such civic culture in the postcolonial state requires cultural reconfiguration (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2022) that starts with the dismantling of the oligarchic, oppressive and exploitative characteristics of the colonial culture and the institutions which maintain it. Much of this work should have been completed at the time of independence, but as many academics have noted, at least in the case of Jamaica, that has not appeared to have been the case (R. M. Brown, 2014; Girvan, 2012, 2015; Kamugisha, 2007; Lindsay, 1975; D. Marshall, 2015). As Acemoglu & Robinson (2019, 2022) indicate, democracy matters for societal well-being, but the emergence of political institutions that can facilitate a well-functioning democracy requires cultural

configuration that redistributes power and allows those exploited or marginalised by the institutions of the colonial state to collectively demand inclusion. If not, though "an extractive elite is displaced, it is only replaced by a new elite without a movement towards more inclusive institutions" (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2019, p. 26).

Girvan (2015) notes that coloniality was institutionalised into the socio-political fabric of the society at Independence, when the decision was taken to maintain the British monarch as the Head of State.

> [This] had the effect of embedding the core symbol of colonial governance into the institutions and rituals of the Independent state … connoted continuity rather than rupture. … [and] institutionalised a fractured psyche of political allegiance among those who were to be responsible for running the affairs of state. (Girvan, 2015, p. 96)

As Girvan (2015) makes the point, swearing allegiance to the Queen and her successors instead of the people of the country must have some impact on the minds of those responsible for governing the state. From Girvan's (2015) perspective the national project has run its course and there is a need to reconceptualise sovereignty, not simply as territorial autonomy but as "structures of people empowerment at the local and community levels. Food sovereignty. Energy independence … the capacity of a society and its citizens to think for themselves … sovereignty of the imagination …'shared sovereignty'" (2015, pp. 104–105). Such a sovereignty requires, "a theory and practice of Caribbean democracy that breaks free from the shackles of Westminsterism" (Girvan, 2015, p. 105). Breaking free of such shackles will however require disrupting the status quo and embracing new ways of governing that enables ways of relating between state and community that go beyond surviving to co-creating.

> We need forms of political participation that privilege informed citizen engagement with the urgent issues of survival and with the kind of society that we wish to create. Forms that promote the building of social consensus across the cleavages of class, colour, ethnicity, gender, and political tribe. (Girvan, 2015, p. 105)

Though the findings from this research reaffirm the normativity of development based on progress, there is a concern for such progress to be inclusive and to benefit all. The approach to achieving such progress, based in the ideology of education, could be understood as elitist, however, it is mostly pragmatic. Creole islanders are aware of the constraints imposed by differential power

relationships. As Krasner (2009) makes clear, the international system of nation-states was designed to maintain an epistemic and economic hierarchy, which places Creole island states as forever at the periphery, responding to changes in the global political and economic system, but not influencing them.

I focussed this thesis on the concept of narratives, in part to reflect a social constructivist perspective (C. Hay, 2015) and because, as Wagenaar (2011, pp. 4–5) indicates, narratives, as meaning, do not only "influence institutions, practices, and policies", they bring the state into being. Therefore, while understanding Creole as experience (Glissant, 2011) and identity as processual (S. Hall, 2006), there was also an awareness of the logic of institutional structures which meant that there were multiple reinforcements that maintain the operation of institutions (Hinings et al., 2017). And though actors can resist and negotiate the narratives they encounter, they operate within the cultural repertoire of that environment and the cultural tools at their disposal.

This is the reason relational practices matter. The reason culture is not static is because it is informed by new experiences, which have the potential to produce new narratives. The interactions and relations involved in new experiences potentially challenge existing narratives, and in turn, have the potential to produce new cultural tools. Each new set of experiences and relations builds the cultural repertoire, either through reinforcement, modification or expansion (Boyd & Richerson, 2005). Therefore, despite being produced from coloniality, the concept of Creole represents a certain hopefulness, based in the knowledge that whatever adaptations and resistances are necessary to attain and defend smaddiness, they will be engaged. And those adaptations and resistances will look different depending on the circumstances and the environment. Nevertheless, the experiences and interactions, the relations, create the potential for change.

Creole islands and islanders are caught in a cycle of emancipatory survival, being in a world not of their own design but in which they must create a niche to survive using the tools available within the environment, whether that is the island, the region or the international political environment. The Creole experience, identity and culture are always in process (S. Hall, 2006) , producing islanders capable of "operat[ing] on several levels simultaneously", and with a "tremendous flexibility in adapting to changing situations as circumstances demand" (Nettleford, 2003, p. 553). Such potential among public servants and community leaders as development and governance actors in the Creole island context provides the basis for the renegotiation of narratives and the fashioning of new relational practices. Narratives as products of experiences reflect the accumulated knowledge and shared understanding among people of what determines survival and success. And as new experiences are encountered and new knowledge is acquired, narrative resources expand. Therefore, opportunities for devising new narratives and creating new relational practices are available to Creole

islanders as state and nonstate actors navigating and negotiating the local development planning and governance processes (or any other process).

Fanon (1963, pp. 149–152) wrote that nationalism would not be the source of anticolonialism, since at independence those identified to lead the postcolonial new nations had simply "step[ped] into the shoes of the former European settlement", instead of following a more "heroic, positive, fruitful, and just path". It is, however, not too late to follow that path, and for Creole island public servants and community leaders to step out of the shoes of the colonial model and put themselves "to school with the people … to put at the people's disposal the intellectual and technical capital [they have]" and take an approach to governing based on encouraging the emergence of "new social relations" (Fanon, 1963, pp. 150–152).

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APPENDIX A. LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Table A-1: Complete List of Conversations

Code	Parish	Position	Category	Conversation Date	Length (Mins)
NS1	Parish C	PDC Chairperson	Nonstate	March 4, 2021	166
NS2	Parish A	PDC Chairperson	Nonstate	March 10, 2021	98
				July 7, 2021 *(Follow-up)*	102
NS3	Parish B	PDC Chairperson	Nonstate	March 10, 2021	219
NS4	NA	Diaspora Organisation Director of Operations	Nonstate	March 16, 2021	93
NS5	NA	Diaspora Organisation Chairperson	Nonstate	March 20, 2021	127
NS6	Parish B	Diaspora Organisation President	Nonstate	March 20, 2021	117
NS7	Parish B	CDC Chair	Nonstate	April 5, 2021	210
NS8	Parish C	CBO President	Nonstate	June 30, 2021	63
S1	Parish B	Executive Secretary	State	February 17, 2021	50
S2	Parish B	Director of Planning	State	February 17, 2021	68
S3	Parish B	Parish Coordinator	State	February 17, 2021	59
S4	Parish C	Chief Executive Officer	State	March 10, 2021	114
S5	Parish C	Spatial Planner	State	March 11, 2021	240
S6	NA	Senior Director	State	March 20, 2021	79
S7	NA	Director	State	March 23, 2021	77
S8	Parish B	Destination Manager	State	March 25, 2021	105
S9	Parish A	Director of Planning	State	March 30, 2021	79
S10	Parish A	LSDP Manager			
S12	Parish C	Director of Planning	State	June 29, 2021	55
S13	Parish A	Destination Manager	State	July 13, 2021	80
S14	NA	Programme Director	State	August 2, 2021	168
S15	NA	Director	State	February 11, 2021	50
S16	NA	Director	State	March 12, 2021	86
				March 30, 2022 *(Follow-up)*	154
S17	Parish C	Parish Manager	State	March 31, 2021	156
S18	Parish B	Parish Manager	State	April 1, 2021	111
S19	Parish C	Former Director	State	April 9, 2021	113
S20	Parish A	Parish Manager	State	July 1, 2021	69
S21	NA	Former Director	State	July 9, 2021	166
S22	NA	Former Director	State	July 17, 2021	108
S23	NA	Division Head	State	August 5, 2021	97
S24	NA	Acting Director	State	September 9, 2021	157
S25	NA	Senior Director			
S26	NA	Planner			
S27	NA	Planner			
S28	NA	Former Programme Director	State	June 25, 2022	67
		N=35		N=33	T= 3,703 Mins or 61.7 Hrs

Table A-2: Participants Responding to RQ-A

Code	Parish	Position	Category
NS1	Parish C	PDC Chairperson	Nonstate
NS2	Parish A	PDC Chairperson	Nonstate
NS3	Parish B	PDC Chairperson	Nonstate
NS4	NA	Diaspora Organisation Director of Operations	Nonstate
NS5	NA	Diaspora Organisation Chair	Nonstate
NS6	Parish B	Diaspora Organisation President	Nonstate
NS7	Parish B	CDC Chair	Nonstate
NS8	Parish C	CBO President	Nonstate
S1	Parish B	Executive Secretary	State
S2	Parish B	Director of Planning	State
S3	Parish B	Parish Coordinator	State
S4	Parish C	Chief Executive Officer	State
S5	Parish C	Spatial Planner	State
S6	NA	Senior Director	State
S7	NA	Director	State
S8	Parish B	Destination Manager	State
S9	Parish A	Director of Planning	State
S10	Parish A	LSDP Manager	State
S12	Parish C	Director of Planning	State
S13	Parish A	Destination Manager	State
S14	NA	Programme Director	State
S22	NA	Former Director	State
		N=22	

Table A-3: Participants Responding to RQ-B

Code	Parish:	Position	Category
NS1	Parish C	PDC Chairperson	Nonstate
NS2	Parish A	PDC Chairperson	Nonstate
NS3	Parish B	PDC Chairperson	Nonstate
NS7	Parish B	CDC Chair	Nonstate
NS8	Parish C	CBO President	Nonstate
S1	Parish B	Executive Secretary	State
S2	Parish B	Director of Planning	State
S3	Parish B	Parish Coordinator	State
S4	Parish C	Chief Executive Officer	State
S5	Parish C	Spatial Planner	State
S6	NA	Senior Director	State
S7	NA	Director	State
S8	Parish B	Destination Manager	State
S9	Parish A	Director of Planning	State
S10	Parish A	LSDP Manager	State
S12	Parish C	Director of Planning	State
S13	Parish A	Destination Manager	State
S14	NA	Programme Director	State
S15	NA	Director	State
S16	NA	Director	State
S17	Parish C	Parish Manager	State
S18	Parish B	Parish Manager	State
S19	Parish C	Former Director	State
S20	Parish A	Parish Manager	State
S21	NA	Former Director	State
S22	NA	Former Director	State
S23	NA	Division Head	State
S24	NA	Acting Director	State
S25	NA	Senior Director	State
S26	NA	Planner	State
S27	NA	Planner	State
S28	NA	Former Programme Director	State
		N=32	

APPENDIX B. SAMPLE CORRESPONDENCE

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PŪKENGA TANGATA

[Date]

[Address]

Dear ____________________,

I am a Development Studies doctoral student completing my dissertation on the role of local culture in the policy process. I would like to focus my case study on the Community-Based Tourism policy process and am seeking your endorsement and support for me to engage the participation of persons in the Trelawny Municipal Corporation who are involved in this policy area, particularly those who may be supporting the implementation of the Trelawny LSDP.

In addition to me being a doctoral student, I am also a twenty-year career civil servant in the Jamaican Government (on study leave). My research interest stems from my experience working with other civil servants, policy stakeholders, consultants and academics on a variety of initiatives in which culture has often been identified as an invisible contributor to the project outcome. With the efforts that we are currently engaged in across the island to achieve *Vision 2030* I thought it would be useful to explore the ways in which "culture" should be expected to manifest so that it can be used to better support the achievement of desired outcomes.

The purpose of this letter is to request your permission to approach your staff, and for contact information for staff who are, or have been, involved in the Community-based Tourism Policy and related initiatives. Participation in the research project is voluntary, which means that any staff member approached will be free to decline my invitation to participate in the research.

Please see attached research information sheet for further information on my project.

Sincerely,

SueAnn Waite

PhD Candidate, Development Studies

Massey University, New Zealand

APPENDIX C. RESEARCH INFORMATION SHEET

Culture and Participatory Policymaking:

An exploration into how cultural narratives of "creole islandness" interact with the participatory policy process: A case study of Jamaica

INFORMATION SHEET

Introduction:
This research asks the question "*in what ways do cultural narratives of "creole islandness" interact with the process of participatory policymaking and implementation.*

This research project is being undertaken by SueAnn Waite, who is a PhD Candidate studying in the field of Development Studies. The research is being conducted as part of SueAnn's doctoral thesis.

The term creole is used in this study to refer to the historical processes that have set the foundation for cultural evolution in the formerly colonised spaces of the Caribbean and Indian Ocean islands. In taking a relational approach to understanding the interactions between citizens and the state, the researcher will engage public servants and non-state policy stakeholders on their experiences with participatory policy processes, to explore the ways in which cultural narratives may have informed ways of thinking and relating within those processes.

This project uses Jamaica's Community Based Tourism Policy process as a case study, based on its importance for development outcomes at the national and local levels.

Project Description and Invitation
Taking as its point of the departure the importance of culture and identity in the expression of civic responsibilities, and the understanding of state operations as an amalgam of cultural practices, the research will explore the ways in which local cultural narratives interact with policymaking and implementation processes.

The research will involve conversations with public servants and non-state stakeholders working with the Community-Based Tourism Policy nationally and at the local government level, with specific focus on the parishes of St. Thomas, Trelawny and Manchester. These parishes have been selected because of the work that has been done, and is undergoing, on their Local Sustainable Development Planning (LSDP).

Participants will be engaged in conversations to explore their roles, experiences and insights related to the policy process. These conversations will be one-on-one lasting approximately an hour. Conversations will be scheduled according to participant availability and will use software such as Zoom, Skype, and Microsoft Teams, depending on their accessibility for the participant.

Conversations will be recorded for the purpose of accurately capturing the information. Following the discussion, each participant will be sent a transcribed copy of the parts of the conversation that I propose to use in the research. Participants will be provided with a two-week period to review the transcribed conversation and clarify any part of it before it is incorporated into the research.

Data Management
The information you provide will be kept confidential and stored safely. All physical data, including interview transcripts and notes will be stored in a lockable cabinet and electronic copies of this data will be saved on the researcher's multi-factor authenticated password-protected Microsoft Office 365 account.

Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa | **School of People, Environment & Planning**
Private Bag 11222, Palmerston North 4442, New Zealand. **T** +64 6 350 4343 **F** +64 6 350 5737. **http://pep.massey.ac.nz**

Your responses within this research will be not be identifiable to you unless you so request. Any quotations that may be used within the thesis will not be attributed to a named individual.

All recordings will be destroyed after transcription verification by the participant.

Once the research is complete each participant will be emailed a summary of the findings.

Participant's Rights
I would be delighted if you agreed to participate, but please be assured that you are under no obligation to do so. If you decide to participate, you have the right to:

- *decline to answer any particular question.*
- *withdraw from the study at any time.*
- *ask any questions about the study at any time during participation.*
- *provide information on the understanding that **your name will not be used***
- *ask for the recorder to be turned off at any time during the conversation.*

Project Contacts
If you have any questions about any aspect of this research, please feel free to contact either SueAnn Waite (s.waite@massey.ac.nz), or Gerard Prinsen her PhD supervisor (g.prinsen@massey.ac.nz). Either of us would be happy to discuss your questions or concerns.

Committee Approval Statement
This project has been evaluated by peer review and judged to be low risk. Consequently, it has not been reviewed by one of the University's Human Ethics Committees. The researcher named in this document is responsible for the ethical conduct of this research.

If you have any concerns about the conduct of this research that you want to raise with someone other than the researcher(s), please contact Professor Craig Johnson, Director-Ethics, email humanethics@massey.ac.nz."

APPENDIX D. SAMPLE CONVERSATION GUIDE

MASSEY UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES
AND SOCIAL SCIENCES
TE KURA PŪKENGA TANGATA

Culture and Participatory Policymaking:

A case study of Jamaica

This research asks the question "*in what ways do "narratives of creole islandness" interact with the process of participatory policymaking and implementation.*

Conversation Guide

The intention is to have a one-on-one-conversation guided by two sets of questions. The first will be related to your identity as a Jamaican, and the second set will be related to your role and experience in the process of developing and implementing the Local Sustainable Development Plan (LSDP) process. In relation to the second set of questions, I would like for our conversation to also explore the mechanisms for supporting local level decision making and integrating the local decision-making processes into the national processes. The Table below provides an indicative set of questions for the conversation.

Part A	Part B
1. Tell me about what being Jamaican means to you? Please elaborate and provide examples	What does it mean for you to be a public servant within the local government system? How does this relate to your sense of being Jamaican?
2. What words come to mind when you think of the island? the people? the history?	How do you understand the role of local government in the national policy and planning process? What is the expectation of the PDC/MC relationship? Advisory? Partnership? Citizen accountability? How does your role support this process?
3. What do you believe are the defining social norms and values within the island culture? To what extent do you believe Jamaicans are living into those norms and values or there is anything preventing them from living into those norms and values? To what extent are those norms and values changing, can change or should change?	How is the input/output from the local planning processes integrated at the national level? What are the specific mechanisms? How are project priorities determined?
4. What are your thoughts on the island's development in terms of its history and future direction?	What has been your experience of the participatory policy and planning process? What have been the successes, or challenges if any? What are the opportunities for even greater success? Can you give any examples or scenarios without being specific about individuals?
5. What are your thoughts on the capacity of Jamaican islanders to get to where you think they need to go? Do you believe that there is a willingness and ability among the citizenry (in the island and the Diaspora) to be involved in achieving Vision 2030?	To what extent is your work informed by the SDGs or Vision 2030? Describe/elaborate.