Indigenous peoples and the emergence of the Caribbean Creoles

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Contrary to most of the dominant discourses on Caribbean history, a close and critical re-examination and re-analysis of historical, archaeological, genetic, and other evidence suggests that the indigenous peoples of the insular Caribbean and their descendants were in the right places, at the right times, in sufficient numbers, and in positions of sufficient power and prestige to have had a significant impact not only on the lexicon, but also on the grammatical structures of the Caribbean Creoles. By acknowledging that throughout the colonial history of the Caribbean, Indigenous and other marginalized peoples had their own demographic, social, economic, political, and cultural agendas, and that they were often successful in implementing these agendas, it becomes apparent that the multiplex matrix from which the Caribbean Creoles emerged must be further complicated and elaborated to include Indigenous influences on creole grammatical structures.

1. Introduction

Although there is a general consensus that a number of lexical items found in the Caribbean Creoles can be traced to the Indigenous languages of the Caribbean, few creolists are willing to admit any substantial Indigenous Antillean input into the grammatical structures of Caribbean Creoles. The arguments that are put forward to justify this skepticism are at first glance quite logical and reasonable, and generally fall into two categories. First, one encounters demographic arguments which hold that because the Indigenous populations of the Caribbean and their speech communities were so rapidly and completely exterminated at the onset of the colonial period, they would not have been present 'at the right place and at the right time' ('Bickerton's Edict' in Dillard 1995) for their grammars to have played a significant role in the formation of any of the creole languages of the Caribbean. Second, one encounters methodological arguments which maintain that since the only data which have survived from the pre-Columbian languages of the Caribbean consist of some wordlists and a few sentences, it is impossible

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to determine what the grammars of these languages looked like, let alone demonstrate any possible influence of these grammars on those of the Creoles that have emerged in the region from European invasion to the present.

In this chapter and the next, we follow Viada (2008) and Viada & Faraclas (2006) in providing evidence that challenges the assumptions and logic that form the basis of these demographic and methodological arguments in order to create a space on the research agendas of creolists for the exploration of possible Indigenous influence on Caribbean Creole grammars. It is argued in this chapter that the historical, demographic, economic, political, and cultural realities that brought landless Europeans, displaced Indigenous Caribbean peoples, and runaway African and Afro-Caribbean slaves into intimate contact in the struggles for survival and subsistence that typified life in the Caribbean during this period would have placed speakers of Indigenous Caribbean languages in a position from which their grammars could have had a significant influence on the emerging Caribbean French- and English-lexifier Creoles.

In the study presented in the chapter that immediately follows this one, to compensate for the lack of surviving grammatical data, a mass-comparison methodology is utilized to identify the typological/areal features that characterize the grammars of the major language families (Arawakan and Cariban) of the Caribbean region. The results indicate that, considered as a *Sprachbund*, the Northern Arawakan languages of the Greater Caribbean Basin display a surprising number of the grammatical features that have also been found to typify the colonial era Creoles of the Caribbean, but which are in many cases absent in the superstrate languages and unlikely to be due uniquely to the operation of universal mechanisms.

2. Indigenous peoples of the Caribbean and the mythical 'Arawak-Carib Divide'

In the mid 1550s, de las Casas (1552) wrote, "In all these islands there is but one tongue and the same customs". In 1690, Charles de Rochefort said, "It is observed that though the Caribbeans of all the islands do generally understand one another, yet there is in several of them some dialect difference from that of others" (Hulme & Whitehead 1992: 118). Whitehead (2002) observes that the identification of Indigenous languages and cultures by Europeans in South America and the Caribbean was a highly political process. It was Columbus (Varela 1982, 1986; Aranz 1995; Varela Marcos & Carrera de la Red 1998) who made the first politico-linguistic distinctions among native populations. This has resulted in a great deal of confusion regarding the ethnic identities and cultural relations that once prevailed among these peoples.

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According to Whitehead (1995) 'Caribs' are of great importance to the development of modern anthropology. They became the moral and literary nemeses to the Amerindian populations collectively designated by the Spanish as 'Arawaks'. This use of the term 'Carib' is quite different from the use of the same term to refer to some of the Indigenous populations that inhabit the South American mainland or to refer to the languages of the Cariban family that they speak. The negative image of 'Carib' was perpetuated by the Spanish to justify the slaughter and enslavement of Indigenous peoples, as well as to justify the violent usurpation of their lands.

The European obsession with the practice of cannibalism by 'Caribs' coincided with the first labor shortages in Hispaniola and Puerto Rico. Because of their alleged cannibalism, Spanish *conquistadores* such as Diego Colón and Rodrigo de Figueroa were granted exemptions from recently promulgated decrees against the enslavement of Indigenous peoples and allowed to conduct raids for slaves on islands that were inhabited by the 'Caribs'. De las Casas (as cited in Sued Badillo 1986, translation modified by the present writers) describes this situation very succinctly in his well-known quote, "Carib is the name that the Spanish used to capture and make free people slaves". Amodio (1991) concludes that 'Carib' was used by the Spanish as a generic label to name any Indigenous people who resisted or rebelled against colonial domination.

Whitehead (1995) maintains that the 'Arawaks' and the 'Caribs' of the Antilles were not opposed or exclusive populations, but instead dynamic elements in a Caribbean and South American macro-ethnic matrix in which a plurality of identities were represented in different ways at different times (Rouse 1986). Exogamous kinship relations extended throughout the region. There is considerable evidence that contradicts the belief propagated by the Spanish that Caribs 'conquered' both the Lesser Antilles and their womenfolk from the 'Arawaks'. For example, Jesuit missionaries of the 17th century commented that the 'Arawakans' of the mid-Orinoco on the mainland were 'becoming Caribs' not as a result of warfare or military conquest by speakers of Cariban languages, but by virtue of close political and economic alliances with the neighboring speakers of Cariban languages. This symbiosis stresses socio-cultural contact rather than sexual-cultural conquest of one group by another. There is no reason to believe that a similar situation did not hold in the insular Caribbean at the time of European invasion.

Amodio (1991) contends that the insular Caribbean can be described as an area of cultural borrowing. This borrowing became so intense in the Caribbean that a process of transculturation between Indigenous populations resulted in political, economic, social, cultural, and linguistic syncretism. It is therefore difficult to speak of different cultures or tribes. Different varieties of one or more

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Arawakan languages developed on different islands, but throughout the entire Caribbean region creolization processes took place and a state of pluri-lingualism prevailed.

Whitehead (1990b) explains that there was considerable confusion regarding those Antillean populations whom the Spanish called 'Caribs' (Garraway 2005: 39–42). They were linguistically not part of the Cariban family, because their language was clearly Arawakan, but they had closer ties to Cariban-speaking peoples than did most of the other Arawakan speakers in the Caribbean. To make the situation even more complex, both Arawakan-speaking and Cariban-speaking peoples from mainland South America regularly moved to and from the islands of the Caribbean (sometimes spending considerable amounts of time on a given island). A further complication is introduced by the fact that Antillean peoples themselves (both those considered by the Europeans to be 'Arawaks' as well as those that they called 'Caribs') not only regularly moved from one island to another (often several times in the space of a single year), but also made frequent journeys from the islands to the mainland.

Bartolomé de las Casas (1552) and many others mention the use of a mixed Arawakan-Cariban contact or trading language among the Indigenous populations of the Caribbean, especially among males. This trade language was used as a *lingua franca* in the Antillean-Amazonian corridor (Whitehead 1995), due to the close social and political relationships between Cariban-speaking peoples and Arawakan-speaking peoples that characterized not only the islands, but also the mainland. Breton (1665, as cited in Wilson 1997) made the following comment about the language practices of the Indigenous peoples of the Lesser Antilles, "They have several languages. The men have theirs and the women have another, and there is yet another for other sorts of important speech which the young people do not understand" (191).

Sued Badillo (1978) affirms that geographic proximity contributed to intermarriage, intense trade and other forms of sustained and intimate interaction between Lesser Antillean peoples, who were all Arawakan language speakers, and mainland Indigenous populations, which included speakers of languages belonging to both the Arawakan and Cariban families. These relations of co-existence and co-habitation provided an ideal setting for language contact. Taylor & Hoff (1980) describe the male register used by the 'Caribs' as a trade jargon which closely resembled the jargon spoken by Cariban-speaking and Arawakan-speaking Indigenous populations in South America. Labat (1722) who arrived in the insular Caribbean toward the end of the 17th century, reported that women found it necessary to speak the male jargon during trading activities. In agreement with Sued Badillo (1994), Farr (1995) concludes that before colonial conquest there was no such thing as a 'Carib' identity on the islands and that both men and women

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participated in trade alliances with Indigenous groups in the Antilles and the mainland. These conclusions are supported by the work of Meyerhoff (1997) for Vanuatu in the Pacific, where trade languages and creoles are often misinterpreted as 'men's languages' since men have historically been those most likely to have trade contacts outside their local area. This would actually have been the opposite for coastal West Africa, where most extra-local trade has traditionally been in the hands of women.

Many scholars, however, find evidence for increased contact between Arawakan speakers on the islands and Cariban speakers on the mainland *after 1492*, due to the formation of the pan-Indigenous alliances against European invasion that effectively locked the Spanish out of most of the Lesser Antilles. Sued Badillo (1995) and Whitehead (1990a) argue that it was only in the context of European invasion that tribalization and clear breaks in ethnicity and identity became evident among the Indigenous populations of the insular Caribbean. Co-ethnicity was once an integral part of Indigenous life, but became less prevalent as the Europeans and Africans penetrated the Indigenous polity through *marronage*, trade, and direct military conquest. A strategy of imposing ethnic divisions on the Indigenous peoples of the insular Caribbean was a key factor in their eventual conquest, which took three centuries, from 1492 to the British deportation of the Garinagu ('Black Caribs') from St. Vincent to Honduras in 1797 at the end of the Second Carib War.

European influence and the progressive militarization of Indigenous Caribbean populations in support of one or another colonial power resulted in the transformation of trade and warfare into exclusively male-dominated activities. This exclusivity became enshrined in a restricted high prestige language to which only men had regular access. Whitehead (1990a) examines the case of the 'Caribs' with emphasis on the role of military cooperation with the Europeans in the formulation of Amerindian ethnicity. He coins the term 'ethnic soldiering' which he defines as "the phenomenon whereby the initial establishment and long term survival of the colonial enclaves of a particular European power often depended on the military assistance of one Indigenous population against other Indigenous groups, rebellious slaves, or their colonial rivals". French-'Carib' alliances began competing with Spanish-'Arawak' alliances. These new European-Indigenous affiliations fostered clear and antagonistic ethnic divisions between Indigenous groups. A major effect of the warfare which became endemic to this region during the colonial period was to 'tribalize' the Indigenous peoples. This tendency can be observed in the notorious 'ethnic vendetta' that the Europeans created between the 'Arawaks' and 'Caribs' (Whitehead 1988; Sued Badillo 1978), which has persistently been misunderstood as having its main roots in pre-Columbian conflicts.

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3. Creolization and *sociétés de cohabitation*

Coined by González López (2007) both as an extension and a critique of Chaudenson's *sociétés d'habitation* and *sociétés de plantation* framework, the term *sociétés de cohabitation* best describes the contact scenarios that prevailed between marginalized peoples of European, African, and Indigenous descent during the initial period of contact as well as many of the scenarios that typified later stages of colonization. Interaction in these *sociétés de cohabitation* was based on symmetrical relationships of power and a common struggle for survival. *Sociétés de cohabitation* not only typified the initial stages of the colonial era, but continued to exist and thrive alongside homestead and plantation societies and beyond as counter-societies that resisted domination. It was within these multiethnic, multicultural, and multilingual *sociétés de cohabitation* composed of people of European, African, and Indigenous descent that many of the linguistic and cultural contours that define the Creole populations of the insular Caribbean today were shaped.

To better understand the ethnic transformations that occurred in the colonial Caribbean, it is helpful to take a closer look at the phenomenon of creolization there from pre-Columbian times up until the present. Faraclas et al. (2007) contend that creolization was widespread throughout the Caribbean before European invasion, and that at least four overlapping strands or waves of creolization can be identified for the region (see also Chapters 1 and 3 of this volume).

The first wave of Caribbean creolization which is characteristic of what we call pre-invasion *sociétés de cohabitation* comprises the period from pre-Colombian times to colonial invasion and beyond. Before the arrival of Columbus the creolization of languages and cultures was a common occurrence among all the Indigenous groups that cohabited the insular Caribbean, resulting in such phenomena as the Arawakan-Cariban trade language that was spoken all along the Caribbean-Amazonian corridor. Creolization continua which were not involved in any way in the formation of new ethnic groups existed across the entire Caribbean basin.

Beginning with European invasion of the Caribbean in the 15th century and continuing until well beyond the end of both slavery and colonialism, the second wave of Caribbean creolization is in many ways an extension of the first, therefore, it is associated with what we term post-invasion *sociétés de cohabitation*. This is because it is associated with sustained and intimate contact between Indigenous peoples, Africans, and marginalized Europeans who, in resistance to European colonialism, attempted to maintain and recreate economies and societies of subsistence similar to those that predominated in the pre-Columbian Caribbean (as well as in pre-colonial West Africa and pre-enclosures Europe) often within or under the protection of Indigenous Caribbean peoples (Bennholdt-Thomsen & Mies 1999). In these *sociétés de cohabitation,* Europeans, and, to a lesser extent

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Africans, depended on Indigenous Caribbean peoples and their knowledge for their biological survival in a new environment that was alien to them. Therefore, under these conditions, Indigenous languages and cultures were in a position of prestige and influence.

Linguistic evidence shows that major influences over the languages that emerged from this contact situation could have come from the Northern Arawakan languages spoken by the Indigenous Caribbean peoples living alongside Europeans and Africans in these *sociétés de cohabitation*. This type of creolization was a bottom-up process which provided an organic scenario for creolization, not a scenario of conquest, but a scenario of resistance resulting in true 'ethnogenesis' which involved the emergence not only of new identities, cultures, and languages, but also of new gene pools that incorporated and recombined Indigenous, African, and European elements, such as those of the 'Black Caribs' and the 'Black Seminoles'. No distinct 'Carib' ethnic identity, however, emerged from this wave of creolization.

The third wave of Caribbean creolization which is characterized by 'homesteads' (small holdings with Indigenous and/or African slaves) or what Chaudenson (2001) calls *sociétés d'habitation* also begins with the arrival of Columbus and reverberates throughout the Americas well into the 1600s, but then limits itself to the Spanish colonies thereafter, where it persists until the end of the 18th century. This pre-capitalist slave-holding wave of creolization is also typified by intimate contact between Indigenous, African, and European peoples, resulting in 'racial' and cultural mixing from above, rather than from below as was the case with the second wave, where slavery played a much less significant role. From this wave emerged a '*criollo*' identity that syncretically integrates Indigenous, African, and European cultural and linguistic elements into pan-American codes that could be recognized at least on the surface as 'European' or, more specifically, 'Spanish' (African and Indigenous gods worshipped in the form of Catholic saints, African and Indigenous food crops cooked in Mediterranean sauces, African and Indigenous words embedded in primarily Spanish grammatical structures, etc.). Such creolization can therefore be considered to involve broad, but covert substrate influence.

The fourth wave of creolization in the Caribbean, which corresponds to what Chaudenson (2001) calls *sociétés de plantation*, begins with the strictly racialized system of slavery that accompanied the establishment of large scale plantation-based capitalist agro-industrial production of sugar first in the English islands in the mid 1600s, then on the French islands in the late 1600s, and finally on the Spanish islands in the late 1700s. Although this process of creolization took place much later than any of the others, it was the only one that resulted in the formation of a distinct 'Carib' ethnic group through the mobilization of Indigenous

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populations into European-led trade and military networks. As was the case in the third wave of Caribbean creolization, fourth wave creolization involved less organic processes than those that typified the first and second waves, because it resulted from a top-down process in which all non-European languages and cultures became conquered and dominated substrates while European languages and cultures became conquering and dominating superstrates. In distinction to third wave creolization, that of the fourth wave involves narrow, but overt substrate influence (see Chapters 2 and 3 of this volume).

4. Demographics and indigenous influence on Caribbean Creoles

Historical evidence contradicts commonly held assumptions about the extermination of Indigenous populations within the first hundred years of colonization, about the lack of contact between Indigenous populations and populations of European descent and African descent, about the total isolation and marginalization of Indigenous populations, as well as about their lack of resistance to invasion. Contrary to prevailing discourses among creolists, Indigenous peoples were not only present on 'critical islands' at 'critical periods' but also had extensive and intimate contact with both African descended and European descended populations.

Although many creolists assume that the Indigenous populations of the insular Caribbean were exterminated during the first 100 years of colonization, a growing body of evidence reveals that despite the genocide waged against them, a significant number of Indigenous groups survived throughout the entire region. This is not to deny that initial contact with Europeans had devastating consequences and that during the first 50 to 100 years of colonization, the Indigenous population of the Caribbean decreased significantly. Alegría (1978b) and Guitar (2002) argue that the extermination of the Taínos in Hispaniola is a myth that was constructed as the result of the convergence of different agendas and circumstances. Fray Bartolomé de las Casas wanted to exaggerate the negative effects of colonization on the Taínos to protect them, colonists wanted to dramatize the need to import African slaves, and finally there was a tendency to compare the reduced numbers of Taínos with the much bigger Indigenous populations on the mainland.

Anderson Córdova (1993) contends that the Indigenous population of the Caribbean at the time of European invasion was much bigger than has been previously acknowledged. She suggests that historical evidence revealing technologically advanced agricultural practices in certain parts of Hispaniola directly correlate with the necessity of feeding a large population of at least between 250,000 to 500,000 Amerindians. When referring to the Indigenous population of

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Hispaniola, de las Casas states that all the islands of the insular Caribbean were so densely populated that it seemed that Providence had gathered most of the people of the human race in this region of the world (as cited in Duff 1938). Columbus himself roughly calculated a population of one million and a half in Hispaniola upon his arrival. Because Columbus was not familiar with several regions of the island where there were significant Indigenous populations, de las Casas believed that a more accurate number would have been closer to three million. Anderson Córdova (1993) estimates the Indigenous population of Puerto Rico in 1511 as being somewhere between 30,000 to 60,000 people. Hearing of the devastation caused by the Spanish in Hispaniola, many Taínos had already fled Puerto Rico and taken refuge in the Lesser Antilles before Ponce de León arrived in 1503.

If the Indigenous population of the entire Caribbean region was much larger than what has been reported, it seems quite feasible to infer that despite the death of so many Amerindians, a significant number did survive and contributed significantly to the creolization of languages and cultures of the insular Caribbean. For example, in 1530 Governor Francisco Manuel de Lando ordered the first population census for San Juan Bautista (Puerto Rico) and counted 426 Spaniards, 1,148 Indigenous people, and 2,077 people of African descent (Alegría 1971). Indigenous peoples made up a significant and influential proportion of the population of the insular Caribbean until at least the end of the 17th century. They played a leading and indispensable role:

- in the establishment and survival of the first Spanish settlements in the Greater Antilles in the 16th century,
- in the successful resistance to Spanish colonization in the Lesser Antilles from the end of the 15th to the end of the 17th century,
- in the establishment of maroon settlements throughout the region from the 16th to the 18th centuries,
- in the success of the French and English raids on the Spanish in the 16th and 17th centuries,
- in thwarting the efforts of the French, English, and Dutch to establish colonies in the Antilles in the 16th century, and
- in the establishment of the first permanent English, French, and Dutch colonies in the insular Caribbean in the 17th century.

The Spanish colonies of the Greater Antilles depended on Indigenous slaves for their very survival. A legal document written by Rodrigo de Albuquerque in 1514 (cited in Rodríguez Demorizi 1971) states that 22,336 Indigenous men and women (excluding children and elderly people) were divided among Spanish *encomenderos* on the island of Hispaniola. Indigenous slavery persisted in the Greater Antilles

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until well into the 16th century. More importantly, however, the Spanish colonists of the insular Caribbean depended on Indigenous peoples for their cultural adaptation to their new environment as well as for their biological and genetic propagation. The Spanish (like the Portuguese, but unlike their Calvinist Northern European counterparts) encouraged racial integration first between Indigenous women and Spanish *conquistadores* and later between Spaniards and African slaves. Spanish-Indian marriages were recommended in the Laws of Burgos of 1512, permitted by Royal Decree in 1514, and legally codified by the *Real Cédula* of February 5, 1515. Whether legally recognized or not, given the sexual ratios of settler and slave arrivals, Euro-Indigenous and Afro-Indigenous sexual partnerships were by far the norm rather than the exception during the first centuries of Spanish colonization.

The term *mestizo* was used from the earliest years of Spanish settlement to designate the descendants of this form of Spanish-Indian cohabitation. In 1514, Rodrigo de Albuquerque also explained how Indigenous populations were distributed throughout the island and clearly states that 60 *encomenderos* were married to Indigenous women. From the first decades of the 16th century, *mestizaje* predominated in all the Spanish colonies. Francisco de Barrio Nuevo attests to the existence of a large and growing population of mixed origin in the insular Caribbean in a letter written to Charles I in 1533 from Santo Domingo (as cited in Schwartz 1997):

> Here there are many *mestizos*, children of Spaniards and Indians, who are generally born on the ranches [*estancias*] and in the countryside [*despoblados*] and one can say that outside the city everything is unpopulated [i.e. *despoblado*]. They are naturally bellicose, mendacious, and friends of every evil. It would be convenient to take them to Spain when very young and not let them return unless they turn out well. Otherwise one can fear that they will cause a rising of the blacks and natives … (5).

Similarly, Father Abbad y Lasierra (as cited in Schwartz 1997) describes this same phenomenon during his visit to the town of Añasco in Puerto Rico when he wrote:

> They [the Spanish] have mixed with others from which resulted a community of *zambos* and mulattos and one cannot find a fully white man and this has happened throughout the island … one sees in the parish registers in all the towns that they are all a mixture of whites and Indians, and these with *zambos*, mulattos, and blacks (19).

Ethnogenetic studies provide proof of widespread and intimate contact among European, African, and Indigenous descended peoples in the Caribbean, demonstrating that biological and cultural convergence among the peoples who lived in *sociétés de cohabitation* typified Caribbean history from 1492 onward. In his

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ground breaking research on the mitochondrial DNA of the population of Puerto Rico, Martínez Cruzado (2002) found that out of a balanced sample of some 800 people, the mitochondrial DNA of 61.1% was of Indigenous origin, of 26.4% was of African origin, and of 12.5% was of European origin. Cortés (2004) discusses a similar study conducted by Professor Martínez Cruzado in the Dominican Republic. An analysis of the data he collected there reveals the prominence of Indigenous matrilineal descent in Dominican subjects as well. This indicates that contact between Indigenous peoples, Africans, and Europeans was not only widespread and intimate, but also that Indigenous people, in particular Indigenous women, played a major if not the predominant role in these contact situations.

Commenting on these findings, Ortiz Aguilú (as cited in Millán Pabón 2007) states:

> Es interesante para nosotros lo que hace la biología molecular. La proporción [de ADN mitocondrial indígena] de seis de cada diez [en Puerto Rico] fue totalmente inesperada, dado el caso de los moldes históricos que hasta ahora se tienen de la formación del pueblo puertorriqueño ... La desaparición de la población indígena que habitaba la isla es lo que se enseña a los niños como hecho histórico incuestionable ... Todo el mundo entiende que los varones españoles se amancebaban con mujeres negras o indígenas y se casaban con europeas, pero aparentemente el rol de procreación más frecuente lo estuvieron ocupando las mujeres indígenas de hombres españoles y negros (6).
>
> It is interesting to observe what molecular biology can do for us. The [Indigenous mitochondrial DNA] rate of six out of every ten [in Puerto Rico] was totally unexpected since it breaks with the historic model that has prevailed concerning the formation of the contemporary population of Puerto Rico …. The disappearance of the Indigenous peoples that inhabited our island is taught to children in school as an undeniable fact …. Everyone knows that Spaniards lived in *concubinage* with African and Indigenous descended women and married European ones, but apparently the highest procreation rate was between Indigenous women and Spanish and African descended men. (Translation by the present writers)

In 1948, De Jesús Álvarez (1951: 47–48) conducted a study of blood types to help identify the genetic heritage of mid-20th century inhabitants of the Dominican Republic. He started from the premise that the following ethnic groups are generally associated with the following blood types:

- *Spanish:* Type A, Rh1, and Rh Negative blood are common, while Rh0 blood is rare;
- *West Africans:* Type B and Rh0 blood are common; Rh1 blood is rare;
- *Indigenous Caribbean peoples:* Type O, Rh1, and Rh1Rh2 blood are common; Rh0 blood is rare

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Based on these correlations, De Jesús Álvarez used the results of his research to demonstrate the following:

- The high incidence of blood type O and of blood factor Rh1Rh2 attested to significant Indigenous ancestry for the general population of the Dominican Republic.
- The highest incidence of blood types common among Indigenous people were found in people inhabiting the mountainous regions of the interior where Indigenous peoples found refuge from the forces of Spanish colonialism.
- In the region of San Pedro de Macorís a high percentage of people having blood types characteristic of West African peoples was found. Historically, many African descended slaves were brought to this area to work on sugar plantations. In areas close to the Haitian border, these same blood types were found to be common as well.
- In the region of Cibao, an epicenter of Spanish colonial influence, blood type A which is associated with Spanish ancestry was predominant.

On the basis of studies such as these, Ortiz Aguilú (as cited in Millán Pabón 2007: 6–7) concludes that cohabitation involving sexual procreation between Indigenous women and European and African descended men was the norm rather than the exception from the earliest years of Spanish invasion and that children born out of such relationships were raised by their Indigenous mothers since it was very unlikely that any Spanish soldier, clergyman, or businessman would care for them. These children adopted many of the moral values and cultural traditions of their Indigenous mothers. Therefore, the annihilation of Indigenous peoples and their cultures in the Caribbean was far from complete. To the contrary, the mixing of Indigenous, European, and African descended peoples in *sociétés de cohabitation* ensured the survival of Indigenous peoples and their cultures in creolized forms.

Guitar (2000) identifies Hispaniola as the major population source for the Spanish Caribbean. According to Agorsah (1994) and Guitar (2002), there is continuity from Indigenous descended to African descended peoples in the maroon communities of the Caribbean. The following quote from Craton (1997) recapitulates a viable scenario which very clearly allows for more extensive Indigenous language influence on Caribbean Creoles than previously imagined:

> The structural link with later slave resistance was forged by the way that black African slaves, imported to replace the unsuitable Amerindians as laborers in plantations and mines, ran away to Amerindian dominated areas and islands and collaborated in some of the earliest '*palenques*' [maroon settlements]. Here they were usually allied subjects at first, but soon miscegenated and in

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> due course in most cases became demographically and culturally dominant. Such a process can be traced, for example, in the permanent *palenque* of Bahoruco-Lemaniel in Hispaniola, in the Windward maroon communities of Jamaica, and among the partially miscegenated Indians termed Seminoles and Miskitos on the American mainland. But the classic case was that of the Black Caribs [who] fearsomely combined African and Amerindian forms of resistance (191–2).

Holm (1986) identifies St. Kitts/Nevis and Barbados as the major population sources for the English colonization of the Caribbean. Not only were Indigenous Caribbean peoples present on St. Kitts when the English and French established their first permanent Caribbean colonies there in the mid 1620s, but both the English and the French depended on these Indigenous peoples for their survival until these Indigenous populations were expelled from the island in 1713. The history of the island of Saint Kitts provides an interesting example that attests to the formation of *sociétés de cohabitation* in the English Caribbean.

Many colonial narratives of the time tell the story of a 'half-caste' man named 'Indian Warner' who moved between two cultures, between two different worlds. The story explains that Thomas Warner, English Governor of Saint Kitts, had a son with an Indigenous woman. 'Indian Warner' was so mistreated by his European stepmother that he ran away to Saint Lucia to live among the 'Caribs' who were his family on his mother's side, and he roamed freely among the 'Carib' islands. He settled on Dominica where Hulme and Whitehead state:

> He was well received … thanks to his mother, and he had the spirit, he rose quickly in the hearts of the savages in that part, which was on the leeward side of Dominica and, along with others, was warring with the English, just as he arrived. This Warner tried to reconcile them, and succeeded so well that he brought them all together, and won the admiration of the savages, over whom he held such ascendancy that he engaged them with a marvelous facility to undertake the most difficult tasks (1992: 91).

The English saw in Indian Warner a powerful potential ally to help them conquer the Indigenous peoples of Dominica. They named him governor of Dominica at a time when the island was of central importance in the wars between the English and the French. But Indian Warner was well aware of how he was being used by the English. He apparently disappeared for two years presumably to live with the French, thus becoming a traitor to the English. His half brother was sent by the English to suppress the Indigenous peoples of Dominica. Pretending to desire a close brotherly relationship with Indian Warner and his followers, he invited them to a gathering. After getting the Indigenous warriors drunk, he ordered his men to slaughter all of them, and he murdered his own brother.

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St. Vincent, however, was not so easily conquered. A great number of African descended maroons lived in *sociétés de cohabitation* with the Indigenous peoples there. Some of them had run away from plantations in Barbados and elsewhere, while others were descended from survivors of at least one slaving ship that was wrecked off the coast of the island. As time went on, the Indigenous peoples who welcomed and intermarried with these African descended peoples became phenotypically African, but retained much of their Indigenous Caribbean language and culture, becoming the Garinagu, or 'Black Caribs'.

The Garinagu became some of the fiercest combatants in popular struggles against the colonization of the southeast Caribbean. After a series of wars, the English finally defeated the Garinagu in 1796 and decided to forcibly relocate them from their lands in St. Vincent, which were well suited for the production of sugar cane. The Garinagu were first expelled to the island of Balliceaux where half of them perished. The survivors were deported from there to Roatán Island in Honduras in 1797 where they have prospered to become one of the most dynamic and uncompromisingly independent contemporary populations on the Caribbean coast of Central America (Hulme & Whitehead 1992).

Although there is no evidence for the existence of permanent Indigenous settlements on Barbados when the English first colonized the island in 1627, among the first slaves imported to the island was a substantial number of Indigenous peoples from other parts of the Caribbean who were needed for their expertise in tropical agriculture. Linebaugh & Rediker (2000) mention a considerable presence of mostly Guyanese Arawaks (presumably Lokono speakers) in Barbados. Other Indigenous peoples who came to the island early on as free people were enslaved by 1636. He also states that Barbados was inhabited by a mixed population of English, French, Dutch, Scots, Irish, Spanish, Jews, Africans, and Indigenous peoples. Heinrich von Ucheritz, a German mercenary who fought for Charles Stewart, was sold to a plantation that he reported to have had "one hundred Christians, one hundred Negroes, and one hundred Indians as slaves" (124). Oldendorp (1770) reports an Indigenous presence on Saint Thomas and St. John at the time of Danish colonization in 1672.

Agorsah (1994) explains that archeological evidence attests to cohabitation between Indigenous populations and Africans in the Blue Mountains of Jamaica after the English took the island from the Spanish in 1655. The maroons of Accompong in West Jamaica continue to claim in their oral traditions that their earliest ancestors were Indigenous peoples. There is archeological evidence for the presence of Indigenous maroon communities in the Blue Mountains prior to the arrival of the English. Agorsah examined an excavation in Jamaica in 1991 which uncovered over 300 artifacts. Thermo-luminescence dates from this and other sites suggest that Indigenous peoples were still inhabiting parts of Jamaica when the English took over the island; therefore, they had not been exterminated.

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Despite European diseases and the cruelty of slavery, many Indigenous peoples survived and escaped to the mountains and other inaccessible areas where they coexisted with African maroons. Today in Accompong, hammocks are still made in the Taíno-Arawak fashion and many non-African plants that were part of the Taíno pharmacopoeia are still used for medicinal purposes.

Roberts (2008) identifies St. Kitts, Martinique, and Guadeloupe as major population sources for the French colonization of the Caribbean. In his examination of early archival materials from French missionaries to these islands, he finds them complaining over and over again that although they had arrived in the Americas thinking that their mission was to convert the Indigenous populations there to Catholicism, in practice their evangelical activities were largely reduced to "provid[ing] moral and spiritual support for the Christians [European descended peoples] and to keep them within the faith" (65). This means that in the earliest days of colonization, French missionaries were spending much more of their time preventing French people from running away to live in Indigenous communities than preaching the Gospel to the Indigenous people of the Antilles. From the earliest days of European invasion, considerable numbers of people of European (especially French, Spanish, and Portuguese) and African descent were running away from the small enclaves which were under direct European colonial control to live with Indigenous peoples in *sociétés de cohabitation* in the vast regions of the Caribbean and the rest of the Americas which were beyond the reach of colonial authority.

Scenarios for the development of Caribbean Creoles via contact that included Indigenous peoples are put forward by both Roberts (2008) and Craton (1997). Roberts convincingly argues that the situation of French buccaneers in Hispaniola was very much like that which prevailed in St. Kitts, Martinique, and Guadeloupe. By the mid 16th century most of the Spanish had abandoned the interior of Santo Domingo, leaving the island open to raids from the Dutch, English, and French, as well as for the establishment of maroon communities. By 1605 the Spanish Crown ordered that the northern half of Hispaniola be abandoned completely, but Indigenous populations were still inhabiting the *Banda Norte* of the island acting as guides for buccaneers (Exquemelin 1678 in Guitar 2000: 7). Linebaugh & Rediker (2000) observe that these same buccaneers included people of European, African, and Indigenous Caribbean descent.

5. Sociolinguistics and indigenous influence on Caribbean Creoles

Since most creolists have traditionally focused their attention on slave holding societies, such as plantations (Chaudenson's *sociétés de plantation*) and homesteads (Chaudenson's *sociétés d'habitation*) the common assumptions are that

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there was a lack of sustained contact and solidarity among Indigenous, European, and African descended peoples, that there was a lack of prestige allotted to Indigenous languages, and that there was a lack of multilingualism among Indigenous populations both in the pre- and post-invasion periods. These assumptions allow little room for the possibility of influence of Indigenous grammars on Caribbean Creoles. But these notions do not correspond to the historical evidence, which attests to the existence of a significant number and a wide variety of marginalized *sociétés de cohabitation* that:

– involved more intimate contact between European, African, and Indigenous peoples, languages, and cultures than do either *sociétés d'habitation* or *sociétés de plantation;*
– predated and outlived both *sociétés d'habitation* and *sociétés de plantation;* and
– were found over a wider geographic and political expanse than either *sociétés d'habitation* or *sociétés de plantation.*

By limiting their research to *sociétés de plantation* and *sociétés d'habitation* and therefore excluding *sociétés de cohabitation* from consideration, many creolists have overlooked some of the most important venues for creolization in their search for the origins of creole languages.

Multilingualism and the use of contact languages has always characterized the Indigenous Caribbean and West Africa. Sued Badillo (1978) challenges the idea that creolization in the Caribbean began with European invasion when he states that:

> El préstamo lingüístico en la América indígena fue más la regla que la excepción. Centenares de dialectos se fundieron y se confundieron en el litoral caribeño, solamente, facilitado por el intenso tráfico comercial que existió. El préstamo lingüístico sigue siendo un fenómeno tan común hasta nuestros días, que blandirlo como evidencia de dominación o de invasión con la firmeza que se ha hecho … resulta impropio (108).
>
> Linguistic borrowing in Indigenous America was more the rule than the exception. Hundreds of dialects blended and mixed along the Caribbean coastline, facilitated by the intense trade networks which existed in the region. Linguistic borrowing has become such a common phenomenon that it is improper to consider it to be evidence of domination and invasion as categorically as has been done. (Translation by the present writers)

According to Roberts (2008), on his voyage of 1493 Columbus wrote in his records that he had not observed much diversity in language among the Indigenous inhabitants of the Caribbean and that they all understood each other. In reality, it is almost certain that one or more contact languages such as the Arawakan hybrid

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language Island Carib were used by the natives of the region before European invasion. It is also probable that these common contact languages provided some basis for communication with the Europeans.

Multilingualism and the use of contact languages persisted in the post-invasion Caribbean, especially among Indigenous peoples. Linebaugh & Rediker (2000) mention that heteroglossia and pluri-lingualism were the norm on the islands and on ships, especially on pirate ships. They describe the *société de cohabitation* or counter-settlement that emerged at Roanoke from the end of the 1500s in present day North Carolina even before the English managed to establish a permanent settlement in Virginia:

> [Roanoke] was established by Africans and European felons, landless paupers, vagabonds, beggars, pirates, and rebels of all kinds who fled to the swamps and lived under the protection of the Tuscarora Indians. They all fished, hunted, trapped, planted, traded, intermarried and formed [a so called] mestizo culture (138).

Linguistic and cultural inter-island networks typified the pre-invasion and post-invasion Caribbean. Roberts (2008) asserts that inter-island networks allowed linguistic practices to diffuse fairly rapidly throughout the Greater Antilles and beyond. He notes that in St. Kitts, Africans learned both European and Indigenous languages. Africans joined Indigenous inter-island networks and created their own.

The idea that Indigenous languages lacked prestige in the early colonial period is contested by Roberts (2008); Linebaugh & Rediker (2000); and Pulsipher & Goodwin (1999). Linebaugh & Rediker discuss Shakespeare's image of Caliban as a *mestizo* having Indigenous, African, Irish, and English blood who teaches *Trínculo* and *Stephano* how to survive in a strange land. Roberts mentions that Drake depended on Afro-Indigenous maroons for logistical support in his raids against the Spanish. The recurrent theme of 'going savage' and the allure that Indigenous cultures had for peoples of African and European descent in the Americas is reflected in the following comment made by Wilcomb Washburn at the *American Indian Ethnohistoric Conference* held in 1957 and cited in Hallowell (1963):

> Most of us know that an extraordinary number of whites preferred Indian society, while almost no Indians preferred white society. Why did the Spanish report in 1612 that forty or fifty of the Virginia settlers had married Indian women, that English women were intermingling with the natives, and that a zealous minister had been wounded for reprehending it? Why were there, at this time in Virginia, such severe penalties for running away to join the Indians? Why indeed did so many whites want to run away to join the Indians? (522)

The best documented examples of *sociétés de cohabitation* in the French Caribbean are those of the buccaneers in St. Domingue and Tortuga before the French were

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able to establish any real colonial control over more than a few enclaves in the western part of Hispaniola. However, even on islands where official French colonial authority was established early on, such as St. Kitts, Guadeloupe, and Martinique, European and African descended peoples were running away in significant numbers to live with Indigenous peoples in *sociétés de cohabitation* before either *sociétes d'habitation* or *sociétés de plantation* became the dominant models there.

According to Roberts, there is a clear indication that the starting points were St. Kitts, Martinique, and Gudeloupe, the first permanent French settlements in the insular Caribbean, and that it was the 'Caribs' who modified the contact language previously used with the Spanish to communicate with the French. This frenchified Native American Spanish contact language was apparently taken to Tortuga and Hispaniola by Indigenous peoples, the French, Africans, and Creoles. The historical accounts indicate that migration from the smaller French islands which started in the 17th century continued unabated until 1739 when a royal order prohibited further transportation of slaves from the smaller islands to Saint Domingue and the reverse. Thus, it is reasonable to conclude from these historical accounts that important features of French lexifier Creole had their origin in St. Kitts, Guadeloupe, and Martinique and that these features spread from there to St. Domingue via the *Banda Norte* and Tortuga (139).

Roberts (2008) reports that the Carmelite priest and missionary, Maurile de Saint Michel, provided the following description of the social structure and life on French St. Kitts in 1646, which included *sociétés de cohabitation*, where:

> Il y a icy de nos François qui deviennent sauvages, se cachants dans le bois, vievant des fruicts d'iceux, et comme ces hiboux et'oyseaux nuictiers n'en sortants que la nuit pou aller picorer: Je sçay quelques-ins de nos passagers, qui ont plustost choisy cette vie, que de supporter les paines de pauvres serviteurs, et de vivre privément avec ceaux qui avoient payé leur passage (64).
>
> There are among us Frenchmen who have become 'savages'. Hiding in the forest, they live by gathering wild fruits and nuts, going out only at night time to gather their food, like owls and other nocturnal birds. Many of the French who have arrived upon the island prefer to live this primitive life rather than submitting to the pains of servitude in order to pay off the cost of their trip. (Translation by the present writers)

Father Mathias Du Puis (1652) makes reference to the early colonial life in Guadeloupe. The author depicts the extremely difficult conditions that prevailed on the island during its initial settlement by the French. The picture presented by Du Puis is one of famine, illness, and desperation for the French colonizers who had the mistaken belief that the conditions on St. Kitts were much better, when in reality conditions were nearly as bad on St. Kitts as they were on Guadeloupe.

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His narration reveals the important role that *sociétés de cohabitation* had in the creolization of languages and cultures in the Caribbean. The situation of the French colonists contrasts with that of the native inhabitants of the island who were living in abundance. As on other islands, the Indigenous peoples shared their knowledge and abundance with those who ran away to join them.

Because of famine, slave owners on Guadeloupe were forced to free their slaves, who would have starved otherwise. Even though African descended slaves possessed much of the knowledge that was required to survive in the tropics, many sought refuge as well among the Indigenous peoples in the woods and in the mountains. About the Indigenous people's generosity du Puis (1652) comments:

> Ils retiennent tousiours cette honnesteté, qui est qu'ils ne mangeront jamais sans inuiter tous ceux qui font leur compagnie …. Comme ils ont vne grande liberalité à donner tout ce quis est en leur puissance, aussi ils se rendent extremement importunes à demander ce qui leur agree. Maisiene ou de honte de ne prier jamais d'vne chose qu'on leur a vnefois refuseé (107).
>
> They are very generous with their food and prone to share it with others and will never eat in front of others without sharing …. Since they are so generous with all that they possess, they are also extremely demanding when trying to obtain something that they desire, but they are also very proud and will never ask again if one refuses to give them what they want. (Translation by the present writers)

The extent to which European descended peoples were running away to establish *sociétés de cohabitation* with Indigenous peoples at this time is dramatized by Father Breton (1640: 132, cited in Roberts 2008) when he expresses his concern for the 'souls' of the French people of Martinique. He complains that, instead of spending their time as they had originally intended, converting Indigenous peoples to Christianity, many missionaries were instead obliged to focus on preventing French Christians from becoming 'heathen savages': "Il nest pas moins necessaire et agréable a Dieu d'empescher que les anciens Chrestiens ne devienment Sauvages que d'attier le Sauvages à se Faire Chrestiens" (64). [It is not less necessary and agreeable to God [in our missionary work] to prevent the 'fallen Christians' [the French] from running off to live with the Indigenous peoples than it is to convert the Indigenous peoples to Christianity] (Translation by the present writers).

Whether in *sociétés de cohabitation, sociétés d'habitation,* or *sociétés de plantation,* intermarriage and long term sexual relationships between men of European descent and women of Indigenous descent were common throughout the period of French colonial rule in the insular Caribbean, from its very beginnings on St. Kitts as witnessed by St. Michel (1652 in Roberts 2008): "Quelques François ont espouse les Sauvages… J'ay vu d'autres Françoises mariez avec des Negresses; les enfants des uns y des autres s'appellant Mulatres" (64). [Some

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French men have married Indigenous women. I have seen other French men marry African-descended women. The children born to these mixed marriages are called mulattos] (Translation by the present writers). Such relationships can be considered to be micro-level *sociétés de cohabitation*. The Indigenous women who bore children with French men were not passive and submissive victims. Du Puis (1652) tells of how a French priest used *baragouin* to establish communication with Indigenous peoples in order to fulfil his religious mission. Despite that fact that he could communicate with them, he found great resistance and hostility toward his teachings, especially among Indigenous women.

Sociétiés de cohabitation became the means of survival for marginalized peoples of European and African descent, who depended on Indigenous peoples to overcome death, slavery, and oppression. In these *sociétés de cohabitation*, the rigid racialized hierarchies of European colonial society were replaced by the relatively egalitarian social structures of traditional Indigenous and African subsistence societies. Given that Indigenous peoples, and to a lesser extent African descended peoples had a greater knowledge of survival skills in the tropics, if any group would have been in a position of prestige in such societies, it would have been the Indigenous peoples rather than the Europeans. Therefore, of the languages and cultures in contact in these *sociétés de cohabitation*, those which would most likely have served as models would have been those of the Indigenous peoples first, those of the Africans next, and those of Europeans last.

As evidenced by these examples, the *sociétés de cohabitation* established among European, African, and Indigenous descended peoples created effective networks of cultural and linguistic contact in which Indigenous languages were in a position of prestige and strength sufficient to exert an influence at all linguistic levels upon the Creole languages that were then emerging throughout the Caribbean.

Roberts (2008) and other scholars credit Indigenous people with the development of contact trade jargons called *baragouins* which were first identified in the Lesser Antilles by Bouton (1640: 130, as cited in Roberts, 2008: 79): "*Ils ont un certain baragouin meslé de Francois, Espagnol, Anglois, et Flament…*." [They have a certain contact language which is a mix of French, Spanish, English, and Flemish] (Translation by the present writers). Roberts explains how newly arrived Africans had an urgent need to learn a language that would allow them to communicate with Europeans. This contact *baragouin* was undoubtedly one of the most important languages that they first encountered upon their arrival. This could explain to some extent the similarities recorded between the speech of the slaves and that of the Indigenous peoples. One of the earliest recorded comments about influence in language contact portrayed the Indigenous peoples influencing the speech of the French. According to de Léry (cited in Roberts 2008: 243) the French began to "imitate the *faćon de parler des Barbares* and instead of saying *crever* they said

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casser la teste". Whether the particular example chosen by de Léry (i.e. *casser la teste*) is actually the result of Indigenous influence or not is beside the point. What is of primary importance here is that already in the 1550s de Léry, who was familiar with several metropolitan varieties of French, was struck by noticeable differences between European and American French and had no problem attributing these differences to influences from Indigenous languages.

Roberts mentions that during the earliest periods of invasion, while European languages were always represented as the norm and those of the Africans as 'deviant' and 'dependent', a different attitude was adopted by the Europeans toward Indigenous languages. For example, in the mouth of Indigenous peoples the Euro-Indigenous contact languages or *baragouins* were seen as creative innovations for communication; whereas, in the mouth of the Africans these same contact languages became a badge of inferiority. Under the European colonial gaze, while the Indigenous populations were seen as having created a useful method of communicating, the Africans were seen as passively adopting and corrupting the languages of the Europeans.

Although Pulsipher & Goodwin acknowledge the importance of Indigenous languages in the retention of food names and herbal medicinal plant names that are of Amerindian origin and Vaquero (1983) and Alvarez Nazario (1996) list hundreds of lexical retentions from Taíno found in toponyms, flora, and fauna in the Spanish of Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic, Dalphinis (1985), Alleyne (2002; 2004a), Lipski (2005), and Roberts (2008) are among the few contemporary creolists to seriously consider influences from Indigenous languages on Caribbean Creoles that go beyond the lexicon.

Focusing his attention on cohabitation between maroons and Indigenous peoples on St. Lucia, Dalphinis (1985) reports that 17th century St. Lucia became a haven for runaway peoples. He asserts that: "St. Lucian and other Caribbean Creoles also have the added dimension of influences from the early Arawak and Carib peoples of the Caribbean and the Americas" (84). Dalphinis not only acknowledges the importance of Indigenous populations in cultural and technological arenas, he more importantly contends that the languages of Indigenous peoples had an impact on the structural development of Creole languages such as St. Lucian French lexifier Creole (Patwa). He holds that the convergence of Indigenous Caribbean and West African politics and economics in maroon communities was accompanied by a similar convergence between Indigenous Caribbean and West African cultures and languages, when he states that in St. Lucia "prior languages have had determining influences upon the structural moulds of subsequent languages; e.g. the Arawakan mould has converged with that of African languages at certain points in the early development of Patwa" (104). Such convergence is all the more probable given the structural similarities

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between the North Arawakan and the Benue-Kwa languages (see Chapter 5 of this volume).

Roberts explains that in this kind of situation, Africans learned and adopted a language of communication which the Indigenous peoples had been using to communicate with the Europeans. Du Terte (1667 in Roberts 2008) sates that slave children grew up speaking both 'proper' French and *baragouin*. Lipski (2005) observes that Indigenous contact languages have played a key role in shaping language varieties used by Africans and Europeans throughout the former Spanish American Empire. He states that "although many Latin Americans reject the notion that Indigenous contributions go beyond simple lexical borrowings for New World items, serious research has revealed profound and far-reaching substratum patterns in the Spanish language throughout Latin America" (4).

6. Economics and indigenous influence on Caribbean Creoles

The dominant consensus among creolists and other academics attributes little or no economic agency to Indigenous and African descended peoples and women during the colonial period and beyond. A review of the literature reveals that the marginalized peoples of the Caribbean did in fact formulate and implement common economic agendas in opposition to the dominant colonial enterprise.

During the colonial period, the propertied classes of Europe expropriated millions of people from their homelands in Europe, Africa, and the Americas in order to use their labor-power for new economic projects in new geographic settings. Focusing on the situation in England, Linebaugh & Rediker (2000) state that:

> By the end of the 16th century there were 12 times as many property-less people as there had been 100 years earlier. In the 17th century almost a quarter of the land in England was enclosed. Areal photography and excavations have located more than 1,000 deserted villages and hamlets, confirming the colossal dimensions of the expropriation of the peasantry. The dispossessed peasants became vagabonds …. The Beggars Act of 1597 was used to transport vagabonds to the colonies (17).

Linebaugh & Rediker consider how people dispossessed by the massive waves of globalization that characterized the 16th and 17th centuries forged alliances to create a space for convergent economic agendas, establishing their own economies whenever they could, based on the subsistence practices of their ancestors. In sharp contrast to the economies of enclosure, commodification, hoarding, and artificial scarcity emerging in Europe, the abundance and security provided by the 'unenclosed' (Bennholdt-Thomsen & Mies 1999; Faraclas & Viada 2006) Indigenous

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economies of the insular Caribbean was first described by Christopher Columbus in a letter written to the Spanish Crown (Alegría 1978a), where he observes:

> Ellos son tan sin engaño y tan liberales de lo que tienen, que no lo creería sino el que lo viese. Ellos de cosa que tengan, pidiéndosela jamás dicen que no, antes convidan a la persona con ello y muestran tanto amor que darán los corazones, y quier cosa de valor, quier sea de poco precio, luego por cualquier cosica cualquiera manera que sea que se les de, por ello son contentos (20).
>
> They have no malice and are so likely to freely give what they possess, that one must see this in order to believe it. They will give whatever they have; when asked for something they never refuse to give it with so much love that they will offer their hearts or any prized possession in exchange for any trinket given in return; for all of this, they are content. (Translation by the present writers)

It is interesting to note that when European and African descended peoples either joined existing *sociétés de cohabitation* in the Caribbean or established new ones, they adamantly rejected the new European economic models and enthusiastically embraced relatively egalitarian Indigenous and African patterns of land and wealth distribution. Striking examples of this can be found in the predominance in Caribbean maroon communities of Indigenous- and African-style subsistence economies as well as in the solemn pledge required by all who wished to join the crew of any pirate ship to share all wealth equally.

Evidence points to the fact that the marginalized people of the Caribbean were constantly reclaiming and recreating varieties of their traditional economics of subsistence throughout the colonial period (Bennholdt-Thomsen & Mies 1999). Early chroniclers (e.g. Breton) noted that Indigenous gardens stretched for many acres and were extremely productive. According to Pulsipher & Goodwin (1999) the original inhabitants of the Eastern Caribbean were skilled cultivators who grew a wide range of crops. They present archeological evidence to argue for the existence of a 'Great Indian Garden' on Galway's Mountain in Montserrat where the English established a settlement in 1632. This place became the site of slave subsistence gardens later. Montserratian slaves used Galway's Mountain to cultivate food both for their own consumption and for sale. Indigenous food crops became the main plants cultivated by Afro-Caribbean peoples.

Subsistence gardens and markets controlled by Afro-Caribbean slave women became a key factor in the constellation of forces that allowed the slaves to eventually prevail over the plantation system. Craton (1997) observes that both slaves and Indigenous peoples grew their own food using their traditional farming methods, feeding themselves, sometimes feeding their masters as well, and selling their surpluses in a highly organized yet informal and non-hierarchical market network. This proto-peasant activity became an essential component of most Caribbean colonial economies (see Chapter 3 of this volume).

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7. Politics and indigenous influence on Caribbean Creoles

In order to seriously consider the possible influence of Indigenous Caribbean languages on the grammars of Caribbean Creoles, it is necessary to challenge the commonly held notions that Indigenous peoples had no political agenda, did not form significant political alliances with dispossessed Africans and Europeans, and did not mount significant or sustained resistance to invasion during the early stages of colonization and beyond.

The initial period of European incursions into the Caribbean was marked by considerable convergence among the political agendas of Indigenous peoples, Africans, and dispossessed Europeans. Indigenous Caribbean culture and politics were relatively free of hierarchies and were based on inclusion (Guitar 2000) as were many of the political traditions brought to the Caribbean by West Africans. The success of the maroon and other 'renegade' communities of the early colonial period was due in no small part to the egalitarian Indigenous political models which were adopted by Europeans and African runaways, many of whom either lived under the protection of Indigenous peoples or were actually integrated into Indigenous communities themselves.

As early as 1520, the Indigenous leader Enriquillo and his followers rebelled and posed a serious threat to the Spanish in Hispaniola. These rebellious Indigenous groups lived in subsistence communities in the mountains of the interior together with an increasing number of African runaways. They were noted for their ingenious and effective strategies of armed resistance, which resembled what today is known as guerilla warfare (Gutiérrez Félix 1989). According to Olendorp (1770) the runaway Afro-Caribbean inhabitants of Maroon Ridge in St. Croix surrounded their communities with small pointed stakes of poisoned wood to defend themselves from intruders. This custom was most likely passed on to them by Indigenous Caribbean peoples who were well-known for their use of poisoned arrows and stakes against their enemies.

Based on his archaeological research in Nanny Town, Agorsah (1994) argues for Indigenous-African cohabitation in Jamaican maroon settlements when he states that:

> Nanny Town, was certainly a strong-hold or a hiding place for freedom fighters during the Spanish period. These freedom fighters may have consisted of the traditional prehistoric groups (the people encountered by the Spaniards on their arrival) or slave crew men who came with them on their voyages to the New World. It also appears that some of the traditional groups who may have inhabited the island and who were already settled at Nanny Town or adjoining areas before the Spanish came in, may have eventually welcomed and accommodated escapees from the Spanish, and also later from the English settlers. If we assume that the

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> prehistoric groups were "Arawaks", it would suggest that the very first escapees (Maroons) were "Arawaks" (182).

Sociétés de cohabitation involving English pirates, runaway African and Indigenous descended slaves, and Indigenous 'host' societies were established along the Caribbean coast of Central America as early as the mid 1500s and the Central American coast continued to serve as a base for pirates until the 1700s. Among the outputs of such contact are the *sociétés de cohabitation* from which the Miskito people emerged. The Miskito live along the Miskito Coast which extends from Cape Camarón in Honduras to Río Grande in Nicaragua. The Miskito have an Indigenous language called Miskito, but they are also speakers of an English lexifier Creole and Spanish. They are of Indigenous, African, and European descent.

Holm (1989) states that because of the inaccessibility of their territory and their military expertise, the Miskito were not colonized by the Spaniards during the 16th and 17th centuries. Building on friendly contacts established between pirates and Indigenous peoples in the area since the mid 16th century, agents from the English chartered Providence Company occupied two small cays on the Miskito Coast in 1631. The English established a protectorate over the Miskito coastal territories from 1655 to 1860. A steady influx of African descended maroons from the earliest period of Spanish colonization contributed a significant African element to the *sociétés de cohabitation* there. In the 1700s a number of African slaves from Jamaica came to the Miskito Coast when their English owners decided to establish plantations there, providing yet another set of inputs into Miskito language and culture as some of these slaves also ran away and found shelter in Miskito settlements.

In 1681 William Dampier landed on the southern coast of Panamá (then called Darién). He wrote a detailed description of the Miskito population whom he called 'Moskito'. Dampier (cited online as Dampier 2008) describes these Indigenous people as follows:

> They are tall, well-made, raw-bon'd, lusty, strong, and nimble of foot, long-visaged, lank black hair, look stern, hard favour´d, and of a dark copper-colour complexion …. inhabiting on the main North-side, near Cape Gratia Dios; between Cape Honduras and Nicaragua …. They are very ingenious at throwing the lance, fishgig, harpoon, or any matter of dart, being bred to it from their infancy …. Their chiefest employment in their own country is to strike fish, turtle or manatee. For this they are esteemed by all the Privateers; for one or two of them in a ship, will maintain a 100 men …. When they come among Privateers they get the use of guns, and prove very good marks men; they behave themselves very bold in fight, and never seem to flinch nor hang back …. These Moskito's are in general very civil and kind to the English, of whom they receive

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> a great deal of respect when they are aboard their ships, and also ashore either in Jamaica, or elsewhere. We always humour them, letting them go any whither as they will, and return to their country if they please …. They have no form of government and acknowledge the King of England as their sovereign. They learn our language, and take the Governor of Jamaica to be one of the greatest princes in the world (1–4).

The *sociétés de cohabitation* established between maroons and privateers with Indigenous peoples in the English Caribbean became in many ways a model for the *sociétés de cohabitation* that emerged in the earliest English colonial outposts such as St. Kitts and Barbados.

According to Linebaugh & Rediker, the political agenda of the renegade republic which was established in Roanoke at the dawn of the 17th century led to the successful re-establishment of the 'commons' which was stolen from European peasants, Africans, and Indigenous peoples of the Americas during the processes of enclosure, enslavement, and invasion. The disastrous initial attempts by the English to colonize Virginia in the final years of the 16th century and the initial years of the 17th resulted in the establishment of *sociétés de cohabitation* by indentured Europeans and African descended slaves who, running away from hunger and forced labor in the Virginia colony, were welcomed by the local Indigenous peoples. Located on the Albemarle Sound in present-day North Carolina, Roanoke included people of both European and African descent who formed part of a heavily Indigenous influenced creolized subsistence society.

When Roanoke was disbanded by the authorities in Virginia, its inhabitants moved southward to re-establish *sociétés de cohabitation* with the Creek Indigenous nations in the Carolinas and Georgia. As the forces of colonization moved further south, the Creek peoples were eventually forced into Spanish Florida, where they, together with escaped African descended slaves, re-established the *sociétés de cohabitation* that became the Black Seminole nation ('Seminole' comes from *cimarrón*, the Spanish word for maroon). The case of the Black Seminoles resembles in many ways that of the Black Caribs. Both groups emerged from cohabitation between African-descended and Indigenous peoples who came together as allies against colonial domination (Bateman 1990).

Indigenous populations not only participated actively in political resistance to colonization; they were one of the main models for resistance in the early phases of colonization in the Caribbean. Oldendorp (1770) states that throughout the 16th and 17th centuries Spanish-'Carib' relations evolved into an uneasy truce of mutual convenience. Many creolists are not conscious of the fact that the persistent and organized resistance of the Indigenous peoples of the Lesser Antilles

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(especially those of St. Vincent and Dominica) successfully blocked Spanish colonization of most of the southeastern Caribbean. Craton (1997) holds that:

> Afro-American slave resistance was rooted in the response of the Amerindians to their enslavement by the Spaniards. Besides structural similarities in the modes of resistance, there were actual links in the way that many blacks collaborated, before becoming dominant in the early *palenques*… It was these Caribs … who were the prototype obdurate resisters, setting up what Troy S. Floyd (1973: 95–105) has cogently termed a 'Poisoned Arrow Curtain' in the Lesser Antilles and parts of coastal South and Central America [such as the Guianas and the Miskito Coast] – that retarded colonization for many years (191–192).

Agorsah (2001) maintains that cooperation between Indigenous peoples and Africans allowed them to join forces against enslavement. Archeological evidence from Nanny Town in Jamaica has revealed that there was collaboration and continuity of settlement between escaped Africans and Indigenous peoples, which became a crucial facet of general struggles against slavery. Agorsah states that an element in the successes of the Jamaican maroons during their struggle with colonial forces was the support that they received from the natives of the island. He also observes that "a misleading notion about Caribbean heritage that has overshadowed this relationship is the one repeated by many historians, with a few exceptions in recent years, that the native people of the various islands were completely exterminated by the Spaniards or other colonial powers" (1).

Kirby & Martin (1972) stress the pan-Caribbean significance of Indigenous resistance by bringing attention to the fact that the guerilla warfare waged by Indigenous peoples against the English continued until the late 18th century and was maintained via their racial, cultural, and linguistic fusion with Africans. In this connection, it is significant to note that the Black Caribs never accepted domination. Instead of being enslaved, they were transported to Honduras. Kirby & Martin also allude to Article XXI of the 1773 Treaty between the Black Caribs and the British, which stated that "no strangers, or white persons would be permitted to settle among the Charaibs, without permission obtained in writing, from the Governor" (30). This, and similar legal frameworks being devised and implemented during the 17th and 18th centuries, graphically illustrate both the formidable power of multiethnic resistance as well as the deep-seated fears on the part of the colonial powers of political cooperation between Indigenous people, Africans, and dispossessed Europeans.

Roberts (2008) traces the origin of the word *jíbaro* to the Island Carib word *chibára-(li)* meaning 'most dangerous kind of poisoned arrow' to refer to the offspring of an Indigenous man and African mother. He also mentions that Africans

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learned resistance from Arawaks, making reference to a widespread Caribbean legend, the story of Inkle and Yarico. According to this legend, Yarico was an Arawak woman from the Guianas who saved an Englishman's life. She begged him to take her to Barbados with him. Once there, he 'reciprocated' her love for him by enslaving her. The Indigenous peoples, too weak to avenge Yariko's maltreatment, communicated their resentment to escaped African slaves who would carry on the fight against Inkle.

8. Culture and indigenous influence on Caribbean Creoles

The Indigenous populations encountered by Columbus on his first voyage formed part of a macro-complex of ethnicities who had been co-inhabiting the insular Caribbean in *sociétés de cohabitation* since well before his arrival. Indigenous peoples of different islands lived in intimate contact with one another, and, therefore, shared similar cultural and religious beliefs, similar forms of political and economic organization, as well as similar linguistic repertoires. Thus the Indigenous Caribbean was inhabited by societies that were pluri-cultural, pluri-lingual, and very accepting of strangers.

Derin (1991), Agorsah (1993), Craton (1997), Guitar (2000), and Faraclas et al. (2007) all highlight the convergence of Indigenous and African cultures in the Caribbean yielding a 'fusion from below' and giving rise to a new cultural agenda based on openness, pluri-lingualism, and pluri-culturalism which resulted in the forging of a new *raza,* and a new culture. Guitar (2000) links the cultural form recognized as *campesino* in Hispaniola, to strong Taíno and African influences.

Roberts (2008) connects the Indigenous term *guatiao* to the English word *mate,* via the following phonetic changes*: guatiao* > *moitié* > *matelot* > *mate.* He states that in the early French colonial Caribbean, *matelots* often lived in multiethnic couples and shared all of their worldly possessions. This relationship, which typified the first French settlements in the smaller islands and was related to the *banare/compère* concept among the Indigenous inhabitants there, "provided a communal fabric outside the established hierarchical one for the growing colony of St. Domingue". Far from rejecting Indigenous cultures, this example illustrates the appropriation of Indigenous cultures by a significant number of Europeans in the French Antilles.

Archeological evidence points to areas of cultural convergence between peoples of Indigenous and African backgrounds. Archeological sites in Hispaniola yield evidence of a high retention of Indigenous traditions complemented, reinforced, and modified by African cultural traditions. Some Jamaican Taíno

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spiritual beliefs as well as Taíno traditions in carving and using plant dyes have been retained by Afro-Indigenous maroon populations in Jamaica. Agorsah (1995) sees cultural continuity from Indigenous to African descended peoples in samples of artefacts that he found at the lower strata of his excavations at the maroon setlement of Nanny Town in Jamaica, such as "terracotta figurines and highly-fired earthenware" which appear to be of Indigenous origin suggesting that Arawaks were hiding in the Blue Mountains before the English invasion of Jamaica (408).

According to Hoetink (1985) the contribution of Indigenous populations to what was to become the Creole culture of the Caribbean can be identified in many areas such as language, ceramics, herbal knowledge, fishing, hunting, topography, and agrarian techniques. He maintains that elements from the cultures of Amerindians, Africans, and Europeans were blended and remodeled, leading to "the formation of a creolized anthroculture such as the Cuban *guajiro*, the Dominican *campesino* and the Puerto Rican *jíbaro*" (84). This heavily Indigenous influenced culture extends from the pluri-ethnic communities that have constituted the majority of the population of the Spanish Caribbean since the early 1500s, to the French and English renegade communities whose adoption of Indigenous cultures and life-ways became simultaneously the only viable foundation for Northern European ascendancy in the region, and the greatest threat to that ascendancy.

Linebaugh & Rediker (2000) question what Virginia Governor Thomas Gates might have meant when he stated that the mutineers of the *Sea Venture* lived like 'savages' when they retired to the woods in Bermuda at the dawn of the 17th century, when they observe that:

> [f]or Gates and his entire generation of Europeans, the classless, stateless, egalitarian societies of America were powerful examples of alternative ways of life… 'There is not *meum* and *tuum* amongst them'. They had no conception of private property and precious little notion about work itself as William Strachey discovered: Virginia's Indians were he noted 'for the most part of the year idle.' Idle perhaps, but not starving. Sir Henry wrote in 1611 that he saw in St. Christopher [St. Kitts] … 'many naked Indians and although their bellys be too great for their proportions, yet itt shewes plentye of ye lland in ye nourishinge of them'. Such discoveries inflamed the collective imagination of Europe, inspiring endless discussion among statesmen, philosophers and writers as well as the dispossessed, of peoples who lived without property, work, masters or kings (23).

Pluri-lingual, pluri-cultural, pluri-ethnic, and pluri-identifed *sociétés de cohabitation* played a significant role in the processes which gave birth to the creolized languages and cultures of the colonial Caribbean, especially the English- and

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French-lexifier Creoles. To the great majority of the peoples in the colonial Caribbean, these marginalized communities represented the difference between death and survival, between scarcity and abundance, between racialized forced labor capitalist economies vs. economies of subsistence, between asymmetrical relationships of power vs. symmetrical relationships of power, and finally, between enslavement and a loss of humanity vs. freedom, autonomy, and dignity. Roberts (2008) asserts that savages, moors, buccaneers, and maroons were among the people most centrally involved in shaping the identity of 17th century New World island societies, and one might add that these were among the people most centrally involved in shaping the languages spoken in these same societies as well. Although they were demonized by the ruling classes, their embrace of cultural diversity, their preference for inclusiveness and adaptability, and their openness to cultural and linguistic exchange played a seminal and crucial role in forging the Creole cultures and languages of the Caribbean.

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