



POLITICAL LIFE *in the*
WAKE *of the* PLANTATION

sovereignty, witnessing, repair

DEBORAH A. THOMAS

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Generations come and generations go, but the earth remains forever. The sun rises and the sun sets, and hurries back to where it rises. The wind blows to the south and turns to the north; round and round it goes, ever returning on its course. All streams flow into the sea, yet the sea is never full. To the place the streams come from, there they return again. All things are wearisome, more than one can say. The eye never has enough of seeing, nor the ear its fill of hearing. What has been will be again, what has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun. Is there anything of which one can say, "Look! This is something new"? It was here already, long ago; it was here before our time. No one remembers the former generations, and even those yet to come will not be remembered by those who follow them.

—Ecclesiastes 1: 4–11 (New International Version)

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Preface

DURING THE WEEK OF 24 MAY 2010, MEMBERS OF THE POLICE FORCE and the army entered the West Kingston community of Tivoli Gardens to apprehend Christopher “Dudus” Coke, who had been ordered for extradition to stand trial in the United States on gun- and drug-running charges. In August 2009 when the United States issued the extradition request for Coke, Bruce Golding, then Prime Minister, leader of the Jamaica Labour Party *and* member of Parliament for Tivoli Gardens, argued against the extradition on the procedural grounds that the evidence against Coke was obtained by wire-tapping, which is illegal under Jamaican law. But by the third week in May 2010, under pressure from Parliament and the U.S. government, Golding announced to the nation on television that he had authorized the attorney-general to sign the extradition order. This led to a standoff between the security forces that had to find Coke, and many of Coke’s supporters who were bent on protecting him at any cost. By the end of the week, Coke had not yet been found and at least seventy-five civilians were officially recognized as having been killed (the number community members give is closer to two hundred). The government established a curfew for Tivoli Gardens, and residents were forced to show passes when leaving or entering. Most movement in or out of the community was effectively stopped, which meant that many people were unable to work, to go to school, to shop for food, or to go about

the ordinary routines of their lives. This continued until 22 June, when Coke was detained and subsequently extradited.¹

Despite the immediate activities of various civil society organizations, it took almost three years for the Office of the Public Defender to submit an interim report to Parliament regarding the conduct of the security forces. The Commission of Enquiry that was called for by the Public Defender's Report of April 2014 finally got under way in December of that year and submitted its report to Parliament in June 2016, but the full scope of political violence in Jamaica has not been publicly aired or accounted for.

THESE ARE THE EVENTS THAT WERE THE IMPULSE FOR THIS BOOK. Yet this project did not begin as a book. This project began as a sort of visual ethnography, an attempt to bear witness, with all its attendant complexities and complications.² Deanne Bell, a Jamaican psychologist now teaching at Nottingham Trent University, had attended a screening at New York University (NYU) of the film that John Jackson, Junior "Gabu" Wedderburn, and I directed called *Bad Friday: Rastafari after Coral Gardens* (2011). That film documented the 1963 Coral Gardens "incident"—members of the Rastafari community call it a massacre—a moment just after independence when the Jamaican government rounded up, jailed and tortured hundreds of Rastafarians as the result of a land dispute. This "incident" was largely forgotten by most Jamaicans outside of a handful of Rastafari activists in western Jamaica who worked tirelessly to bring it into public consciousness. Despite these efforts, Coral Gardens was not reliably remembered even among Rastafari, especially the youth. This was partly because the events at Coral Gardens would have been difficult to assimilate within a triumphalist nationalist narrative of ever increasing freedoms and respect for black political activism. To create the film, therefore, we worked with members of the community to track down elders who had experienced that persecution, and we contextualized their narratives within the broader dynamics of the political and social hegemonies of the time, such as a visceral fear of Rastafari and other forms of black consciousness.

Our first screening of *Bad Friday* was on Friday, 21 April 2011, at the annual commemoration of the events, to a rapt audience of Rastafari and fellow travelers. After that, the documentary had its official premiere at the Bob Marley Museum in Kingston, and it screened at film festivals internationally, on college campuses across North America and the Caribbean, and on public television in Jamaica.³ The Public Defender's Office in Jamaica pursued a reparations case based on the "incident," and the western extension campus of the University of the West Indies in Montego Bay developed a digital archive

of Coral Gardens that includes our interviews as well as testimonies from additional police and civilians who were part of or witnessed the events of that week. *Bad Friday* now runs on a constant loop in the National Gallery of Jamaica and Institute of Jamaica's western branch in the Rastafari exhibit, and on 4 April 2017, Prime Minister Andrew Holness officially apologized to the Rastafari community and outlined a number of reparative benefits for those who were affected, including land and a trust fund (Cross 2017). An event that was all but lost to public consciousness has within the past five years become part of the national historical terrain.

This has been possible because the position of Rastafari vis-à-vis the Jamaican state is much changed since the early 1960s. In the early years Rastafari marked the limits of citizenship in independent Jamaica. They were seen as a threat to the consolidation of the new nation because they did not accept the authority of the Jamaican political leadership (instead seeing Africa as "home"); they did not subscribe to capitalist economic and social development models; and they attempted to turn the normalized hierarchies of color and class on their heads through both linguistic and ideological reconstruction. Now, Jamaica is known all over the world because of Rastafari and reggae music, and though some Rastafari maintain an opposition to political participation, newer organized groups have sought to create relationships with the state in order to advocate for their interests *within* the Jamaican polity via both local and transnational institutional fora. Consequently, the scale of Rastafari's impact and critical intervention, both locally and transnationally, has intensified to the extent that elements of the community's language, worldview, and day-to-day practice have become part of the nation's performance of itself. It is Rastafari, in other words, that is largely responsible for the growth of black pride and consciousness in Jamaica, and that has put Jamaica on the map globally, and particularly throughout the postcolonial world.

Coral Gardens has also been able to capture sympathetic public attention because we are now more than fifty years on from the incident—most of the police who were directly involved have either passed on or "repented" in one way or another, and while some of the families who were influential in the persecution of Rastafari in that area at that time are still active in the community, the general will of the population has changed. It was possible to create this archive in the first decade of the twenty-first century, therefore, because while the question of racial equality remains open-ended, significant transformations had occurred globally that no longer render Rastafari a threat to citizenship and nationalist integrity. This is not as obviously the case when we turn our lens to the extradition of Christopher Coke from Tivoli Gardens, for reasons that should become clearer in these pages.

After the *Bad Friday* screening at NYU, Deanne approached me and Junior about creating something similar addressing the state of emergency in 2010, a film or other visual work that would provide a platform for people in Tivoli Gardens and surrounding communities to talk about their experiences during the week of 24 May and to publicly name and memorialize loved ones they lost. Initially, I resisted. *Bad Friday*, I argued, was possible because of the long-standing ties we had to the community and the relationships we were able to create with individuals who had already been attempting to document the elders' stories. It was also possible because the situation was no longer "hot," as it were, not part of the overarching and ongoing oppositions that have characterized political life in independent Jamaica. Not having any ties to, or contacts within, Tivoli, and the sense of being in the thick of things regarding the still unresolved events of 2010 seemed to mitigate against doing anything there. Deanne persisted, however, and with the help of a few key figures including the American journalist Mattathias Schwartz, who generously connected us with the people with whom he had worked most closely in order to write his *New Yorker* article "A Massacre in Jamaica" (2011), we began our project together in early 2012.

Over the intervening years, we recorded about thirty oral histories in a friend's music studio, and we amassed a variety of additional materials, including the footage from the U.S. drone that was overhead during the operation (again, due to Schwartz's generosity), archival film and stills of the community itself, photography (both portraits of our interviewees and pictures taken by community youth during a workshop we ran with students from the University of Pennsylvania in August 2013), additional video from a guided walk through the community in January 2014, and emails and cables between personnel within the U.S. Consulate in Kingston and their counterparts in Washington, DC. And on several occasions, we convened the people who shared their experiences with us to show them drafts of our work in order to receive feedback, and to make sure we were walking the fine line they asked us to when we began working with them, a line that reflects their negotiation of dual power structures—that of the state and that of the Coke family. There was an immediacy to our work with residents in West Kingston, one that operated quite differently from the temporal frame that contextualized *Bad Friday*.

Both projects, however, stand as attempts to witness and to archive state violence, and to give some sense of how the practices and performances of state sovereignty—and the attempts to create life alongside, through, and in opposition to them—have changed over time. The sphere of the visual offers different affordances than academic prose. In visual work, we are able to

proximately juxtapose divergent scales, perspectives, and times. And the affective engagements we have sought to reflect and generate through the production and editing decisions that we have made, as well as the dynamics of the present that condition these decisions, are sometimes difficult to capture or represent through language.⁴

Moreover, these engagements are stubbornly both unpredictable and aspirational, and our visual work seeks willfully to accept this indeterminacy, while also attempting to awaken some sort of recognition of the domains in which we, as producers and consumers of events and their representations, are complicit. This textual account extends and engages our visual process, and the complexities of archiving violence through this process, via the sort of transmediation Christine Walley has written about. For Walley (2015: 624), using multiple media in ethnographic practice can offer new and potentially more diverse spaces for engagement as well as “possibilities for expanded dialogue in an increasingly unequal era.” Here, the term “transmedia” is coined not to evoke the use of multiple media platforms in research and dissemination, nor to highlight processes of adaptation from one medium to another, but to extend “ethnographic narratives across media forms, with each component making a unique contribution to the whole” (Walley 2015: 624) in ways that might encourage more robust conversations about ethnography as process, relationship, and representation.

Following this, our visual, sonic, and textual work ideally would be “read” together, with each speaking to the gaps in the other without necessarily seeking to resolve them into one seamless story. This kind of transmedial reading might ultimately also do more justice to the media worlds and digital nonlinearities linking us to our interlocutors (Ginsburg et al. 2002; Jackson 2004), helping us to rethink the social relations of ethnographic time and space in our research, writing, and extratextual practice. Ultimately, for me, the story I relate in these pages about making life in and through violence—institutionalized and imagined, past and present—spans multiple temporal and spatial frames, and requires attention to both embodied and cognitive modes of analysis. The archives that can generate these modes of apprehension and analysis, however, are different for different periods, and thus the process of evidence gathering requires another way of looking, the kind of “parallax effect” Faye Ginsburg (1995) advocated for many years ago, the different vision enabled by a change of position. My ultimate hope is that these changes of position might also allow us to understand revolution in a different register, one in which archiving and repair are allied projects.

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HUMANNESS *in the* WAKE *of the* PLANTATION

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE HUMAN — POLITICALLY — IN THE WAKE of the plantation? How have people confronted the unpredictable afterlives of colonialism and slavery, nationalism and state formation in ways that perform not only a material but also an affective transformation? What forms of community and expectation are produced in and through violence? What does modern sovereignty *feel* like? These questions have been haunting me over the past twelve years during which I have been developing archives of the relationships between sovereignty and violence in Jamaica.¹ My specific obsessions have had to do with the temporal regimes to which postcolonial sovereignty projects have been tethered. I have wanted to know how these regimes have conditioned the affective states through which sovereignty projects are enacted and experienced and how they have shaped the complex processes of subjectivity within a modernity whose foundational infrastructures were imperialism, colonization, and plantation-based slavery. I have been interested in what Sylvia Wynter identified as a constitutive tension between the dominant logic of the plantation—a logic that undergirds *all* modern sovereignty projects—and its internal threat, the (often millennial) spaces within which enslaved people maintained a conception of themselves as human rather than as property.² It is this tension that would ultimately shape the relationship between the national and the popular in struggles over sov-

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ereignty, and it is this tension that becomes legible by ethnographically attending both to moments of exceptional violence and to the realm of everyday practice.

My aim throughout this text is to bear witness to these dynamics in the kind of quiet and quotidian way Tina Campt (2017: 32) has identified as a modality of refusal, the “nimble and strategic practices that undermine the categories of the dominant.” Witnessing, as implied here, is neither straightforward nor unmediated; rather, it is ambivalent and relationally complex.³ My agenda in these pages will be to juxtapose assemblages of archives—visual, oral-historical, colonial, and postcolonial—in order to think through the relations they bring into being among the psychic, material, prophetic, and political dimensions of sovereignty; the broader historical and geopolitical entanglements they make visible; and the possibilities they generate for a redefinition of human recognition.

The form of witnessing that interests me—one I am calling Witnessing 2.0—is not the witnessing of human rights organizations or of public tribunals such as Truth and Reconciliation Commissions (TRCs), which are limited in and through their relationships to the categories through which they are mobilized, such as human rights and reconciliation.⁴ Witnessing 2.0 is, instead, an embodied practice. It is the kind of “co-performative witnessing” for which Dwight Conquergood consistently advocated—a commitment to “shared temporality, bodies on the line, soundscapes of power, dialogic inter-animation, political action, and matters of the heart” (quoted in Madison 2007: 827).⁵ It makes visible the ways affects operate in multiple temporalities and across levels of consciousness, and is thus closer to the form of witnessing described by Barbie Zelizer (1998, 2002), in which it is a moral practice that involves assuming responsibility for contemporary events. This is what Sue Tait (2011) has referred to as “bearing witness,” distinguishing it from “eye-witnessing” by emphasizing its affective dimensions beyond visibility, thereby destabilizing the ocular-centrism that has facilitated imperialism.⁶ Tait (2011: 1221) argues that “bearing witness exceeds seeing, and this excess lies in what it means to *perform responsibility*,” what Avery Gordon (2008) has elaborated as response-ability.

By focusing on the extent to which one recognizes the various ways we are implicated in the processes we address, Witnessing 2.0 both produces intimacies through the development of affective archives and reveals the ways we maintain the conjunctures of power within which we live. Because the technologies through which we witness potentially exceed these conjunctures, however, Witnessing 2.0 offers us windows into what Walter Benjamin (2005: 510) called the “tiny spark of contingency,” that spark that might

produce something unexpected and that might reformulate the ground of the human outside of modernist binaries.⁷ It is a practice of *recognition* and *love* that destabilizes the boundaries between self and other, knowing and feeling, complicity and accountability. Witnessing 2.0 can therefore ultimately produce the internal shifts in consciousness that radiate from one to another in unexpected and necessarily nonlinear ways, and that lead to lasting, world-changing transformations. What I argue throughout this text is that we must cultivate archives through attentive embodied care in order to recognize and respond to the psychic and sociopolitical dynamics in which we are complicit, and therefore to generate the ability to be response-able, to ourselves and to others.

NEW WORLD PLANTATIONS, IT HAS BEEN EXTENSIVELY ARGUED, PROVIDED the basis for modern social and economic arrangements, not only in the Western Hemisphere but everywhere.⁸ Contemporary claims and complaints regarding humanness in the Caribbean are therefore being made within a modernity generated through the movement of Europe (with Africa, conscripted) toward the Americas and the establishment of new forms of genocidal violence as the basis of a changing transnational capitalist political economy. Fifteenth- and sixteenth-century mercantilism inaugurated material, religious, political-philosophical, scientific, and ideological processes that indelibly linked the “New World” and the “Old” in a common project of defining modern humanity in racial terms. The “settling” of the New World saw the delineation of racial hierarchy in the language of the potentiality for Christian conversion, a delineation that then became institutionalized during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries by Inquisition tribunals (see, e.g., Silverblatt 2004; Wynter 2003). It also saw the twin transformative processes of racial fixing (of diverse African peoples into *negros* and diverse indigenous New World populations into *indios*) and racial flexibility (the various configurations of creolization, transculturation, and hybridity that emerged [see Whitten 2007]). These were processes that became institutionalized through particular extractive labor regimes and constellations of citizenship and subjectivity that excluded non-European groups from the category human (Buck-Morss 2000, 2009; Fischer 2015; Mbembe 2003; Wynter 2003). The initial racialized elaborations of what it means to be human would be subsequently mobilized to serve late nineteenth-century projects of indirect imperial rule throughout Africa and South Asia, as well as the emergent imperialist project of the United States.⁹ Modern, liberal democratic political arrangements have been designed to hide these ontological processes; they

have disguised the dehumanization of foundational racism through the conceptual framework of perfectibility.

Anticolonial and nationalist projects sought to interrogate, critique, and ultimately revise these originary delineations of the relationships among personhood, value, and political legibility through the development of new forms of community cultural consciousness, if not always substantially new economic arrangements. Indeed, the elaboration of continuities between imperial and nationalist modalities of governance has been a critical focus for these scholars, including attention—in the case of New World societies—to the ongoing forms of violence that have been enacted against black bodies.¹⁰ While many anthropologists have offered brilliant and trenchant critiques of the diverse vectors of nationalist governance and subject formation, I have also felt we have sometimes stopped just short of the more sensory dimensions of sovereignty, leaving us largely unable to answer other, also pertinent questions.¹¹ This is, in part, because much of this work—inspired by Michel Foucault and Giorgio Agamben—has often failed to take into account the ways what Alex Weheliye (2014: 4) has called “racializing assemblages” are foundational, rather than incidental, to modern delineations of humans, not-quite-humans, and nonhumans. As Wynter (2003) reminds us, the making of the figure of “the poor” and the figure of “the black” are not different processes (as is commonly articulated through assertions such as, “In Jamaica it’s not like in the United States; for us the problem is class, not race”). Both these makings, instead, are really one and the same, the recognition (and overrepresentation) of the European as “Man” and therefore human.

What analyses of “bare life” seem to disavow is exactly this: that race *always* prefigures notions of what it means to be a human—and, potentially, a citizen—and thus also what it *feels* like to be a problem, especially once political normativity is marked by liberal rights-oriented participatory democracy (Ramos-Zayas 2012). If we do not account for the ways Afro-descended people find themselves as objects in the midst of other objects, ontologically impossible without violence and exiled from the human relation, then we cannot fully account for subjectivity’s discursive entanglements. And if blackness cannot stand on its own as humanity, but must always be recognized through, by, or vis-à-vis whiteness, then liberal governance can only ever perpetuate affective “double consciousness,” the need to see oneself through the lens of imperial binaries.¹²

This would be the Afro-pessimist line, and it is a theoretically powerful one, moving beyond political economy and engaging the psychic foundations of the modern world as antiblack (Hartman 1997; Sexton 2007, 2011; Spillers 1987; Wilderson 2008, 2010). This mode of theorizing importantly

points to the limitations of both our analytics and our strategies, as it offers a logic whereby the slave relation transcends time and space, perpetuating the impossibility of Black Presence in a context where “whiteness is not only always Presence, but also absolute perspectivity” (Wilderson 2008: 98). Like all logics, Afro-pessimism is (as Claude Lévi-Strauss would have said) “good to think with,” but, of course, logics must be understood as contingent. They can exist in the world only as engagements, always in motion, always entertaining the possibility of human action.

This forces a return to my original question: Within this context, what has it meant to be a human capable of acting politically in and on the world? And how do we bear witness to these enactments? If we agree that sovereignty is best understood as dynamic practice, and that therefore there is no static constellation to which “it” refers, then we must think of it as performed and thus embodied (Biehl 2005; Fassin 2008, 2012; Fassin and Rechtman 2009; Hansen and Stepputat 2006; Stevenson 2014; Ticktin 2006, 2011), as constituted both from “below,” as it were, and from “above.”¹³ As performance, sovereignty is also a mode of address and thus requires acknowledgment from an audience for whom the performance must be legible (Masco 2014; Rutherford 2012a).¹⁴ If all social projects that are not forcefully imposed “must be affective in order to be effective,” as William Mazzarella (2009: 299) has argued, then our ethnographic attention must be attuned to the production, reception, and circulation of these affective fields.

Focusing ethnographically on the relation between affect and sovereignty offers a number of important affordances, the first of which has to do with the emergence of the body on the stage of critical thinking, not just as the raw material of management, but also as a way of knowing, both publicly and intimately. This body is not private but is instead social, relational, and historical, and its unconscious is therefore also fully historically and culturally situated.¹⁵ Exploring the constitution of the political subject not primarily through nationalism or through state- (and extra-state-) driven processes of subjectification, but through the cultivation of embodied affects that are shaped by the particular temporal conjunctures in which they emerge, enables us to interrogate the ways political affects can transcend the context of their emergence, allowing them to appear and resurface unpredictably. It can thus unbind sovereignty not only from territory, and therefore from the political centrality of the independent nation-state, but also from the teleologies of linear, progressive time.¹⁶ What an affective approach to sovereignty gives us, then, is a better sense of what Danilyn Rutherford (2016: 287) has called “the embodied experience of a world in motion, the atmospherics of an age.” These embodied atmospherics are the nonideological dimensions of hailing

and the aspects of relation that arrive without always explicitly calling attention to themselves, creating a sensibility of community that disturbs both the spatial and the temporal dimensions of the nation-state through the particular forms of mediation that bring them into being.¹⁷ They are grounded in particular historical materialities; they are generated through particular technologies; and they produce temporally specific expressions, with different effects in different periods.

In thinking through how the “Tivoli Incursion” came to be possible, I have been interested in cultivating an “archive of affect.” This is Gayle Wald’s phrase, one she mobilizes to understand the late 1960s and early 1970s television variety show *Soul!* as both a reflection of contemporary realities and an embodiment of dreams for a “black is beautiful” future (Wald 2015: 8). Archiving, here, is not oriented toward the past and its preservation or toward creating sites of pure memory or history. As Michel-Rolph Trouillot (1995) has taught us, archiving produces absences and forgetting as New World knowledge formations as often as it suggests new possibilities for social and political relations.¹⁸ In the case Wald investigates, these relations are generated through popular cultural expression, but in our case they emerge through our collection of images, sounds, and narratives of state violence (see also Iton 2008). Nadia Ellis (2016) has called the elaboration of possibility generated by this kind of archival practice “improvisation,” an embodied affective register through which African diasporic people enact survival under conditions of unpredictability and multiple forms of sovereign violence.

An archive of affect is not quite a counter-archive—or, perhaps, it would be more accurate to suggest that an archive of affect is not beholden to the nationalist and masculinist discursive frames that often contextualize counter-archives (Ellis 2015). Those documentation practices and social movements that have taken the space of the nation-state as their primary mobilizing rubric have accomplished many critical goals, but they ultimately have failed to complexly historicize our conceptualization of social and political processes and therefore have enabled the perpetuation of the “culture of violence” and “culture of poverty” tropes, as well as the patterns of exclusion that characterized the colonial period.¹⁹ An archive of affect, however, opens a space of potentiality, one that might catalyze new possibilities for seeing connections previously unexamined and for reordering our ontological taken-for-granted, such as time and space, politics and justice, and the very terrain of humanism itself (Reid-Pharr 2016; Wynter 2003). In making this argument, I am not suggesting there is some romantic and miraculous sphere of political action outside signification processes and machineries. Instead, I am suggesting that the unpredictability of affect, and subsequently its power, lies in its

simultaneous operation at the cognitive, mediated level and at a more visceral level (Mazzarella 2009). We constitute ourselves through political activity in the everyday, both at the level of consciousness and at the level of embodiment. Assembling archives of affect thus should tell us something about how the sphere of the political has been imagined and felt at various junctures and about the kinds of politics that are possible at these junctures.

Archives of affect, because they are nonlinear and thus unobligated to the teleologies of liberalism, can also shift the politics of reparations away from discretely local and legally verifiable events and toward the long and slow processes undermining our ability to forge social and political community together. They can urge us to be more skeptical about nationalist narratives of perfectibility whereby we triumph over past prejudices and injustices through a force of will and commitment to moral right, instead encouraging us to train our vision more pointedly to transnational geopolitical and socio-cultural spheres and to the messiness of sovereignty at different moments. They address an audience that extends beyond the juridical limitations of the nation-state, thereby encouraging demands for a more comprehensive form of justice. At the same time, by inspiring us to see and hear differently, archives of affect can help us to focus on the everyday ways people innovate life without constantly projecting today's struggle into a future redemption. And because they are, in the end, technologies of deep recognition, they can cultivate a sense of mutuality that not only exposes complicity but also demands collective accountability.

MY LAUNCHING PAD FOR THESE INVESTIGATIONS IS THE CARIBBEAN, and specifically Jamaica, where the pressing questions always seem to come back, in one way or another, to how the society came to be so saturated with violence, and how to end it. In the Caribbean, the history of plantation development and the transatlantic slave trade has meant that there has been no straightforward relationship among territoriality, nativeness, and nationalist governance. Moreover, in Jamaica, as elsewhere in the British West Indies, the reckoning of land rights, norms regarding the organization of political authority, and conflicts among subgroups developed in relation not to ordinary land rights but to a context, at least prior to the nineteenth century, in which the planter class wielded considerable political influence within Parliament and absolute authority locally, and in which indigenous peoples have been conceptually disappeared (S. Jackson 2012).

In his classic *The Sociology of Slavery*, Orlando Patterson argued that the primary characteristic of Jamaican slave society was absenteeism. "This ele-

ment was central to the whole social order,” he wrote, “and was in some way related to almost every other aspect of the society” (Patterson 1967: 33). For Patterson, the consequences of absenteeism were legion: it evacuated Jamaican society of potential leaders within all sectors of society and therefore resulted in a Legislative Council populated by individuals whose “poverty and inefficiency [was] a matter of public notoriety”; who had “no respect” and “no influence”; and who therefore severely diminished the character and efficacy of public office (Governor Marquis de Sligo, quoted in Patterson 1967: 38). It prevented the development of a proper educational system, which meant that even planters and their children—save the wealthiest—remained semiliterate, and it “led to a complete breakdown of religion and morality among the resident whites” (Patterson 1967: 40), with clergymen themselves among the most profligate; this occasioned a breakdown of the institutions of marriage and the family. Most of all, absenteeism meant that the majority of estate profits were repatriated to England rather than reinvested locally, which “was disastrous for an economy so heavily dependent on foreign supplies” (Patterson 1967: 44). Absenteeism thus produced a “loosely integrated” society within which there were no significant institutions to create or reinforce laws.

Furthermore, Patterson points out, for more than 125 years after initial British colonization of the island in 1655, there were no comprehensive slave codes, and despite the passage of a Slave Act in 1696, the relationships between masters and slaves were governed by customs rather than laws. This meant that while masters typically enjoyed absolute legal power, slaves also were able to extract certain rights—most importantly, in relation to the cultivation of provision grounds, which became a much more expansive practice than what had originally been legislated by Slave Acts in both 1696 and 1788. While these grounds have typically been understood as essential to the production of foodstuffs to sell in the market (and therefore to the attainment of cash), and while they were crucial for the development and maintenance of religious and social practices outside the reach of the plantation, customary stewardship of provision grounds also “weakened slave resistance to white power,” as Trevor Burnard (2004: 169) has reminded us:

On the one hand, the tendency of slaves to engage in capitalist market-oriented activity worked, in the long run, against the logic of plantation slavery because it reduced slaves’ dependence on the bounty of the master and thus reduced his control over him. On the other hand, private property and market exchange fractured slave communities. Disputes over property and property-related crimes opened fissures within slave ranks. Confronting attacks on slave prop-

erty rights from outside often healed these fissures, but it also often weakened the black community as a whole.

Making this relation between autonomy and cooptation even more complex is Burnard's assertion that whites (as estate owners, managers, and overseers) were slaves' only protection against the praedial larceny of other slaves. As a result, potential solidarities were further strained: "When a thief was from within a slave community, slaves could humiliate or ostracize the violator of group norms. But when a thief came from outside the closed society of the plantation, slaves had little option other than to turn to their masters, who alone had recourse to the law and the authority to apprehend and punish slaves, wherever they came from" (Burnard 2004: 165). Whites, here, embodied the law, and slaves, as property, had no inherent rights unto themselves; therefore, any legal action on their behalf had to be undertaken by their masters. Nevertheless, the customary agreements masters entered into with slaves ensured the smooth functioning of the plantation system. Moreover, after 1717, masters were also able to protect their more "valuable slaves" from prosecution for crimes as outlined by an act "for the more effectual Punishment of Crime by Slaves."²⁰ Slaves, by contrast, entered into competitive arrangements with other slaves as custodians of property, and though they developed collective interests in the preservation of their economic and, arguably, sociocultural resources, this "communal solidarity was limited and territorially defined" (Burnard 2004: 170).

I have argued elsewhere that we could read in these dynamics the beginnings of a system of patronage and clientelism, albeit an unstable one, in which political authority was not only racialized but also tied to territorially rooted patterns of protection that ultimately encouraged alliances between the powerful and those they exploited and undermined alliances among the exploited themselves (Thomas 2011). In an interview with David Scott, Orlando Patterson made a similar claim, arguing that "there's a clear pattern of continuity between the instability of slavery and the plantation belt that . . . sometimes permeated the peasant area, and then fed right into the urban slums" (Scott 2013: 161). Indeed, patron-clientelism would become the defining characteristic of a political system that features what have come to be known in the contemporary period as "garrison" communities. In Jamaica, thus, a nexus of customary rights related to land use and heritability, and forms of patronage and clientelistic loyalty, forged the ground on which and mechanisms through which nationalist citizenship claims developed in the twentieth century.²¹ What I want to highlight here is that just as the plantation was foundational to modern economic production and labor organiza-

tion, it was this phenomenon that also shaped the infrastructures, practices, and processes of politics during the post-Emancipation period and within postcolonial New World nation-states.²²

In Jamaica, the political economy of modern citizenship was, by the mid-twentieth century, defined through participation in the trade union movement. This broad movement ultimately became politicized via the formation of oppositional political parties: the People's National Party (PNP) in 1938 and the Jamaica Labour Party (JLP) in 1941, each connected to a union—initially the Trades Union Congress (after 1943) and ultimately the National Workers' Union (after 1952) and the Bustamante Industrial Trade Union (BITU), respectively. From the earliest moments, conflicts between unions were also partisan conflicts over territory, especially in downtown Kingston, and these conflicts were often violent. In response to a question from the political scientist, activist, and politician Trevor Munroe regarding street fighting during union conflicts in the 1940s, Richard Hart, whom we will come to know better in chapter 3, remembered that “whole streets changed the composition of tenants living in a particular area, because if you were a PNP man you couldn't live in certain areas.” He explained, “You had PNP yards and JLP yards; and you had PNP streets and JLP streets developing. And only then, when the forces had reached that level . . . did the state—in classic Engelsian terms—intervene to preserve peace between the contending factions and did the police begin coming out” (Munroe 1990: 120).

Since power in this context was personalized, ultimately grounded within the charisma and patronage of one or another leader (Munroe 1972; Sives 2010), allegiances to union leaders—and therefore to political parties—were generally understood to be transmitted through the family, the community, and the workplace. Clientelistic networks, however, were not limited to those operating within the domains of organized political party activism with working-class Jamaicans; they also included those within the fields of education, business, journalism, and community development who could trade information, skills, and contacts with their counterparts in politics (Edie 1994; Stone 1980). This solidified divisions within the working class, and the hegemony of colonial class relations and patterns of leadership was secured in such a way that working-class Jamaicans would “continue support of a basically middle-class political order long after this support would have appeared unjustified on any calculation of social returns” (Munroe 1972: 92; see also Gonsalves 1977; Sives 2010; Thame 2011).

Beginning with universal suffrage in 1944 and culminating in independence in 1962, as government power grew it became more centralized, which further eroded the ability of working-class people to make decisions that

would improve their political, economic, and social circumstances, even at the level of local government (Senior 1972). This situation was exacerbated by an intensification of partisanship in the distribution of state resources. While this became a feature of politics in the 1940s, it had become institutionalized with respect to labor by the 1950s and housing by the 1960s. The distribution of seasonal farm work tickets, for example, was by 1955 known to operate on a partisan basis. Consider the example, documented by Munroe, of a woman who registered for a job with the Government Employment Bureau and was asked what constituency she lived in: “I was told that I would have to be a member of some PNP group before they would help me to find a job. To make sure I wouldn’t lie to them they told me to get a note from the Chairman of whatever Group I Joined” (letter in *The Star*, cited in Munroe 1972: 92). That this was party policy is evident from the 1959 PNP Group Leaders Training Course pamphlet Munroe cites, which laid out the following policy: “See that PNP people get work. . . . [O]f every ten, make it six PNP and four JLP,” and “PNP hard core workers should be provided for” (Munroe 1972: 92).

By 1966, when the JLP was in power and some factions of organized U.S. labor were pressuring the American government to shut down the Farm Labour Programme, this kind of partisanship related to employment continued in the guise of assisting farm workers vis-à-vis U.S. unions. In a letter to his father, Norman Manley, who was then the leader of the opposition, Michael Manley, the island supervisor and first vice-president of the National Workers Union (NWU), explained that their “great friend in the American Labour Movement called Nick Zonarich” had advised him that he convinced the U.S. unions to organize West Indian farm workers rather than advocate for their removal. As a result, the younger Manley proposed that representatives from the NWU meet recommended farm workers from the PNP before they departed for the United States in order to “put them in a frame of mind to expect to be organized by representatives of the American Trade Union Movement.” He added that the NWU and the PNP leadership agreed that their policy was to cooperate with the AFL-CIO, and that they did not “wish to include the Ministry of Labour and the BITU in such an exercise, but would prefer to help through the efforts of the NWU.”²³ The full significance of this request will become clear in chapter 3, but I relate this correspondence here in order to show how political partisanship in Jamaica also took on a transnational dimension and was entangled with foreign institutional bodies. Of course, this has been true not only in relation to labor organizing, but also with respect to Jamaica’s involvement in the international trades in drugs and arms, which, though a feature of political struggles during the 1960s, emerged more strongly in the 1970s and 1980s.²⁴

By the 1967 elections, patronage (in terms of housing and jobs) was explicitly wielded as a political weapon, as government-constructed property by then constituted 40 percent or more of housing stock in downtown constituencies (Clarke 2006b). With continued patronage dependent on continued loyalty, the partisan system's most explicit manifestation was through the construction of housing schemes that were made available to people on the basis of party membership. While the colonial government had been involved in the construction of housing developments that solidified particular political allegiances in the aftermath of hurricanes and other disasters (Robotham 2003), and while the PNP had proposed a project of slum clearance and housing construction in 1961, it was the removal of squatters from Western Kingston and the subsequent construction of Tivoli Gardens that solidified the links among housing, territory, and political party. In 1963, 932 families comprising 3,658 people were removed from the Foreshore Road area in Western Kingston, and the destruction of their dwellings began on 2 October to enable Phase I of the Tivoli Gardens scheme (Sives 2010: 65). Additional evictions beginning in mid-February and continuing until mid-July 1966, displacing about two thousand people, led to the replacement of left-leaning "Back O' Wall" with Phases II and III of Tivoli Gardens. By mid-August, political gang warfare had surged, and in October, the JLP had declared a state of emergency that lasted until after the 1967 elections (Gray 1991). Following the completion of Tivoli Gardens, which remains (with Denham Town) the JLP's stronghold in downtown Kingston, the PNP government constructed additional housing for its supporters. The garrisonization of downtown Kingston was further reinforced by the abandonment of downtown spaces by Jamaican elites and middle-class professionals (Carnegie 2014; Robotham 2003).

Contemporary garrisons—of which Tivoli Gardens is considered the perfect example—are thus territorially rooted homogeneous voting communities in which political support is exchanged for contracts and other social welfare benefits.²⁵ As in the past, these exchanges have been institutionalized, and even codified as part of general procedures for the distribution of paid work and social services among constituencies downtown, with the vote-benefits nexus mediated through the relationship between the politician and a local "don." This relationship, however, has not been static (Sives 2010). It became part of a more general ideological struggle during the 1970s, and it subsequently transformed as the elaboration of the transnational trades in cocaine and weapons supplanted a previously smaller-scale trafficking in ganja. This has strengthened the role of dons vis-à-vis politicians, as dons' increasing involvement in both illicit and legitimate businesses has provided

politicians with financial support, in addition to the military support offered during election periods (Harriott 2004; Samuels 2011). This is also what has perpetuated a kind of permanent war in which Kingston figures centrally as a spatially, racially, and politically polarized place, both discursively and symbolically, and it is what has brought garrison dons to the attention of the U.S. government.

What were thus made legible in 2010 were the various scales at which and through which the garrison operates. In other words, the garrison doesn't merely denote a physical space—one that is simultaneously local, national, and global—but also evokes an affective disposition encompassing the requirement of submission to a set of dictating norms and forms of violence that include the suspension of critical consciousness, the simultaneous denigration of blackness and its celebration in popular culture, the violent policing of movement, and the need to appeal to a “leader” for the provision of basic requirements. This is why other modalities of organizing political life and social development—such as Rastafari, the People's Freedom Movement, or the Black Power movement, all of which are discussed in these pages—are seen and subdued as threats, not only to Jamaican sovereignty and U.S. hegemony, but also to the worldview that positions black bodies as the instruments of profit, both economic and political, for others.

Again, what undergirds my arguments throughout this text is the assertion that these contemporary manifestations of garrison politics are grounded in a system of political authority on sugar estates oriented toward loyalty to a powerful figure and reliance on that figure for work, benefits, and protection. There is, in other words, a certain kind of global historical priorness that we should attribute to political organization in postcolonial New World societies, one that has to do with the infrastructures, practices, and processes of politics in which the plantation-based racialized categories of human, not quite human, and nonhuman remain foundational to nationalist sovereignty, despite material transformations in the position of black, “brown,” and white Jamaicans (Hanchard 1999).²⁶

We would also do well to remember that in Jamaica and elsewhere, the consolidation of plantation-based, rather than peasant-based, agriculture only deepened with the intensified penetration of the United States in the late nineteenth century. While in Puerto Rico, Cuba, and the Dominican Republic plantations heralded an intensified investment in sugar, in Jamaica it was banana production that became more vertically integrated into an export-oriented plantation system monopolized by the Boston Fruit Company (later to become the United Fruit Company), despite the origins of this industry in small-scale peasant production by black Jamaicans (Holt 1992).

Tensions regarding a deepening U.S. influence over the Jamaican economy extended to the political realm after the 1907 earthquake in Kingston, in the wake of which then Governor James Alexander Swettenham was recalled to Britain because he refused the assistance of a contingent of U.S. Marines who had arrived on a rescue mission. By World War II (with the Destroyers for Bases Agreement), and in its aftermath (with the establishment of the Anglo-Caribbean Commission), the United States had a significant foothold in Jamaican economic, political, and sociocultural life, and this foothold only deepened throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first with the militarization of drug policy (see Tate 2015). The United States was therefore fundamental to the reorganization of sovereignty in Jamaica after World War II, and intelligence gathering and labor mobilizing were the critical institutional spheres of this reorganization. I have much more to say about these processes throughout this book, but I outline them here in order to lay the groundwork for apprehending the multiplicity of sovereignties in which Jamaicans are imbricated and to which Jamaicans have responded in different ways at different times. In Tivoli Gardens, certainly, there have been multiple sovereignties at play, and the different scales at which they have operated—sometimes in collaboration and sometimes not—give us windows into the affective sociopolitical fields in which people attempt to make life.

IF WE CONCEDE THAT SEIZING STATE POWER IS BOTH AN ACT OF SELF-determination and an act of sovereign violence, then we are able to grasp the inherently contradictory nature of revolution, and we are in a position to take seriously Maziki Thame's (2011: 76) argument that "the postcolonial experience produces violence that in and of itself is related to processes of liberation." Drawing from Anglophone Caribbean scholarship attending to the relevance of Fanonian views of revolution to formerly British West Indian countries, Thame explores the gendered, racialized, and class dimensions of Caribbean nationalisms. Her argument is that within a configuration in which "middle class and professional men came to assume power over the nation and have maintained their dominance over other, weaker men and over women in general," the Caribbean state became an agent of this subject position (Thame 2011: 77). The relationships among gendered class, kinship norms, and nationalist respectability have been discussed elsewhere at length, but what is important here is Thame's contention that where full personhood and citizenship remain in question for black working-class Jamaicans, working-class men are criminalized, singled out for exceptional treatment by the state.²⁷ Violence against poor Jamaicans thus became normalized "as a

feature of elite consensus around the establishment of a social order that rendered poor Blacks also demeaned” (Thame 2011: 79). The violence Thame is pinpointing is not only the violence of party politics and the racialized patterns of structural violence that have become normative throughout the Americas; it is also an everyday violence that permeates encounters with middle-class people, agents of the state, and each other. The garrison, for Thame (2011: 81), is the extension of this violence and is “a symbol of conquest and specifically of middle class dominance over the poor through the party mechanism,” one that seeps into every other dimension of social organization and interaction, locally and transnationally.²⁸

Frantz Fanon’s point about revolutionary violence is that it turns the norms of society on their head; it purges colonial degradation and allows for the reclamation of personhood and the realization of meaningful social and economic transformation. But what kind of liberation could Fanon’s cleansing and humanizing violence bring within this context, one in which the response to alienation from the nationalist state has been “violence, disorder and indiscipline though not necessarily of a revolutionary nature” (Thame 2011: 84)? Thame points out that for scholars such as Anthony Bogues, Obika Gray, Anthony Harriott, and Brian Meeks, violence in postcolonial Jamaica has been an “act of empowerment” and a “means to visibility” (Thame 2011: 84). “Through their competition and collaboration with the state in the use of violence,” Thame (2011: 86) writes, “segments of the urban poor become empowered.” Violence, in this frame, is a route to recognition, but one that has primarily been expressed and received (or rejected) through the very masculinism that undergirds the postcolonial order. I come back to questions of visibility in chapter 1, and I have much more to say about recognition in the coda, but the important question here is that if violence in postcolonial Jamaica has at its base “a masculinist understanding of empowerment—the imposition upon another as the basis for establishing one’s humanity” (Thame 2011: 88)—does this allow for the development of new political, social, economic, and ethical logics? For Thame (2011: 89), what is required is “a new focus on the meaning of liberation, which seeks to deconstruct a decolonization steeped in men’s desire for power,” and to simultaneously transform the “institutions of alienation and domination that became features of the postcolonial state.”

Here is the crux of an important insight into why earlier models of political liberation have been exhausted. If we must confront what David Scott (1999: 14) has argued over the past two decades is a crisis in the “coherence of the secular-modern project,” then in what new ways might we rethink the limits of postcolonial sovereignty and its flawed models for sociopolitical

change? How might we expose the incompatibility of decoloniality and liberalism without falling into what Wynter has called “simplistic easy radicalisms” (Scott 2000: 158)?

Within anthropology, the critique of liberalism has tended to center on the liberalism of Locke, Kant, and other framers of the Enlightenment-oriented modern state institutions that ultimately would come to operate through a focus on private property, market relations, and developmentalism.²⁹ It has not typically turned its critical lens toward the Romanticist strands of liberalism, in part—perhaps—because these are the strands that are more common fodder for anthropological research, the “cargo cults” and millennial movements critical of abstract rationalism and capitalist modernity we have striven to make legible, even inevitable, given configurations of inequality. While we have deconstructed the utopias envisioned through these movements, we have respected them, even sometimes rescuing them from the sense that Romanticism tends inescapably toward fascism, totalitarianism, and similarly reactionary programs. A Weberian tradition of anti-Enlightenment romanticism, however, is one that has been central to many successful social transformation projects, not just extremely conservative ones, in large measure due to the affective (as opposed to secular-rational) *force* of its movements, a force that is often circulated through the figure of a charismatic leader.³⁰

Michael Löwy and Robert Sayre have advocated for a reconsideration of Romanticism. In *Romanticism against the Tide of Modernity* (2001), they argue that the critical force and clarity of Romanticism lies in its exposure of “the blindness of the ideologies of progress . . . the unthought of bourgeois thought” (Löwy and Sayre 2001: 250). Their argument is that Romanticism can be both revolutionary and counterrevolutionary, undergirding movements with vastly discrepant ends. What is common to all, however, is a “value on life, love, hope, freedom and joy, as well as creativity” (Löwy and Sayre 2001: 8), and a rejection of the Enlightenment’s abstract rationalism, as well as the stultifying reification—defined here as “the dehumanization of human life, the transforming of human relations into relations among things, inert objects” (Löwy and Sayre 2001: 20)—accompanying the move to global capitalism. Where most locate Romanticism as emerging in the wake of the French Revolution as the result of disillusionment with the bourgeoisie that seized power, Löwy and Sayre (2001:20) track it back to the early eighteenth century and an emergent disillusionment with the spread of capitalism. They argue that in pushing a critique of capitalist modernity, “the Romantic view constitutes modernity’s self-criticism.”

Throughout their text, Löwy and Sayre chart a typology of Romanticisms, differentiating among Restitutionist, Conservative, Fascistic, Resigned,

Reformist, and Revolutionary or Utopian Romanticisms (which for them would include Jacobin-Democratic Romanticism), and distinguishing further among the English, French, and German varieties of each. It is that last category of Romanticism that contains some interesting bedfellows. Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels appear among the Utopian Romanticists, as do Nikolai Bukharin and Joseph Stalin, E. P. Thompson, and the Frankfurt School. Löwy and Sayre (2001: 214) also argue that surrealism was the twentieth-century movement that most “brought the Romantic aspiration to reenchant the world to the peak of its expression and that most radically embodied romanticism’s revolutionary dimension.” And, of course, it was surrealism, and later situationism, that inspired Aimé Césaire and Fanon, in part because it was a way to rethink form, but also because it reimagined the relationships among past, present, and future and eschewed the binary dualisms of self and other, mind and body, and so on.

While Löwy and Sayre do not tether their grounding of Romanticism in anticapitalism to imperialism and the colonization of the Americas at all, if we understand modernity as the ground upon which our degradation as non- or not-quite-humans is realized, then we should be able to see the appeal and purchase of an anti-modern critique of reification within settings characterized by colonization and plantation slavery. It is true, in other words, that aspects of Romanticism have been central to the contemporary rightward shifts throughout the Americas and Europe. But it is also true that they have undergirded powerful social movements—such as Rastafari—that have gone the furthest to critique the liberal, capitalist status quo and the progressive teleologies of developmentalism. I want to suggest, therefore, that we reformulate the “problem” of postcolonial sovereignty in terms of an ongoing struggle between two versions of liberal social change: secular-rational versus Romanticist, or, in other language, pragmatists versus poets. In this reformulation, the power of institutional transformation would probably rest in the modern secular liberal revolutionary framework, and the power of affective attachment would probably stay with the Germanic framework, in both its exclusionary and inclusive guises.

In Jamaica, this would look like a struggle for revolutionary social change between the progressive left—a formation I would take to include the various Marxist and Black Power groups that came to occupy the political landscape after universal suffrage in 1944, but perhaps most stridently in the late 1960s and early 1970s—and the prophetic left, a formation that would encompass Rastafari, but also Ethiopianism and earlier redemptive religious movements such as Bedwardism, as well as secular-prophetic hybrid movements such as Garveyism. Of course, these two formations, especially during the late 1960s

and early 1970s, did not exist within a nationalist vacuum and were not necessarily mutually exclusive. At particular moments and within particular contexts, there were significant points of overlap, and sometimes collaboration. At other times, there were significant disconnects. These formations, as well, have existed within a broader political economy in which the region is increasingly dominated by U.S. economic interest, and it is this broader context that shapes the breaking of old regimes, the institutionalizing of new ones, and the devastation attending their collapse.³¹

For the progressive left, the bourgeois rights achieved through liberal revolutions are important, meaningful, and deserving of more profound elaboration through the “strong and slow boring of hard boards,” as Max Weber (1946) famously defined politics. This is an approach that “criticizes the present in the name of certain modern values . . . while calling on modernity to surpass itself, to accomplish its own evolution” (Löwy and Sayre 2001: 28). And it is one that works from the messy and difficult here and now rather than envisioning a utopian past or future. It attempts to forge alliances among the positions of actually existing people, with all their actually existing flaws, in order to produce actually existing change through control of the state. For them, Romanticist movements are important but cannot ultimately play a leading role on the stage of revolutionary change. However, within our actually existing contexts, I would argue that it is Romanticist movements that have consistently produced meaningful and lasting transformations in people’s understanding of the world and their place in it, and therefore of their internal worlds and intersubjective relations, in part because they do not respect the boundaries of the territorial state. Theorizing sovereignty in relation to questions of affect, therefore, forces us to generate more complex accounts of the historical and social relations through which notions of sovereignty are produced, experienced, and circulated across time and space. And it encourages us to more fully appreciate the complexity of how visions of the present, the future, and social change are inhabited and expressed in extremely complex and often contradictory ways by people who are operating in networks that encompass many scales simultaneously.

Let me return to Thame’s claim that corruption, middle-class dominance, and the criminalization of black, working-class men and women in Jamaica can be dismantled only by displacing men’s desire for power from the center of political thought and action. While Weberian conceptualizations of politics and revolution do much to help us take seriously the affective states that constitute notions of politics and community, it is true that they do not necessarily move us outside the broader frame of masculinism. However, neither,

as we have seen, does the secular rationalism of the progressive left. What Thame is proposing is a kind of feminist solution, one that makes visible other kinds of struggle and action, typically led by women. This is a solution that doesn't rely on charismatic leadership and that involves collaboration among diverse stakeholders. This is, indeed, her own program of research, and it is a critically important one.

What I want to propose is another kind of feminist solution, not as an alternative but as a way to walk alongside Thame. It is a solution grounded in *Witnessing* 2.0, a quotidian practice of watching, listening, and feeling that is relational and profoundly intersubjective.³² This solution is geared toward (1) taking seriously embodied ways of knowing and understanding in an effort to (2) track the long-term entanglements that have produced and sustained the binaries structuring our modern world so that we find ways to (3) undo dualistic modalities of thinking and acting in order to (4) generate meaningful forms of repair. In the coda, I argue that this repair must be generated through the "real love" (J. Jackson 2005) of deep recognition.

WHILE THIS BOOK BEGINS WITH A DISCUSSION OF THE EVENTS OF May 2010 in Tivoli Gardens, it travels successively back in time in order to flesh out some of the ways we might understand the various entanglements that helped us arrive at that moment, and the affects that might be understood to characterize it, as well as the other moments I explore. I argue that the worlds of West Kingston in 2010, of southern Clarendon during the late 1960s and early 1970s, and of Jamaica as a whole through the long 1950s are characterized by different affective sociopolitical fields. By this, I mean to explore affect in much the same way that some scholars of migration in the 1980s and 1990s understood the movement across territorial boundaries as generating a transnational sociocultural field (see, e.g., Basch et al. 1994; Glick Schiller et al. 1992; Sutton and Chaney 1987). The original proponents of transnationalism within anthropology were attuned to the importance of history, not merely in terms of how the past appeared in the present, but as a circulating discursive field that made evident the long-term geopolitical and economic entanglements that shaped migratory streams and the specific sociocultural patterns and processes that emerged in relation to these streams at particular moments. Affective sociopolitical fields, like transnational sociocultural fields, circulate. And because they raise questions about the sense of temporality that undergirds the broader geopolitical and epistemological dimensions of their production, I suggest that identifying them not only responds to the forms of racism that produced the ideological terrain of the

post-contact New World but also encourages us to renew, revive, reconstruct, and represent our histories in order to rethink our present.

My discussion of the narratives we collected from residents of Tivoli Gardens, and of the forms of evidence given at the West Kingston Commission of Enquiry, suggests that the dominant affective register of neoliberalism is *doubt*; my treatment of Claudius Henry and his International Peacemakers' Association as it flourished and then declined between 1966 and 1986 leads to an exegesis of an affective field of *expectancy*; and my discussion of the ways Rastafari and communism became conjoined during the height of the Cold War, and of U.S. intervention into the trade union movement after the expulsion of the radical wing of the People's National Party in 1952, is shot through with *paranoia*. I show that doubt and paranoia are "kissing cousins," but where doubt references a diffuse sense of uncertainty, paranoia has a clear, if unpredictable, object. Expectancy, however, emerges as a moment of rapprochement between the secular-rational vision and the prophetic vision, one that is produced within a context in which an increasingly leftist PNP, active within the Non-Aligned Movement internationally, controlled the state. This moment was subsequently dismantled when the PNP was removed from power.

If archives of affect are produced in and through particular sociopolitical affective fields, then they also generate particular technologies through which we experience, confront, and interpret these fields.³³ These technologies also sediment over time and in relation to fields that have come before, thereby generating our contemporary landscape of the political. For the context I am describing here, doubt produces technologies of *misrecognition*, the result of obfuscation, denial, and the maintenance of public secrets. Expectancy produces technologies of *prophetic waiting*, a waiting in which the end is never the end because it was foretold from the beginning.³⁴ Paranoia, finally, produces technologies of *surveillance* and *conspiracy*; friends turn against friends, and what you see is never what you get.³⁵ Where doubt and paranoia short-circuit the future, focus on the present, and evacuate the past, expectancy generates new worlds for the future. Each of these affective sociopolitical fields is therefore tied not only to the temporal materialities that contextualize it, but also to different versions of social and political change. In other words, the fields are shared across social and political boundaries, but their experience is particular as a result of these boundaries. Moreover, the generational sedimentation of these fields and the time maps they index is key to reflecting not only on what sovereignty has felt like during the moments under consideration, but also on the ways the affective fields, once established,

become available for reactivation, as it were, thus transcending their context of origin, something I discuss more in chapter 2.

While the chapters that follow focus on the periods I have outlined here, the interludes between the chapters outline three other moments. These moments are related, but in rhizomic rather than causal ways. They concern twentieth-century entanglements in Jamaica among colonial and nationalist governments, U.S. foreign policy, prominent local capitalists, external observers, a nationalist development-oriented middle class, and the trade in ganja and other drugs. Together—though again, nonlinearly—these moments also give a sense of the conditions that set the stage for the 2010 state of emergency in West Kingston. The assemblage of these moments also creates a story about how entanglements change over time, and one that is therefore about the dissolution of (British) imperialism and the shifting vectors of (American) empire. It tells us about what kinds of political imagination are possible—whether diasporic, Pan-African, or nonaligned—at different temporal junctures. The interludes also give a sense of what it has meant for others to bear witness, and specifically of how outsiders to Jamaican society bore witness to the public secrets that characterized the periods in which they found themselves in Jamaica. As such, they reveal how certain places—Jamaica, in this case—become central to knowledge production about the important questions of their day. In the interludes, Jamaica emerges as critical not only in relation to the transition from British to American hegemony throughout the Western Hemisphere, but also to the development of a perception of insecurity in the United States, one that was generated by circulations of drugs, communism, and black radicalism, but also by spies, money, and diplomats.

REFLECTING ON WHAT HE TERMED THE “DISMAL” STATE OF RECORD-keeping and maintenance in Jamaica, Anthony Harriott once suggested to me that “the attitude to history is indicative of the attitude to accountability.”³⁶ This, ultimately, speaks to the ethical impulses of this project and the questions that frame the coda: How are we complicit in sovereign violence? To whom are we accountable? What are our obligations? And what might real liberation feel like?

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Notes

PREFACE

- 1 At his trial, Coke pled guilty to charges of racketeering and distribution of marijuana and cocaine on 30 August 2011, and he was sentenced in June 2012 to twenty-three years, which he is currently serving in a medium-security prison in South Carolina.
- 2 The overarching rubric of this attempt is “Tivoli Stories,” a collaborative practice that has been the basis for a film (*Four Days in May*) and a multimedia installation (which was mounted in November 2017 at the Penn Museum). See <https://www.tivolistories.com>.
- 3 I have also heard through the convoluted networks that embrace Rastafari, tourists, and other lovers of Jamaica, and through the diasporic channels that link spaces within Brooklyn and the Bronx with media productions originating in Jamaica, that *Bad Friday* has screened on television in Germany, and that almost immediately after we released the film, bootlegged copies were on sale in the “bend down plazas” in Flatbush. For an analysis of the perils of visual ethnography and bootlegging, see Stout 2014.
- 4 By this, I do not mean to invoke an agreement with those who have argued that affect is prelinguistic or precultural, of whom Brian Massumi (2002) has been the most celebrated proponent. I have more to say about this in chapter 1 and the coda.

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INTRODUCTION

- 1 Michel-Rolph Trouillot gave us some of our most significant insights regarding archives, evidence, and the multiple roles, conceptions, and uses of history as they bear on anthropological research. His work continually asked us to position archives not just as static sources of information but as dynamic spaces of knowledge production. His argument was that both the materiality of history and the interpretations of that materiality are constructed, and that they exist as part of the scaffolding of a discursive frame of belonging and mattering vis-à-vis political and social communities. Trouillot talked about this frame mostly in terms of effects, and in relation to particular forms of silencing, but I engage this frame in relation to its affective productions and to plumb the multiple dimensions of these productions.
- 2 Sylvia Wynter has elaborated this tension in a number of publications (see esp. Wynter 2003), but I am thinking here of her iteration of it in Scott 2000.
- 3 Achille Mbembe (2011: 1) reminds us that “the task of the witness is to reopen the emancipatory possibilities which, as a consequence of the structured blindness and collective self-deception of the age, are in danger of foreclosing the future.” See also Ahmed 2004 on witnessing and the ways individual pain, when witnessed, becomes a social and embodied affect; Cvetkovich 2003 on the ambivalence of witnessing; and Berlant 2011a on the affective attachments we develop to formations of inequality and injustice. I address the forms of recognition these scholars are implicitly calling for more fully in the coda.
- 4 One way to think about the limits of TRCs and human rights tribunals is offered by Sharon Sliwinski (2011: 56), who argues that they arise because the judgments of moral action these tribunals generate “are only afforded to those of us who are removed from the immediate action, those of us whose flesh has not been wounded directly, but whose imagination has been aroused by such images.” For additional critiques of TRCs, witnessing, and testimony, see Fassin 2008; Feldman 2004; Hinton 2010; Redfield 2006; Ross 2003; Shaw et al. 2010; Theidon 2012; Ticktin 2011; Wilson 2001; Wilson and Brown 2011. And for a critique of “reconciliation” in relation to Native North American populations, see Coulthard 2014.
- 5 For a discussion of the issues raised by an insistence on “shared temporality,” see Rifkin 2017.
- 6 Tait distinguishes “bearing witness” from what Paul Frosh and Amit Pinchevski (2014) have discussed as “media witnessing,” a form of witnessing that has emerged from the ubiquity of smart phones. Their argument is that collective and egalitarian media witnessing has destabilized the temporal gaps between experience and discourse, bringing them into a state of “permanent simultaneity” (Frosh and Pinchevski 2014: 595). The effect of this is a kind of millenarian relationship to temporality in which each moment is experienced in terms of potentiality—“ripeness” in their account—that creates a sense of both shared vulnerability and political possibility. Media witnessing, in this context, challenges the ontological centrality of the event, instead configuring

it as repeatable and thus as shared. Events, in this formulation, can only always already be co-constituted with their repetitions, and witnessing these events exceeds the immediate experience of them, creating an embodied and material relationship to witnessing, but it does not necessarily create an imperative for meaningful action.

- 7 For more on the importance of developing new critical archives, see Robert Reid-Pharr's (2016) analysis of humanism and modernity through an exploration of African American engagements with Spain. Reid-Pharr (2016: 156) has called for "a radical Black Studies and an invigorated Critical Archive Studies as parts of broad-based efforts to disrupt the Man/anthropophorous animal binary." For Reid-Pharr, the development and critical reading of archives of affect also has the potential to reframe the grounds of humanism and the definition of the human.
- 8 There are many scholars to whom we are indebted for the certainty of this assertion. The list would include, but is not limited to, Lloyd Best (1968), Sidney Mintz ([1966] 1971, 1996), Cedric Robinson ([1983] 2000), Michel-Rolph Trouillot (1992), Eric Williams (1944), and Sylvia Wynter (2003).
- 9 On racial projects, see Omi and Winant 1986. For scholarship on the diverse legislative twists and turns that emerged to govern the forms of political, economic, and intimate relations throughout the long histories of Spanish, Dutch, French, and British colonial rule, see Chatterjee (1986) 1991, 1989, 1993; Cohn and Dirks 1988; Cooper 1996; Hansen and Stepputat 2006; Mignolo 2001; Stoler 2007; Taussig 1992.
- 10 See, e.g., Christen Smith (2016a), who has outlined the ways racialized violence against black bodies has been institutionalized through legal codes and the development of various levels of the police force in Brazil and has therefore been part and parcel of state formation during the colonial and republican periods.
- 11 But for examples of anthropological analyses of sovereignty that take affect seriously, see Bonilla 2015; Masco 2014; Navaro-Yashin 2012; Rutherford 2012a. Other ethnographers have striven to focus on the everyday to render the experience and expression of affective states at a variety of levels of scale through various realms of labor and public culture (see, e.g., Chalfin 2012; Mankekar 2015; Riles 2000; Stewart 2007). For an excellent review of empirical studies of affect within anthropology, see Rutherford 2016.
- 12 The obvious references, here and earlier, are to W. E. B. Du Bois and his classic question underpinning *The Souls of Black Folk* ([1903] 1996) and Frantz Fanon and his exploration of the psychic dimensions of colonialism in *Black Skin, White Masks* ([1952] 1967). On disavowal, see Fischer 2004.
- 13 While state violence has often been a focus of scholarship, sovereignty claims are also produced from the ground up. Bonilla's (2015) analysis of the syndicalist strikes in Guadeloupe demonstrates that her interlocutors' activism was not only about the constitution of new labor relations, but also about an engagement with histories of slavery and *marronage*, the development of a broader critical sociopolitical consciousness, and the generation of affective intimacies

and conceptual spaces in which new—and, in this case, nonsovereign—political forms might be imagined. In Bonilla's text, intensities of feeling are also spawned through the materialities of particular places, as is also the case in Yael Navaro-Yashin's (2012) exploration of affective geographies in Northern Cyprus. Navaro-Yashin (2012: 8), like Bonilla, argues that dates and places have "affective properties"; they are phantoms that haunt—in the Derridean sense—the contemporary actions and imaginations of people who feel them.

- 14 Joseph Masco (2014: 20) has argued that in the post-World War II security state, we are affectively "coordinated as subjects through felt intensities rather than [through] reason at a mass level." Daniel Goldstein's (2012) analysis of vigilante justice in Bolivia exists, in many ways, as the B side of Masco's rendering of counterterrorist paranoia, as for him mob violence is a way for people to produce security within an institutional, infrastructural, and affective context defined by insecurity. See also the "Post-Fordist Affect" special collection of *Anthropological Quarterly* (2012) for analyses of the ways insecurity is affectively rendered within a variety of neoliberal contexts. Where for Masco insecurity is a quintessentially modern affect, Ulla Berg and Ana Ramos-Zayas (2015) have argued that modernity produced additional (though related) affects, such as rationality, disenchantment, and vulnerability.
- 15 In a posthumously published essay in the *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Be-goña Aretzaga argued that to explore everyday subject making in relation to states, one must "ask about bodily excitations and sensualities, powerful identifications, and unconscious desires of state officials; about performances and public representations of statehood; and about discourses, narratives, and fantasies generated around the idea of the state" (Aretzaga 2003: 395). Aretzaga's formulation here echoes the eighteenth-century philosopher David Hume's assertions that reason and rational thought are driven in and through bodily passions, which Rutherford engages in her discussion of state building in West Papua. What is useful for Rutherford is Hume's materialist linking of behavior and passions and his argument that "the 'force and vivacity' of the idea leads one to feel what one thinks the other feels" (Rutherford 2009: 5). Of course, scholarship on affect is not the first time the body emerges on the stage of critical thinking about governance, feeling, and knowing. There is a mass of feminist scholarship from anthropology, philosophy, and allied fields that has been oriented toward critiquing the body-mind dualism as one of several related binaries on which hierarchies of nature and culture, material and ideological, and subject and object have been grounded (see, e.g., Alexander 1994, 1997, 2005; Chatterjee 1989; Kaplan et al. 1999; Lewis 2003; Ong 1990; Parker et al. 1991; Stoler 1989, 2002). For an excellent early review essay on gender and state formation, see Silverblatt 1991. More recent work includes Abu-Lughod 2004; Navaro-Yashin 2012; Rofel 1999.
- 16 But on how the affective relation might also seek to connect a conservative sense of territorial homeland to a structure of feeling, see Kuntsman and Stein 2015.
- 17 Purnima Mankekar (2015: 19) has argued that temporalization is an "affective

process that is constantly produced through everyday life”; she draws from Henri Bergson’s notion of *durée* to think through the ways time “crisscrosses, transects, articulates, and, equally importantly, disarticulates the lives of [her] informants with the temporalizing processes through which nations are made and unmade.” Mankekar’s context is India, but this framing of the relationship between temporality and affect is also useful in my own.

- 18 See Harvey Neptune’s (2014) retrospective on the ways Trouillot’s work was geared toward creating an anthropological and historical archive of the West (and specifically, the “North Atlantic”), and sought to deconstruct the epistemological categories that created these archives in the first place. It is also interesting to note that groups such as the African Hebrew Israelites of Jerusalem also have challenged this spatializing and periodizing of modernity by relocating the “New World,” for example, in Israel (newly conceptualized as Northeast Africa) and the “Old World” in the Americas (J. Jackson 2013). The question of creating presences from absences has also been explored by those interrogating queer archives (see Agard-Jones 2012; Ellis 2016). Finally, archivists themselves have also become interested in the affective turn, thinking through the ways researchers affectively experience archives themselves (see *Affect and the Archive, Archives and Their Affects* in *Archival Science*, special issue [November 2015]).
- 19 I discuss the counter-archive in relation to Caribbeanist scholarship elsewhere (see Thomas 2013).
- 20 Quoted in Patterson (1967: 75); the original can be found in the National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew Gardens, Colonial Office Records (henceforth “CO”) 139/8.
- 21 For discussions of land tenure and inheritance, see Besson 2002; Carnegie 1987. On the relationship of land during slavery and patterns of political authority, see Burnard 2004; Thomas 2011. On authoritarianism and patronage, see Munroe 1972; Singham 1968.
- 22 Slavery was abolished throughout the British West Indies in 1834 and was to be followed by a six-year “apprenticeship” period, during which time formerly enslaved people would continue to work for their former masters for a wage, thereby becoming socialized into a new relationship between labor and value. This system failed, and “full free” was declared in 1838. During the period of slavery, it should also be noted, judicial authority rested in the hands of the slaveholder or estate manager and was transferred after emancipation to the state. Diana Paton has written extensively about the forms of punishment and new legislation that emerged after emancipation, arguing that these legal mechanisms were tools of social control over urban space and that they in effect criminalized laborers through the proliferation of “small charges” (Paton 2004, 2014).
- 23 Michael Manley to Norman Manley, letter, 8 September 1966, Jamaica National Archives, Spanish Town, Norman Manley Papers 4/60/2A/71.
- 24 Trevor Munroe and Arnold Bertram (2006: 322) have demonstrated that, while in 1962 “there were 37 casualties caused by firearms, in the year of the

- 1967 elections, this number had increased to 202.” These arms were entering the country illegally in conjunction with the growing trade of ganja between Jamaica and the United States, and the accusation was that politicians were arming criminals (Lacey 1977; Senior 1972).
- 25 For an analysis of representational practices related to these phenomena, see Gray 2011; Jaffe 2013. For an analysis of their gendered dimensions, see Ulysse 2007. For more on the history of these polarizations, see Clarke 2006a and 2006b; Howard 2005. For a description of the role of dons as arbitrators and purveyors of justice and social welfare within their communities, see Charles 2002. For a somewhat more popular academic exegesis of garrisons, see Gunst 1995.
- 26 For a longer discussion of racial categories in Jamaica and the ways these index class identities, see chapter 1 in this volume. While my focus is Jamaica, there are clear commonalities throughout the region. For example, for the Brazilian context, see Perry 2013; Smith 2016a.
- 27 For a few examples of the relationships among gendered class, kinship norms, and nationalist respectability, see Barrow 1988; Edmondson 1999; Reddock 1994; Thomas 2004.
- 28 For an insightful analysis of how organized crime becomes a mode of governance in and through the implementation of community development projects, see Galvin 2014. Ultimately, her argument is that the development programs “do not successfully weaken the need for informal community governance, crime, or vigilantism and, in fact, reinforce undemocratic community hierarchies” (Galvin 2014: 145). Instead, they reproduce garrisons as mini-states within the Jamaican nation.
- 29 On the critique of Kantian and Lockean liberalism, see, e.g., Fischer 2004; Mahmood 2011; Povinelli 2011. These critiques are trenchant but have not necessarily explicitly addressed the foundational racism of Enlightenment theorists. For a primer on the development of philosophical views on racial and geographical hierarchies, and the ways these came to inform an emergent anthropology, see Eze 1997.
- 30 See, classically, Weber 1946. I have more to say about the relationship between charisma and notions of power and politics in chapter 2.
- 31 David Scott (2014: 63) has argued similarly in his exploration of the aftermath of the Grenada Revolution: “In undertaking to uproot the institutions and practices of the status quo, in daring to interrupt the necessity by which we are ruled and therefore to be otherwise than we have been obliged to be by the powers that have control over our lives, revolution is almost *purely* a matter of action, of intervention, of initiatives without precedent. Therefore, revolution entails a permanent exposure to risk and reversal. By the same token, nowhere is the price of freedom more dearly paid than in the collapse or failure of revolution when *everything* has been risked in action—and *everything* has been lost to it.”
- 32 For an accounting of the sensory relations being heralded here, see Camp 2017.

- 33 For an analysis of the relationships among technology, archive, and the psychic domain, see Smith and Sliwinski 2017.
- 34 This differs from David Scott's interpretation of Derrida, whose notion of "messianic time" leads to a kind of "waiting without expectation" (quoted in Scott 2014: 10). For Scott, Derrida is turning our eyes through an "*atemporal* futurity" (Scott 2014: 10), one that is not reducible to any particular ontology of time.
- 35 On *surveillance*, see Masco 2014; on *inaction*, see Ngai 2005; and on *conspiracy*, see Jackson 2008; Marcus 1999.
- 36 Anthony Harriott, personal communication, 24 October 2014.

1. DOUBT

- 1 Here, I am referencing Alfredo González-Ruibal (2008) and Jane Guyer (2007). I have more to say about endurance in chapter 2.
- 2 The Commission of Enquiry's report provides some additional details on Chineyman's brother's death (Government of Jamaica 2016: 236–38), at the end of which the Commissioners note that his stepfather received three gunshot wounds in his back, and that Dashan (Dashard in the report) sustained four gunshots in his chest. The Commissioners concluded that "inferences are compelling that they must have died at the hands of the security forces" (Government of Jamaica 2016: 238). They therefore suggest additional investigations.
- 3 An investigation by Amnesty International of the 2001 West Kingston Commission of Enquiry found that the inquiry "failed to fulfill its obligations under international law to fully investigate the deaths of at least 25 people," who were likely killed extrajudicially, because it found no one responsible and failed "to consider the possibility of criminal proceedings, in violation of international standards" (Amnesty International 2003: 4). See also Amnesty International, "Jamaica 2017/2018," <https://www.amnesty.org/en/countries/americas/jamaica/report-jamaica>.
- 4 For an elaboration of these points, see Paton 2017. In particular, she discusses the simultaneous growth of state activity under Crown Colony rule at the same time that populations were being denied access to the political system and as the state was continually enhancing its capacity to suppress opposition. See also Paton 2004.
- 5 W. G. Johnson, Police Adviser to the Secretary of State, to Colonial Secretary, letter, 18 April 1950, National Archives of the United Kingdom, Kew Gardens, Colonial Office Records (CO) 537/5435.
- 6 For an analysis of this event, as well as additional sources, see Thomas 2011.
- 7 Holding a public Commission of Enquiry was one of the recommendations made by the Office of the Public Defender in its interim report to Parliament (Witter 2013). The Commission was ultimately convened in mid-2014. It held public hearings on the following dates (they were broadcast live on local television and were recorded by the Jamaica Information Service): 1–12 Decem-