

## The Colonial Caribbean

*The Colonial Caribbean* is an archaeological analysis of the Jamaican plantation system at the turn of the nineteenth century. Focused specifically on coffee plantation landscapes and framed by Marxist theory, the analysis considers plantation landscapes using a multiscalar approach to landscape archaeology. James A. Delle considers spatial phenomena ranging from the diachronic settlement pattern of the island as a whole to the organization of individual house and yard areas located within the villages of enslaved workers. Delle argues that a Marxist approach to landscape archaeology provides a powerful theoretical framework to understand how the built environment played a direct role in the negotiation of social relations in the colonial Caribbean.

James A. Delle is Professor of Anthropology and Chair of the Department of Anthropology and Sociology at Kutztown University of Pennsylvania. He is former chief editor and current member of the *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* editorial board and currently is an associate editor of *Historical Archaeology*. He is a member of the executive board of the Council for Northeast Historical Archaeology. Delle is the author of *An Archaeology of Social Space*; coeditor of *Lines That Divide: Historical Archaeologies of Race, Class, and Gender* and *Out of Many, One People: The Historical Archaeology of Colonial Jamaica*; and editor of *Limits of Tyranny: Archaeological Perspectives on the Struggle against New World Slavery*. Delle has published articles in the *Journal of Social Archaeology*, *Historical Archaeology*, *Northeast Historical Archaeology*, *International Journal of Historical Archaeology*, and *Archaeologies*.

*Case Studies in Early Societies*

*Series Editor*

Rita P. Wright, New York University

This series aims to introduce students to early societies that have been the subject of sustained archaeological research. Each study is also designed to demonstrate a contemporary method of archaeological analysis in action, and the authors are all specialists currently engaged in field research.

The books have been planned to cover many of the same fundamental issues. Tracing long-term developments and describing and analyzing a discrete segment in the prehistory or history of a region, they represent an invaluable tool for comparative analysis. Clear, well organized, authoritative, and succinct, the case studies are an important resource for students, and for scholars in related fields such as anthropology, ethnohistory, history, and political science. They also offer the general reader accessible introductions to important archaeological sites.

*Other Titles in the Series Include:*

Ancient Mesopotamia

*Susan Pollock*

Ancient Oaxaca

*Richard E. Blanton, Gary M. Feinman, Stephen A. Kowalewski, and Linda M. Nicholas*

Ancient Maya

*Arthur Demarest*

Ancient Jomon of Japan

*Junko Habu*

Ancient Puebloan Southwest

*John Kantner*

Ancient Cahokia and the Mississippians

*Timothy R. Pauketat*

Ancient Middle Niger

*Rod McIntosh*

Ancient Egyptian Civilization

*Robert Wenke*

Ancient Tiwanaku

*John Janusek*

The Ancient Indus

*Rita P. Wright*

Ancient Inca

*Alan L. Kolata*

Ancient Central China

*Rowan K. Flad and Pochan Chen*

# The Colonial Caribbean

## *Landscapes of Power in the Plantation System*

---

James A. Delle  
Kutztown University of Pennsylvania



CAMBRIDGE  
UNIVERSITY PRESS

Cambridge University Press & Assessment  
 978-0-521-76770-5 — The Colonial Caribbean  
 James A. Delle  
 Frontmatter  
[More Information](#)



Shaftesbury Road, Cambridge CB2 8EA, United Kingdom  
 One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
 477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
 314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre, New Delhi – 110025, India  
 103 Penang Road, #05–06/07, Visioncrest Commercial, Singapore 238467

Cambridge University Press is part of Cambridge University Press & Assessment, a department of the University of Cambridge.

We share the University's mission to contribute to society through the pursuit of education, learning and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)

Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9780521767705](http://www.cambridge.org/9780521767705)

© James A. Delle 2014

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press & Assessment.

First published 2014

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library*

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication data*

Delle, James A.

The colonial Caribbean : landscapes of power in the plantation system / James A. Delle.

p. cm. – (Case studies in early societies)

Landscapes of power in the plantation system

ISBN 978-0-521-76770-5

1. Plantations – Jamaica – History – 19th century. 2. Landscape archaeology – Jamaica. I. Title. II. Title: Landscapes of power in Jamaica's plantation system. III. Series: Case studies in early societies.

HD1471.J3D45 2014

306.3'49–dc23

2013043768

ISBN 978-0-521-76770-5 Hardback

ISBN 978-0-521-74433-1 Paperback

Cambridge University Press & Assessment has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party internet websites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such websites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

## Contents

<i>Figures</i>	<i>page</i> viii
<i>Tables</i>	xi
<i>Preface</i>	xiii
1 Landscapes of Power in the Colonial Caribbean	1
2 His Majesty's Island: The Colonial World of Plantation Jamaica	22
3 The Plantation Mode of Production	64
4 A Class for Itself: Regional Landscapes of the Planter Class	109
5 Contradictions and Dialectics: Village Landscapes of the Enslaved	142
6 Dialectics and Social Change: Plantation Landscapes after Slavery	177
7 Plantation Landscapes in Comparative Perspective	198
8 Conclusion	231
<i>References</i>	237
<i>Index</i>	259

## Figures

2.1. The Caribbean.	<i>page</i> 23
2.2. Topographic Features in Jamaica.	29
2.3. Location of Spanish-era Sites in Jamaica.	30
2.4. GIS Modeling of c. 1670 Settlement Pattern in Relation to Hatos.	40
2.5. GIS Modeling of c. 1670 Settlement Pattern in Relation to Spanish Towns and Known Settlements.	41
2.6. GIS Modeling of c. 1670 Settlement Pattern by Distance from Coast.	42
2.7. GIS Modeling of c. 1750 Settlement Pattern by Distance from Coast.	46
2.8. GIS Modeling of c. 1750 Settlement Pattern in Relation to Elevation.	47
2.9. GIS Modeling of c. 1775 Settlement Pattern by Distance from Coast.	51
2.10. GIS Modeling of c. 1775 Settlement Pattern in Relation to Elevation.	52
2.11. GIS Modeling of c. 1800 Settlement Pattern by Distance from Coast.	53
2.12. GIS Modeling of c. 1800 Settlement Pattern in Relation to Elevation.	54
2.13. GIS Modeling of c. 1814 Settlement Pattern by Distance from Coast.	57
2.14. GIS Modeling of c. 1814 Settlement Pattern in Relation to Elevation.	58
2.15. Number of Plantations by Distance from Coast, c. 1670–1814.	59
2.16. Percentage of Plantations by Distance from Coast, c. 1670–1814.	60
2.17. Number of Plantations by Elevation, c. 1670–1814.	60
2.18. Percentage of Plantations by Distance by Elevation, c. 1670–1814.	61

	List of figures	ix
2.19. Percentage of Plantations above 250 m, c.1670–1814.		61
3.1. Stone Mason's Chisel from Marshall's Pen, in situ.		78
3.2. Socketed Bill from Marshall's Pen.		79
3.3. A Branch of a Coffee Tree with Fruit.		80
3.4. Processed Coffee Beans Drying.		81
3.5. Grinding Wheel at Marshall's Pen.		82
3.6. Overseer's House at Mile Gulley.		84
3.7. Coffee Plantations Mentioned in the Text.		88
3.8. Overseer's House at Clydesdale Plantation.		100
3.9. Reconstructed Landscape of Clydesdale Plantation.		101
3.10. Overseer's House at Sherwood Forest Plantation.		102
3.11. Detail of Overseer's House at Sherwood Forest.		103
3.12. Barbecues at Sherwood Forest.		104
3.13. Reconstructed Landscape of Sherwood Forest Plantation.		105
4.1. Karst Topography in Central Jamaica.		116
4.2. The Enclave of Upper St. Davids.		120
4.3. The Negro River Valley.		130
4.4. Digital Elevation Model of the Negro River Valley.		134
4.5. Viewshed from Farm Hill House.		135
4.6. Viewshed from Abbey Green.		136
4.7. Viewshed from Upper New Battle.		137
4.8. Viewshed from Mt. Pleasant.		138
4.9. Viewshed from Lower New Battle.		139
4.10. Viewshed from Eccleston House.		140
5.1. Yabbas Recovered from Archaeological Sites in Jamaica.		150
5.2. The Village of Marshall's Pen.		154
5.3. Iron Cooking Pots Recovered from Marshall's Pen.		160
5.4. Imported Stoneware from Marshall's Pen.		161
5.5. Refined Earthenware from Marshall's Pen.		162
5.6. House Area 1 at Marshall's Pen.		164
5.7. Spanish Wall House at Porus.		167
5.8. Remnants of a Spanish Wall House at Marshall's Pen.		168
5.9. Nineteenth-century Board House in Porus.		169
5.10. Remnants of a Board House at Marshall's Pen		169
5.11. Iron Nails Recovered from House Area 6.		170
6.1. Great House at Upper New Battle.		178
6.2. The Subdivision of Mt. Charles Plantation.		179
6.3. Mavis Bank When First Patented.		194
6.4. Initial Subdivision of Mavis Bank.		195
7.1. Martin's Hundred, c. 1622.		206
7.2. Jordan's Journey, c. 1630.		212

x	List of figures	
	7.3. Fortified Homestead at the Harwood Plantation, c. 1630.	214
	7.4. Harwood Plantation, c. 1630.	215
	7.5. Buck Site, c. 1630.	216
	7.6. Clifts Plantation, c. 1675.	223
	7.7. Three Phases of Construction at Rich Neck Plantation.	230



## Tables

5.1 Refined English earthenwares recovered at Marshall's Pen	<i>page</i> 157
5.2 Vessel forms and their functions recovered from Marshall's Pen	157
5.3 Coarse ceramics recovered from Marshall's Pen surface collection	158
5.4 Ceramic varieties recovered from Marshall's Pen	159
5.5 Identified individuals selling produce to Marshall's Pen, 1825–1826	163
5.6 Identified individuals selling produce to Marshall's Pen, 1830–1831	164
6.1 Comparison of number of laborers in 1839 to number of apprentices in 1838	185

## Preface

In following the format for *Case Studies in Early Societies*, this volume explores a former civilization, the plantation society of colonial-period Jamaica, framing the analysis of fieldwork within a coherent theoretical structure. The theory that structures this book, Marxism, has a long history of use by Anglo-American archaeologists, dating from at least the work of V. Gordon Childe through to the twenty-first century. Some readers may enter this book from a frame of reference dismissive of Marxism, its basis in materialism, and its focus on the development of class structure and dialectical conflict; others may be curious about how Marxist theory can be used to create understandings of the archaeological past. It is on this latter audience that I have focused my writing. It was my intention when starting out on this book to simultaneously present a thoughtful analysis of the archaeology of plantation Jamaica and to provide an introduction to Marxist archaeology. Knowing that many readers will have had only a cursory introduction to Marxist theory, I have endeavored to explain some of the primary concepts that inform Marxist archaeology without overly depending on jargon. I hope those with a deeper understanding of Marxism will forgive my occasional definition of terms with which they may already be familiar.

There are many people to whom I owe a debt of gratitude for the completion of this book. First and foremost of these is Rita P. Wright, the series editor for Cambridge University Press's *Case Studies in Early Societies* series. I was flattered that Rita asked me to contribute this volume to the series, and I thank her for her patience while I wrote it. I am also grateful to the editorial staff at Cambridge, including Beatrice Rehl, Anastasia Graf, and Isabella Vitti. Two colleagues whom I hold in the highest regard, Tom Patterson and Chuck Orser, read and commented on a complete draft of this manuscript, and, as always, I learned a great deal from their thoughtful comments, which helped guide and refine my thinking through the process of revision.

The analysis contained herein is based on fieldwork conducted in Jamaica over the course of more than twenty years. The list of people

who assisted me in the collection and analysis of field data is long indeed; I would like to especially thank all of the one-time graduate students from a variety of universities with whom I have had the privilege of working over the years, including Elizabeth Clay, Kristen Fellows, Patrick Heaton, Lizzie Martin, Jordan Pickrell, Janet Six, Ashley Tupper, and Mike Volmar. Field school students too numerous to mention, from both Franklin and Marshall College and Kutztown University, contributed a great deal to the projects discussed here. A number of colleagues in archaeology and other fields contributed a great deal to both the fieldwork and analysis behind this work; my thanks go to Doug Armstrong, Mark Hauser, Ken Kelly, Jack Rossen, Chris Sacchi, Rob Sternberg, Norman Stolzoff, and, of course, Mary Ann Levine. Several administrators of my former employer, Franklin and Marshall College, especially John Campbell and Bruce Pipes, were instrumental in helping my work in Jamaica move beyond the dissertation. My current employer, Kutztown University, provided me with a sabbatical leave during which I began writing this book. My thanks go to President Javier Cevallos, Dean Anne Zayaitz, and Provost Carlos Vargas. Funding for this project was provided by Franklin and Marshall College, Kutztown University, the Keck Foundation, and three separate grants from the Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research. My thanks to the grants administrators at both Kutztown University and Franklin and Marshall for helping secure and administer these funds.

In Jamaica, I owe a debt of tremendous gratitude to my friend and colleague Dorrick Gray and the staff of the Jamaica National Heritage Trust. Several landowners provided me with virtually unlimited access to their properties, including Charles Deichman, owner of Sherwood Forest, and the Sutton family – the late Arthur and late Robert, and Ann – owners of Marshall’s Pen. The Jamaica Forestry Department was kind enough to allow me access to Clydesdale, a property they maintain as a forest preserve. The Earl of Crawford, descendant of the Earl of Balcarres, has generously allowed me to conduct research on his family papers at the National Library of Scotland. My thanks to Kenneth Dunn, keeper of manuscripts at the National Library of Scotland, who has always been extremely helpful to my research efforts there. One of the requirements for inclusion in this series was a discussion of a comparative case study. I would like to thank the many colleagues who helped me form my ideas about seventeenth-century Virginia, including Kelley Deetz, Chuck Downing, Jillian Galle, Chris McDaid, Fraser Neiman, and Matt Reeves. Although they may not necessarily agree with the approach I take in the analysis of early colonial Virginia, I hope they each find this comparative analysis interesting and informative.

I would like to thank those who helped prepare the images presented here. The GIS images that appear in Chapter 2 were generated by my friend and colleague Richard Courtney of the Department of Geography and GIS Lab at Kutztown University. I could not have done the analysis without his help. Nick Stover, an undergraduate student in Kutztown's Department of Communication Design, completed many of the images you will see here. He did an outstanding job completing graphic work begun by my late friend John Svatek, who unexpectedly passed away during the preparation of the images for this volume.

Finally, I would like to thank my family, Mary Ann Levine and Lily Delle-Levine, for their patience and understanding as I hauled versions of this manuscript around with me, taking every advantage of the moments in between family events to revise my writing and clarify my thoughts.