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AUTHOR'S NOTE

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- 1 Just after midnight on the night of March 2-3, 1795, armed insurgents stormed the town of Grenville, in the Caribbean island of Grenada. The port town, located on the east coast of the British West Indian colony, was then still widely known by its former French name of 'La Baye.' A British colonist later reported that the insurgents, who were led by a free coloured planter named Julien Fedon, "not only murdered in cold Blood every Man they could find, but cut and mangled their unhappy Victims with all the wanton Cruelty, which Savage Ferocity could devise".¹ A simultaneous attack on Charlotte Town, better known as Gouyave, on Grenada's west coast, was considerably less violent. Led by two free men of colour, insurgents in Gouyave instead took the town's men hostage. The number of hostages grew as the insurgents marched their captives to Julien Fedon's Belvidere plantation, in Grenada's mountainous interior. A total of fifty-one hostages—among them Ninian Home, Governor of Grenada—were held for over a month at Belvidere Estate. Forty-eight of the hostages were executed in April 1795, in response to a failed British attack on the insurgents' camp.² The conflict that became known as Fedon's Rebellion engulfed Grenada for more than a year, from March 1795 until June 1796. Sixteen British regiments were deployed to restore order in the 134-square-mile island, and reported damages totalled more than £ 2.5 million sterling.³
- 2 Although the uprising that paralyzed one of Great Britain's most promising plantation colonies has received relatively little scholarly attention, the first historians to analyze Fedon's Rebellion tended to explain the insurgency as an ideological outgrowth of the French Revolution.⁴ Yet a closer examination of Grenada's entangled colonial history

believes attempts to characterize Fedon's Rebellion as "clearly linked with the French Revolutionary cause."⁵ This article is not primarily concerned with the events of the rebellion itself; instead, it resituates the violence of 1795 as one episode in a much longer contest over the place of specific colonial subjects in both the French and the British Atlantic World. Using surviving French and British government correspondence, censuses, and Catholic parish records, the article illuminates how and why these Caribbean-born, francophone Catholic whites and free people of colour came to share an understanding of the political, economic, and religious rights to which they were entitled, and why they turned from diplomacy to rebellion when these rights were denied to them. By extending the chronological analysis of events in Grenada, I demonstrate that colonial subjects were accustomed to shaping the colony's political economy—first as subjects of the French Crown and, after the island's cession to Great Britain in 1763, as 'new adopted' British subjects. After experiencing a wide range of political realities, residents of Grenada—both white and free coloured—developed an expectation that they were entitled to participate in colonial politics and to exercise certain customary rights. Only when these expectations were repeatedly frustrated by British colonial policies did they turn from diplomatic pressure to violence.

- 3 In what follows, I emphasize how creolized communities acted as a practical and ideological challenge to European rule in the colonial Americas. This approach is informed by research that traces the emergence and persistence of economic, social, and informal political ties that united the Lesser Antillean archipelago across geographic and imperial boundaries throughout the late-seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁶ As the study of an 'inter-imperial microregion' elsewhere in the Caribbean shows, the presence of multiple competing polities within a relatively small space raised questions about the basis and extent of imperial sovereignty.⁷ In islands like Grenada, residents did not even have to look to neighbouring colonies in order to compare different strategies of colonial rule—they experienced them firsthand.
- 4 Although Grenada developed at the margins of the French Caribbean, following its cession to Great Britain at the end of the Seven Years' War (1756-1763), the island became a site of wide-ranging economic and political reforms. As British officials sought to exert greater control over fiscal, military, and political affairs in an expanding empire, they experimented with different approaches to ruling new territories peopled by different kinds of subjects.⁸ Former French subjects in Grenada served as the objects of a number of these experiments in political economy.⁹ Attempts to win the allegiance of small and middling planters in Grenada initially resulted in unprecedented concessions, as British officials allowed former subjects of a rival sovereign to vote, to be elected or appointed to positions of power, and to continue in the free and open exercise of their Catholic religion. The reversal of these concessions in the wake of the War of American Independence (1776-1783) provoked resentment that exploded into violence in 1795. In the last decades of the eighteenth century, people like Julien Fedon therefore experienced an expansion—and later a violent contraction—of their possibilities for political inclusion. Yet contrary to what has been argued elsewhere, Fedon and his followers were not seeking "to gain full citizenship as promised to their brethren in French territories."¹⁰ Attention to evolving strategies of French and British colonial rule in the latter half of the eighteenth century reveals that insurgents in Grenada instead sought to *reassert* political rights to which decades of firsthand experience led them to believe they were entitled.

- 5 Focusing on the family of Julien Fedon allows for an appreciation of how the changes outlined above concretely affected longstanding residents of the island. In a departure from the prevailing view that the rebellion's leaders "all immigrated to the island... between 1779 and 1784 or thereafter," this article shows that Fedon and many of his followers had deep roots in Grenada, having settled in the island prior to its cession from France to Great Britain in 1763. As a result, they and their families experienced firsthand the imperial reorganisations that accompanied the end of the Seven Years' War and the American War of Independence. By locating the spark of Fedon's Rebellion not in 1795 or 1789 but in 1763, when residents of Grenada experienced a transition from French to British rule, this article reframes the insurgency as just one of many responses to broader imperial reforms in the latter half of the eighteenth century. In doing so, it casts the rebellion not as an ideological extension of the Atlantic Revolutions, but as a logical outgrowth of deep-rooted—and often deeply personal—local contests over economic, religious, and political inclusion.

Situating Fedon's Rebellion: A Review of Relevant Historiography

- 6 The appeal of revolutionary ideology is frequently cited as an explanation for the insurgencies that erupted throughout the Atlantic World in the latter half of the eighteenth century.¹¹ Although the influence of Palmer and Godechot has waned, eminent scholars remain concerned with "explaining why the French Revolution, among all the other political upheavals of the time, had such far-reaching effects, not only in France but around the world."¹² Beginning with the 1938 publication of C. L. R. James' *The Black Jacobins*, historians have also explored how insurgents in France's colonies, most of whom were slaves or free people of colour, reinterpreted and gave new meaning to the *droits de l'homme*.¹³ In the most influential recent analysis of the Caribbean during the era of the French Revolution, Laurent Dubois eloquently illustrates how in fighting for their freedom, enslaved people in France's colonies participated in a transatlantic contest over the basis and the limits of modern citizenship.¹⁴
- 7 Historians have also explored the role of the French Revolution in stimulating insurgencies elsewhere in the Caribbean.¹⁵ Focusing on the impact of French Governor Victor Hugues, who was stationed in Guadeloupe, a number of historians contend that the French Republican regime offered both rhetorical and material support for the uprising in Grenada.¹⁶ Others take the argument further, asserting that Fedon "was, of course, under the ultimate direction of the French."¹⁷ The few historians to acknowledge that French forces actually offered little in the way of material support to Grenada nonetheless assert that the outbreak of Fedon's Rebellion owed in large part to the French Revolution; in this view, events in France and her colonies "provided external stimulants to [Grenada's] local situation."¹⁸
- 8 Works affording primacy to the French Revolution in driving events in the Caribbean are increasingly eclipsed by scholarship that stresses the impacts of the Haitian Revolution¹⁹. As "les Caraïbes...sont replacées au centre d'une analyse dont elles avaient été exclues,"²⁰ historians have worked to generate a more comprehensive understanding of the interplay between France, her colonies, and other parts of an interconnected Atlantic World.²¹ Historians also increasingly acknowledge the importance of enslaved people in

Atlantic history; one interpretation of Fedon's Rebellion minimizes Fedon's role in order to recast the insurgency as "an episode of slave resistance."²² Another historian emphasizes the key role played by free people of colour like Fedon in the rebellion that bears his name, but elides earlier instances of political agitation on the part of free coloureds when he argues that "it is only by the last years of the eighteenth century...that they finally came into their own and became a major part of Atlantic history."²³ Finally, a recent article exploring the "growing radicalism amongst the French Roman Catholic clergy" both in France and among missionaries in the 1780s and 1790s emphasizes the role of Catholic leadership in Fedon's Rebellion.²⁴

- 9 These interpretations are invaluable for a number of reasons. First, they succeed in highlighting the interconnected nature of the Atlantic World, challenging the notion that colonies were peripheral to or removed from late-eighteenth-century contests over the meanings of subjecthood and citizenship. They also demonstrate how enslaved and free people of African descent actively participated in these contests, thereby highlighting the ways in which people of colour contributed to the Enlightenment.²⁵ Finally, focusing on moments when imperial rule was interrupted or broke down, such as during the American, French, and Haitian Revolutions, allows for an appreciation of how colonial subjects seized opportunities to intensify their political and military activities; uprisings became more likely when the tools to quell them were absent.²⁶
- 10 Yet a close analysis of inter- and intra-imperial dynamics in Grenada in the decades preceding Fedon's Rebellion belies the notion that the insurgency was primarily instigated by the events or the ideology of revolutions elsewhere in the Caribbean or Atlantic World, or that it was driven by agents from Europe, whether secular or religious. Rather, the francophone Catholic whites and free people of colour who took up arms against British colonial rule did so because the strategies they had used to secure customary political and religious rights in the decades prior were no longer working. The response of British planters and officials in Grenada further affirms the deep-rooted local nature of the conflict. In addition to sentencing almost one hundred men accused of participating in the insurgency to death, authorities confiscated their properties and exiled their families from the island.²⁷ By permanently expelling the very people they once sought to assimilate, British subjects and authorities signalled that they perceived the greatest threat to Grenada's prosperity to come not from French revolutionary forces, but from disaffected fellow planters within the island.
- 11 Attention to diplomatic contests surrounding the status of former French subjects in Grenada in the period after 1763 suggests that participants in Fedon's Rebellion were not primarily motivated by universalist notions of the Rights of Man; instead, the insurgency of 1795-96 represented one of many attempts to regain specific rights for specific groups within colonial society. A longer *durée* analysis of Fedon's Rebellion reveals that many of the issues that animated revolutionaries in France and her colonies in the 1790s—the basis of just rule; the extent and nature of political participation; and the role of religion in public life—were already intimately familiar to residents of Grenada. In an island that experienced shifting strategies of French and British colonial rule firsthand, such issues had been debated, tested, and reformulated for decades.

From French to British: Early Colonial Grenada

- 12 Few places better illustrate the entangled nature of imperial ambitions in the early modern Atlantic World than the island of Grenada. Settled as a French proprietary colony in 1649, Grenada remained sparsely populated and economically underdeveloped relative to France's other Caribbean colonies throughout the period of French rule.²⁸ Although Martinique is just over three times the size of Grenada, France's primary Windward Island colony soon counted more than twenty times the number of inhabitants: as of 1671, Grenada was home to just 283 free colonists and 222 slaves, compared with 4,326 settlers and 6,582 slaves in Martinique.²⁹ As the small number of enslaved people in the island suggests, Grenada's plantation economy was also slow to develop; fifty years after the island was first colonized by the French, Grenada reported just three sugar plantations.³⁰ Economic growth continued to proceed slowly in the ensuing decades; in 1755, French officials reported 87 sugar plantations in Grenada, compared with 350 in Martinique.³¹ By the end of the Seven Years' War in 1763, Grenada counted just 646 free families and approximately 13,000 slaves.³²
- 13 Among the French subjects who settled in Grenada prior to 1763 was Julien Fedon's father, Pierre Fedon, who lived in the northwestern parish of Grand Pauvre. At just 5,600 acres, Grand Pauvre was the smallest parish in Grenada; under French rule, it was also the least populated.³³ The last census of Grenada to be archived by French colonial administrators, which was taken in 1755, indicates that only 12% of the island's free population—just 172 people—lived in the parish. As its name suggests, Grand Pauvre—'Big Poor' or 'Great Poor'—was also not a particularly wealthy part of Grenada, boasting just five of the island's eighty-seven sugar plantations, fewer than any other parish in the island.³⁴
- 14 Instead of sugar, planters in Grand Pauvre focused on the production of subsistence crops, such as plantain and sweet potato, as well as secondary export crops such as coffee. Cacao was particularly important: out of 82,600 *pieds* of land planted in cacao in Grenada, 42%—34,600 *pieds*—were in Grand Pauvre.³⁵ This focus on less labor-intensive crops was reflected in the demographic composition of the parish: out of 9,008 enslaved people reportedly living in Grenada in 1755, 1,019—just 11% of the island's total slave population—lived in Grand Pauvre. Individual planters in Grand Pauvre tended to own only a small number of enslaved people. As of 1763, the majority of planters in Grand Pauvre—thirty-seven out of sixty-one planters in the parish—owned ten slaves or fewer; of these, eleven owned a single enslaved adult. Only three plantations in the parish were worked by more than fifty slaves. Of these three plantations, by far the largest belonged to "les R[évérénd] P[ères] Jacobins": in a testament to the importance of Catholic institutions in French colonial Grenada, the Dominican order owned 106 adult and fifty-four child slaves in Grand Pauvre.³⁶
- 15 Julien Fedon's family was in many ways characteristic of the French subjects who settled in Grenada in the period prior to the Seven Years' War. A tax roll taken in 1763 indicates that Pierre Fedon owned a small coffee plantation in Grand Pauvre worked by just three slaves; like most of their neighbours, the family was unable to afford any cattle, sheep, or horses.³⁷ While Julien's father Pierre was a white man born in France, his mother, Brigitte, was a former slave. Julien and his siblings were therefore 'gens de couleur,' or people of colour. They were certainly not alone: Julien's future wife, Marie Rose Cavelan, was also

from a free coloured family in Grand Pauvre, though neither family was explicitly identified as such in the 1763 tax roll taken by French officials.³⁸ Neither Julien's mother nor Marie Rose's father was able to write their name: on a list of former French subjects who took the oath of allegiance required of anyone who wished to remain in Grenada after the island was ceded to Great Britain, both signed with an 'x'.³⁹

- 16 Despite the Fedon family's limited means, they would still have participated in the social and economic life of their community. As a sparsely populated, economically marginal French possession, Grenada developed in a vacuum for much of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.⁴⁰ French colonies were theoretically subject to direct control from metropolitan France, with military and fiscal affairs administered by a Governor and an Intendant, respectively. Most colonies were also home to a *Conseil Supérieur*—an elite colonial body designed to advise government officials but lacking formal legislative authority—, but no such council existed in the peripheral colony of Grenada.⁴¹ Denied formal participation in colonial government, French subjects in Grenada instead cultivated and exercised authority at the local level.⁴² In this respect, they resembled their counterparts throughout the French Atlantic: with formal political participation largely restricted to members of the nobility, French subjects used civil participation as a measure of their integration into the body politic.⁴³ Serving in the militia gave both white and free coloured men the opportunity to defend the island, while membership in the Catholic Church allowed congregants to publicly affirm their social and familial ties through marriage, godparentage, and by serving as witnesses to religious rites. As members of a legitimate family who owned both land and slaves, the Fedons occupied a socio-economic position comparable to that of many of their neighbours in Grand Pauvre.
- 17 That position changed in the wake of the Seven Years' War. By virtue of the 1763 Treaty of Paris, France ceded a number of territories, including Quebec and Grenada, to Great Britain.⁴⁴ The British Crown made Grenada the seat of a newly-constituted administrative and economic entity known as the 'Southern Caribbee Islands,' more commonly referred to as the Ceded Islands. A single Governor-General was appointed to govern Grenada as well as the neighbouring islands of Tobago, Dominica, and St. Vincent. Land grants and generous loans attracted settlers from England, Scotland, and the West Indies to the new British colonies, and sugar production exploded. Within ten years, the Ceded Islands—whose total area amounts to just 700 square miles—surpassed Barbados and the Leeward Islands to become second only to Jamaica in terms of collective sugar exports to Great Britain. The bulk of these exports came from Grenada, which was the only island of the four to produce sugar prior to 1763.⁴⁵ This rapid economic expansion owed to an equally dramatic increase in the transatlantic slave trade to Grenada. By 1772, the colony counted more than 26,000 slaves, more than double the number reported in 1763.⁴⁶ In a testament to the rapid economic transformation of this once-marginal French colony, just nine years after Grenada was ceded to Great Britain, the island counted 700 acres planted in cacao, almost 13,000 acres planted in coffee, and a staggering 32,000 acres planted in sugarcane.⁴⁷
- 18 Designs for the Ceded Islands illustrate imperial desires to reform three key elements of colonial rule.⁴⁸ Although France and Great Britain laid claim to vastly different territories in the wake of the Seven Years' War, the basic challenges faced by both Crowns were remarkably similar.⁴⁹ Imperial officials needed to generate an accurate account of their domains, determine how to maximize their economic and strategic potential, and ensure that they would be adequately protected in the event of another war.⁵⁰ By immediately

establishing the terms according to which existing residents of the Ceded Islands might be incorporated into the Empire, British officials consciously sought to regulate the settlement of land, generate revenue, and secure the allegiance of their new colonial subjects.⁵¹

- 19 The British Crown's eagerness to reform the practice of imperial rule owed in part to lessons learned from administering other conquered territories in the Americas, such as Acadia.⁵² Although British forces conquered the region northeast of what is now Maine in 1710, the predominantly French Catholic residents of Acadia were initially denied legal title to land. People without title to land did not pay taxes to the Crown; lacking tax revenue and a representative Assembly to allocate the proceeds of that revenue, Acadia languished for decades after its cession to Great Britain.⁵³ British failure to reconcile residents of the region to Crown rule had serious consequences, ultimately resulting in the expulsion of more than 10,000 Acadians from the Maritimes region beginning in 1755.⁵⁴ This imperial misadventure cast its shadow over British colonial strategies just eight years later, as officials debated how best to rule over the tens of thousands of people already residing in territories conquered during the Seven Years' War.⁵⁵
- 20 Peopling the Ceded Islands with large numbers of small- and medium-sized planters promised to avoid a number of problems that soured earlier attempts to absorb new colonial subjects, such as those in Acadia. The logic of mercantilism dictated that colonial subjects should produce raw materials for the mother country and consume the manufactures of the metropole. To gain new subjects and new lands was therefore to enlarge the economic potential of the empire.⁵⁶ Rather than allowing vast tracts of land to be consolidated by a small number of absentee planters, as had occurred in British West Indian islands such as Jamaica and Barbados, officials hoped to people the new colonies with many small landholders who would permanently reside in the Indies.⁵⁷ These small planters and their families would provide a larger market for British goods, while also producing commodities for export. Resident planters would also serve in the militia, thereby protecting the Ceded Islands from the very real threats of external attack or internal slave revolt.⁵⁸
- 21 In addition to attracting new settlers, British officials also hoped to retain the hundreds of small planters already living in Grenada, such as the Fedons. Rather than alienating recently conquered peoples, as they had done in Acadia, British officials attempted to win the allegiance of new colonial subjects by offering unprecedented economic and political concessions. Eligible subjects in Great Britain's colonies—usually white, propertied men—exercised a wider range of political privileges than did their counterparts in French colonies, including the right to vote for representatives to the Colonial Assembly, to be elected to the same assembly, and to be appointed to positions of authority such as judge or member of Council. The question in Grenada, as in contemporaneous Quebec and Acadia several decades before, was whether 'new adopted' subjects—people who practiced a different religion, spoke a different language, and were formerly subjects of a rival Crown—would enjoy the same privileges as existing British subjects.
- 22 The actions of Grenada's 'new adopted' subjects in the period immediately after the island became a British colony are telling. They illustrate the existing inhabitants' conviction that, as long time residents of the island accustomed to influencing political and economic life, they should be entitled to continue doing so. The only difference was that, as subjects of the British Crown, they should participate in a formal—rather than merely a customary—capacity. Following the creation of Grenada's first elected Colonial

Assembly in 1766, a number of former French subjects presented a memorial to the island's Governor, George Melvill. Arguing that it was "cruel and unjust" to "depriv[e] them of any remaining privilege, to which publick faith, the goodness of their Sovereign, and the wisdom of Government have given them a title," the memorialists insisted that they were "absolutely intitled to give votes as freeholders for representatives properly qualified."⁵⁹ Testifying to the desire of British officials to retain these new colonial subjects, along with their slaves and the produce of their plantations, the request of these newly adopted subjects was soon granted. Just three years after Grenada first became a part of the British Empire, officials in England formally decreed that "every White-Man professing the Christian Religion" aged twenty-one or older who owned at least ten acres of land in the island would be permitted to vote. "His Majesty's New-adopted Subjects"—former subjects of the King of France, who spoke a different language and practiced a different form of Christianity—were "thus made capable of Electing."⁶⁰ Aaron Willis estimates that owing to the large number of small and middling planters in Grenada, fully 66% of adult men in Grenada met the property qualifications for enfranchisement.⁶¹

- 23 The specification of "White-Man" electors constitutes the only mention of race in the seven-page printed ordinance. In the minds of officials in England, the prospect of free coloured political participation may have been a moot point, meriting little or no discussion. Yet a large number of the British Crown's newly adopted subjects in Grenada were men like Julien Fedon: the legitimate sons of white men legally married to women of colour. In accordance with customs and laws established during the period of French rule, these men expected to exercise basic civil rights in common with their white peers: to be able to inherit and bequeath property, marry in the Catholic Church, and exercise influence as heads of household, owners of land and slaves, and members of the militia.⁶² I have found no record of free coloured Francophone Catholic planters formally pressing their case for political participation during this era of British rule in Grenada.⁶³ Nonetheless, it is likely that free men of colour, along with their white fathers, at least pondered the question of whether race, like religion, might be removed as a handicap to political participation.⁶⁴
- 24 Although former French subjects in Grenada were granted the right to vote, the possibility that they might be eligible for election in the British colony was effectively foreclosed by the stipulation that any candidate for public office be a "[male] Protestant Natural Born, or Naturalized Subject, who hath attained the Age of Twenty-One Years."⁶⁵ Despite this wording, newly adopted subjects in Grenada soon moved to expand their political privileges. In a further testament to Great Britain's desire to retain the large numbers of French Catholic planters already established in the island, officials in England acceded to the demands of their new colonial subjects. In September 1768, the Court of St. James issued a ruling stating that Catholic subjects of the King of France who were resident in Grenada at the time of the island's cession to Great Britain would enjoy a number of political privileges. Significantly, they were allowed to do so without having to renounce the doctrine of transubstantiation that acted as a handicap to Catholic political participation elsewhere in the British Empire.
- 25 The practice of granting certain concessions in order to appease newly-incorporated colonial subjects was not unknown in the British Empire, particularly after the Seven Years' War. In Quebec, former subjects of the French Crown were permitted to serve as notaries, lawyers, bailiffs, and even as judges of the Prerogative Court.⁶⁶ Yet the privileges extended to new British subjects in the Caribbean were generous even relative to those

granted to their counterparts in mainland North America. Unlike in Quebec, where administrators were explicitly forbidden to appoint former French subjects to the Colonial Council or to serve as Superior Court justices, in Grenada the Governor was empowered to name two new adopted subjects to Council and to appoint one Francophone Catholic Justice of the Peace in each of the island's parishes.⁶⁷ It was further decreed that as many as three former subjects of the King of France could be elected to the Grenada Assembly. While French Catholics had to take the oaths of allegiance and supremacy in order to accede to these highly-coveted positions, they were not required to deny the doctrine of transubstantiation.

- 26 The contrast between British treatment of planters in Grenada and those in Caribbean territories settled earlier in the colonial era was especially stark. In the Leeward Island of Montserrat, which was primarily settled by Irish planters in the seventeenth century, Catholics could not so much as vote unless they took all required oaths.⁶⁸ Significantly, the concessions afforded to Catholics in Grenada applied only to former subjects of the King of France; English and Scottish Catholics would continue to be barred from participation in colonial politics unless they publicly renounced one of the principal tenets of their faith.⁶⁹
- 27 These concessions and accommodations were not without their critics. Planters who migrated to Grenada from England, Scotland, or neighbouring British West Indian colonies resented the privileges afforded to the former subjects of a rival Crown, and were openly suspicious of the imperial loyalties of French planters.⁷⁰ Despite this opposition, in the decade after the Seven Years' War British officials in Grenada continued to safeguard Francophone Catholic participation in the economic and political life of their new colony. Their willingness to do so owed in no small part to the island's demographic structure. As of 1772, 139 of Grenada's planters were identified as 'old subjects,' that is, English or Scottish settlers recently arrived from other parts of the British Empire. They were slightly outnumbered by their Francophone Catholic counterparts, who totalled 166 planters.⁷¹ Allowing newly adopted subjects to participate formally in Grenada's economic and political affairs—much as they had done informally during more than a century of French rule—promised to both fuel the island's plantation economy and assure its defence.

The American Revolution and the End of Toleration

- 28 British toleration for their 'new adopted subjects' came to an end in the wake of the American War of Independence. In July 1779, the American patriots' French allies conquered Grenada; they would occupy the island, as well as the Ceded Islands of Dominica, St. Vincent, and Tobago, until the end of hostilities in 1783.⁷² Although the war significantly disrupted transatlantic trade and threatened to undermine political stability in France and her colonies, in Grenada, existing planters experienced the French occupation less as an unwelcome invasion than as a return to normalcy after less than two decades of British rule.⁷³ British colonial institutions such as the Assembly and Council were abruptly dissolved, but during this second period of French rule Grenada was granted a *Conseil Supérieur* for the first time.⁷⁴ The decision to allow Grenada its own appointed judicial and regulatory council indicates that French officials recognized the increased economic and strategic importance of the island in this era. It also suggests that the *Ministère de la Marine* sought to exert greater—or at least more effective—control over

the recently-restored colony. By incorporating Grenada's Francophone Catholic planter elite into an existing colonial bureaucracy, officials attempted to harness both their knowledge and their influence in the service of the French state.⁷⁵ In keeping with French colonial policy, only those who made public proof of "leurs bonnes vies, Moeurs, Religion Catholique Apostolique & Romaine"⁷⁶ were eligible for appointment as one of eight members of council.⁷⁷ This meant that elite French planters, who had exercised customary rights during the initial period of French rule and formal rights under the British, could continue to directly influence colonial affairs—this time to the detriment of their English neighbours, who found themselves excluded from power.

- 29 Although formal political participation during the French occupation of 1779-1783 was reserved for elite members of the *Conseil Supérieur*, small planters like Julien Fedon also used the restoration of French rule to their advantage. On March 12, 1780, Fedon and his wife, Marie Rose Cavelan—who was also his childhood neighbour—baptized their daughter in the Catholic Church of Anse Gouyave, the parish immediately south of Grand Pauvre, Grenada. The baby girl, who was also named Marie Rose, had already been baptized on December 25, 1779. The priest noted that at the time of her initial baptism, baby Marie Rose was considered illegitimate: her parents had married not in the Catholic Church, but "selon la coutume Angloise,"⁷⁸ meaning according to English—and therefore Protestant—custom. After taking pains to "revalidé le mariage, selon les Rites de l'église Catholique Romaine le sept février"⁷⁹ 1780, Julien Fedon and his wife brought their daughter to be baptized a second time. By making the effort to revalidate both their marriage and the baptism of their child, the Fedons publicly signalled the importance they attached to being legitimate members of the Catholic community in Grenada.⁸⁰
- 30 The record of Marie Rose Fedon's baptism provides important insight into the experiences and motivations of the man who would later lead a sixteen-month rebellion against British rule. A lack of documentation regarding where the Fedon family lived after 1763 has led historians to conclude that they left Grenada, only returning during the period of French occupation in 1779-1783 or perhaps even later.⁸¹ Yet, as this baptismal record shows, Fedon and his wife lived in Grenada during at least part of the time when the island was first under British rule. As of March 1780, Fedon's mother also lived in the island; "Brigitte veuve Fedon" served as baby Marie Rose's godmother.⁸² The record also hints at some of the quotidian constraints that the Fedon family experienced under British rule, including the inability to undertake the most significant rites of their religion. Between 1763 and 1779, Great Britain's newly adopted subjects had been legally granted the freedom to practice Catholicism. Yet Fedon's marriage "according to the English Custom" may suggest that access to Catholic rites or personnel was not always available, or that adhering to English Protestant religious practices was more advantageous. Whatever Fedon's reason for first marrying in the Church of England, this simple baptismal record indicates that the Fedons wasted little time in utilizing French occupation to rectify a handicap they suffered under British rule.
- 31 Many of Fedon's fellow adopted subjects also used the period of French occupation to their economic benefit. French occupying officials legally prohibited residents of Grenada, whether of British or French extraction, from making payments to any British creditors.⁸³ This policy effectively relieved the island's planters from servicing their debts for a period of four years, lessening the financial burden they experienced due to wartime disruptions in transatlantic trade. In addition to depriving France's wartime enemy of financial assets, the temporary ban on payments to the British was therefore a welcome

boon to Grenada's small planters, many of whom sought to remove their slaves from the island rather than risk having their moveable property seized by creditors when Great Britain reasserted its rule in Grenada in 1784.⁸⁴ While it is unknown whether Fedon also profited from this temporary interruption in British trade, in a general sense it can be stated that former French subjects derived economic, religious, and political benefit from this era of intra- and inter-imperial war.

- 32 Many of these subjects hoped that French rule would persist after American independence. An anonymous letter enumerating the reasons why French forces should reconquer Grenada noted that in addition to the island's economic importance, it boasted a number of families who were attached to the King of France, and that the island's English proprietors were largely absentee planters. Most important, the letter asserted that "tous les habitants Français et Anglais, vexés par le gouvernement, ruinés par les intérêts excessifs des négociants de Londres... dans l'impuissance de recourir aux loix à cause des frais énormes de la justice...doivent être entraînés...vers une législation plus douce, et ensuite vers la France."⁸⁵ Yet the appeal to French rule fell on deaf ears, and in January 1784 Francophone Catholics in Grenada once again found themselves subject to British rule.
- 33 Rather than being seen as valuable members of colonial society whose loyalty could be won through the continuation of earlier policies of leniency and toleration, in the wake of the French occupation, Francophone Catholics were viewed by British colonists and administrators with suspicion. Although British officials who resumed control over Grenada after January 1784 reported that "the French subjects seemed impressed with a consciousness [of] their gross misconduct during the war," they were also convinced that prior "principles of Liberty towards the New Subjects...proved to be destructive of the Constitution."⁸⁶ During the French occupation of 1779-1783, Francophone Catholics in Grenada demonstrated that British policies of toleration would not dissuade them from disrupting the Empire's economy and alienating or harassing their English neighbours. Their subsequent attempts to exert pressure in order to reassert their position as equal members of British colonial society were therefore unsuccessful. After more than a decade of petitioning to regain formal access to political participation, in 1795, many members of Grenada's Francophone Catholic population were prepared to use violence to reassert what they perceived as their rights.
- 34 Although another historian has argued that "the same policy of toleration returned" when the British resumed control of Grenada in 1784, a close examination of events in the island reveals that, in the wake of American independence, British officials began to differ markedly in their treatment of old and newly adopted subjects.⁸⁷ Historians note that following the loss of the Thirteen Colonies, Great Britain adopted a more authoritarian and interventionist approach to imperial administration, and this trend is clearly illustrated in the case of Grenada.⁸⁸ Initial instructions to the British Governor who resumed control of the colony in 1784 specified that new adopted subjects should be allowed to be appointed to Council or to serve as judges, and to be elected to the Assembly, provided they took the oaths of Allegiance, Supremacy, and Abjuration.⁸⁹ However, colonial correspondence reveals that this policy was not put into practice. Owing to ongoing contests between Grenada's British Protestant and Francophone Catholic populations, in the decade after 1783, the latter group experienced a significant reduction in the rights they were accustomed to exercising under both French and British rule.

- 35 British planters who were restored to positions of power as members of Grenada's Council and Assembly alleged that the French had "grown insolent from their long indulgence" during French occupation, and they sought to use their recently reacquired influence to diminish the position of their 'insolent' neighbours.⁹⁰ In response to agitation on the part of British planters, in the wake of American independence, almost all of the privileges previously afforded to Francophone Catholics in Grenada were effectively revoked. Newly adopted subjects were no longer eligible for appointment to positions as Judge or Councillor, nor could they sit in the island's elected Assembly, unless they "audibly repeated and subscribed the Declaration against Transubstantiation commonly called the Test."⁹¹ Requiring Catholics to publicly deny one of the basic tenets of their faith in order to participate in colonial politics ensured that they would be, as they later complained to officials, "dans le *fait* non représentés rendu inhabiles à être élus membres de la présente Assemblée."⁹² The assault on the customary rights of Francophone Catholics in Grenada continued as Catholic Church property, including lands and buildings, was appropriated for the use of the Church of England. Rather than share religious facilities with their Protestant neighbours, Catholics chose to worship in the homes of their priests.⁹³ British planters responded to their neighbours' silent protest with derision, alleging that the French "sullenly abandoned the Church [and] withdrew the utensils and ornaments which had been left unmolested."⁹⁴ As the tone of the planters' complaint suggests, contests over the place of newly adopted subjects increasingly took the form of personal affronts by one sector of Grenada's small planter class against another. In one particularly vivid example, Grenada's Catholics alleged that British officials ordered "images, and other ornaments of the Roman Catholic worship, thrown out, and trampled under feet in the streets".⁹⁵
- 36 Such public and personal affronts were particularly dangerous given the evolving demography of the island. A number of British planters left Grenada during the French occupation of 1779-1784, leaving the island's Francophone Catholic population with a stronger majority than they had enjoyed prior to French occupation. A French census of Grenada taken just prior to the island's restoration to Great Britain after the American Revolution reported a population of 2,709 free people, of whom 1,447 were described as 'white' and 1,262 as 'free people of colour.' The census also distinguished between 'French' and 'English' inhabitants. Francophone Catholics outnumbered their Anglophone Protestant counterparts in both categories, with a reported 594 British whites and 853 French whites living in Grenada in 1783. By far the largest number of free people were categorized as French 'gens de couleur' like Julien Fedon: the group was reported to number some 1,072 individuals, as compared to just 190 English free people of colour. Grenada also counted 29,705 slaves, who outnumbered free people by a ratio of more than ten to one.⁹⁶
- 37 French Catholics initially resorted to familiar tactics of diplomatic pressure in an effort to resolve their grievances. Soon after the restoration of British rule in 1784, former French subjects petitioned Grenada's Governor for redress. The petitioners provided specific examples of rights that they had previously enjoyed and were now denied, including "la faculté d'être revêtus de Commissions dans la milice...le libre exercice de leur religion,"⁹⁷ and participation in the Assembly.⁹⁸ Worried that "the appointment of a French Counsellor, or the election of a French Representative, would occasion a total interruption to public business," British colonial officials failed to placate Francophone Catholics, who in turn began to exert greater pressure in their attempt to regain

customary rights.⁹⁹ In 1790, a circular letter signed “by almost all the new subjects” vowed that they would not elect any candidate to the Colonial Assembly unless he publicly pledged to “vote on every occasion, and for every motion that will tend to restore to the New Subjects, the prevelidges [sic] of Citizens of which they have been unjustly deprived”¹⁰⁰. Newly adopted subjects also presented themselves as candidates for election to the Assembly; despite receiving a majority of the votes in the parish of St. Georges in 1789, the election of a Francophone Catholic was “set aside” and the incumbent British Assemblyman was permitted to continue in his seat.¹⁰¹

- 38 These and other disputes were more than just local disagreements; they represented a broader debate regarding the acceptable basis of political, religious, and economic participation in an Atlantic World that was undergoing considerable upheaval. During the first years of the French Revolution, as understandings of who might participate in the body politic expanded dramatically, long time residents of Grenada instead experienced a drastic reduction in their rights. As worried British colonial officials reported, “amongst the new subjects, who have been the longest residents, there are many who seem to be not so well attached to the English Government.”¹⁰² The reasons for this lack of attachment were both practical and ideological in nature. For the first time in Grenada’s 140-year colonial history, propertied Francophone Catholic men were stripped of the right to influence political, economic, and military affairs, to openly practice their religion, or to formally occupy positions of authority.¹⁰³ These changes were experienced by people whose families had lived in Grenada for generations, and who had long shaped the island’s political economy—first as French subjects and later as subjects of the British Crown. Among them was Julien Fedon.

The Rebellion and its Aftermath

- 39 Although multiple accounts of Fedon’s Rebellion survive, all were authored by English-speaking Protestants openly hostile to the insurgents.¹⁰⁴ Of particular note is the fact that two of the four surviving firsthand accounts—those by Hay and McMahon—were not published until 1823, at precisely the same moment when the formation of the London Antislavery Society re-ignited public and parliamentary debates concerning amelioration, emancipation, and the place of free people of African descent in the British Empire.¹⁰⁵ Contemporaneous accounts that emphasize the treasonous actions of free people of colour like Julien Fedon must therefore be treated with caution. Rather than attempting to use these accounts to reconstruct the events of the rebellion, this article is concerned with challenging the notion that “the democratic forces which the American and French revolutions unleashed impacted on...members of societies whom hardly anyone initially considered useful beneficiaries of democratic precepts.”¹⁰⁶ As the preceding overview of political contests in eighteenth-century Grenada makes clear, inhabitants of this small island had long been at the centre of broader contests over democratic participation in both the French and the British Empires. While the upheavals precipitated by intra- and inter-imperial war may have prompted some individuals to opt for military rather than diplomatic tactics, outside stimulus was not necessary to provoke the assertion and reassertion of customary rights. In Grenada, as in a number of Caribbean colonies, the insurgencies of the 1790s were not expressions or echoes of the universalist ideals of the French or Haitian Revolutions. Instead, they constituted one of many responses to practical and ideological conflicts that had been brewing for decades.¹⁰⁷

40 Nor is there evidence that Fedon's Rebellion was orchestrated by French Republican administrator Victor Hugues. A review of Hugues' surviving correspondence yields no direct communication between the Republican Commissioner and Julien Fedon, and few mentions of events in Grenada.¹⁰⁸ Although two of Fedon's officers presented commissions from the French Republic when issuing their demands to Grenada's colonial government, the men should not be mistaken for French Revolutionary "agents [sent] to stir up the francophone free coloureds and slaves."¹⁰⁹ A 1797 memoir written by a political opponent of Hugues dismisses the significance of these documents, alleging that the Republican commander elected to give commissions to "trois mulâtres chassés de cette isle [Grenada] pour dettes."¹¹⁰ The anonymous critic claims that Hugues then "avait abandonné cette tentative à elle-même pendant l'espace de huit mois sans rien faire pour la soutenir."¹¹¹ While commissions from Hugues likely afforded these free coloured emissaries additional legitimacy in the eyes of Grenada's colonial elite, the lack of communication between Hugues and Fedon or his followers suggests that the latter leader was not primarily acting on behalf of the French Republic. Instead, Francophone Catholics in Grenada capitalized on the intra- and inter-imperial disruption created by the French Revolution in order to pursue their own initiatives, much as they had done through more diplomatic channels during the American War of Independence. Rather than an attempt to emulate Revolutionary France, Fedon's Rebellion was the product of a decades-long contest over the nature of political, religious, and economic participation in a colony that had experienced both French and British rule.

41 No surviving records explain the causes of the rebellion in the insurgents' own words. The more than 7,000 white, free coloured, and enslaved people who participated in Fedon's Rebellion were not afforded a jury trial, so no testimonies were ever taken. Instead, all free people suspected of participating in the insurgency were named in an Act of Attainder. Individuals named in the Act were declared guilty without the benefit of trial, leaving them with only two options. If named in the act, the accused could either argue that he was not, in fact, the same person as the individual named, or he could confirm his identity, thereby acknowledging guilt and accepting the associated sentence.

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42 Despite the fact that as many as 6,000 of the estimated 7,200 participants in Fedon's Rebellion were enslaved, those named in the Act of Attainder were all white and free coloured men. This does not mean that enslaved participants in the rebellion escaped punishment. Instead, in the wake of the rebellion, slaves found within Fedon's camp were summarily sentenced—to corporal punishment, sale, or execution—by largely untrained Justices of the Peace.¹¹³ Caitlin Anderson rightly argues that by denying slaves the benefit of appearing before the court, British colonial officials silenced their political agency.¹¹⁴ Yet there is another explanation as to why officials focused on the actions of the free coloured leaders of the rebellion, like Fedon, rather than the enslaved people who constituted the majority of the fighting force. Emphasizing the treasonous conduct of small planters justified removing them from the colony, without disturbing a plantation economy that relied on the exploitation of the enslaved. Contemporary portrayals of Fedon's Rebellion as the work of Francophone Catholic free people of colour deliberately sought to avoid laying blame on enslaved insurgents; in Turnbull's contemporaneous account, slaves who joined the insurrection did so only because of their connections with free people of colour. In a passage likely intended to argue in favour of the continuation of the transatlantic slave trade—then the subject of much debate in Great Britain—

Turnbull stressed that “the *African* negroes who had not been long in the island...were the last to join the insurgents.”¹¹⁵

- 43 The decision to try the insurgents by Act of Attainder further suggests that British officials had little interest in trying to understand what motivated the rebellion. Instead, the Court of Oyer and Terminer that convened to sentence the rebels, which was composed of British planters and officials, provided its own reasons for the insurgency. “We are unanimously of opinion,” the Court stated, “that the principal cause [of Fedon’s Rebellion] was the permission granted to so *great a number of Foreigners* white and coloured to reside amongst us”. While a number of French subjects did seek refuge in Grenada after the outbreak of the revolutionary activities in colonies such as Martinique, many others, like Fedon, had long been resident in the island.¹¹⁶ In a single rhetorical swoop, British residents of Grenada transformed men who were formerly their fellow subjects, and whose residence in the island usually preceded their own, into aliens. Francophone Catholics who resided in Grenada during French and British rule were no longer seen as potential electors, Council and Assembly members, members of the militia, or contributors to the colony’s rapid economic growth. Instead, they were outsiders whose mere presence in the island threatened the very basis of colonial society. Worse still, from the perspective of British colonists and officials, the insurgents failed to recognize the benevolence of British rule. “It gives us real pain,” the court noted, “when we reflect that...disregarding the mild and lenient government under which they lived & enjoyed liberties unknown to the deluded enthusiasts of the present French system...were those who...were the foremost to take arms against us.”¹¹⁷ Despite the extension of ‘liberties’ or customary rights to long time residents of Grenada, men like Fedon proved willing to take violent action against their neighbours. Their attack on a colonial system that had sought to incorporate them would not be tolerated by those in power.
- 44 The pronouncements of the Court of Oyer and Terminer evidence a clear desire for vengeance on the part of a British body politic that once again felt betrayed by the very people it had sought to adopt. British subjects and officials were not only unwilling to pardon the treason of the insurgents, they were loath to even tolerate the presence of a population that their Crown had recently gone to considerable lengths to assimilate.¹¹⁸ Instead of trying to identify the causes of the insurgency, officials focused their efforts on making sure that a similar uprising would never again be attempted. Of the more than 460 individuals named in the Act of Attainder, more than 100 were sentenced to death. Others were deported or exiled from the British Empire for life. Arguing that was necessary to use “the severest examples” in order “to check, if possible, the restless and vindictive spirit of this worthless class of people,” British officials carried out mass public executions of both white and free coloured insurgents on July 9, September 26 and 27, and October 12, 1796.¹¹⁹ In what French commentators decried as “une violation atroce du titre 2 de la Capitulation,”¹²⁰ 120 French troops were made prisoners of war; “la moitié tous habitants propriétaires en l’isle de la Grenade, sont pendus comme Rebelles,”¹²¹ while the remainder were deported to England to spend seventeen months in captivity.¹²² While the presence of French troops in the British colony hints at the Republican versus Royalist contest then being waged in nearby French colonies, the focus of British officials and planters remained centred on Grenada.¹²³ For British residents of the colony, the greatest threat seemed to come not from invasion by French troops, but from the betrayal of families who had been allowed to live and own property in Grenada. As one observer wrote, “that ill-fated island may be said to have cherished a viper in her bosom, that has

at length stung her to the heart"; one of Great Britain's most promising plantation colonies was almost felled not by French forces, but by internal enemies.¹²⁴

45 Public displays of state violence such as mass executions no doubt served to remind any other would-be revolutionaries of the possible consequences of betraying the Crown under which they lived. But visiting terror on people directly involved in Fedon's Rebellion was seen as insufficient to curb the potential influence of Francophone Catholics in Grenada. Planters and officials were particularly incensed by the destruction of property; as Grenada's governor explained, "the consequent ruin of the inhabitants have naturally raised a strong spirit of resentment against the whole body of the insurgents."¹²⁵ All property belonging to those accused of participating in the insurgency was therefore confiscated to the benefit of the British Crown. As one historian explains, the forfeiture of estates and slaves was designed "to restrict the material basis for future revolt"; as bankrupt French planters left the island, people loyal to Great Britain quickly purchased the confiscated property, ensuring that people like Fedon would lack the financial means to mount an insurgency in future.¹²⁶ The Court also recommended "the removal from all public trust and confidence of every Foreigner of every description." They further advised "the withdrawing every permission of residence already granted and a positive refusal to Foreigners of every description to reside amongst us during the continuance at least of the present destructive and unnatural War." Finally, they urged "the most speedy removal from this Colony of every Female white, black or coloured, who by any ties of blood or marriage are or have been attached in any manner to any person who has been concerned in the late dreadful insurrection."¹²⁷ The recommendation that every foreigner "whether capitulant or naturalized," as well as all women with any connection to Fedon's Rebellion be permanently removed from Grenada hints at the broader stakes of the contest between British colonial officials and the subjects they once sought to accommodate. As British subjects and officials condemned Fedon's Rebellion, they used written documents to cast *all* former French subjects, regardless of race or sex, as violent, untrustworthy traitors incapable of participating in British colonial society. This characterisation effectively erased the fact that in the years after 1763, individuals 'adopted' by the British Crown—people who spoke a different language, practiced a different religion, and were often a different colour—actively participated in shaping the political economy of the British Empire. Only when this participation was refused to them, in the decade after 1784, did they turn from diplomacy to violence to agitate for the restoration of their customary rights.

46 The tendency to characterize Caribbean insurgencies that occurred in the 1790s as a product of Atlantic Revolutionary ideology and French Republican agents creates a very compelling narrative, one in which people from all classes of society simultaneously awakened to the possibilities of the rights of man. Yet a close examination of how evolving strategies of colonial rule were experienced by longstanding inhabitants of Grenada suggests that they did not need the example of Paris or Saint-Domingue in order to agitate for political inclusion. Charting Grenada's history in the decades between the Seven Years' War and the French Revolution reveals a remarkable degree of pluralism—religious, linguistic, political, and economic—as former French subjects transformed customary rights into formal political participation under newly instituted British rule.¹²⁸ This pluralism was only erased after the fact, when participants in Fedon's Rebellion—many of whom had lived in Grenada for generations—were recast as foreign to the island, to colonial society, and to the British Empire more broadly. Ironically, the political

activism of people like Julien Fedon became most apparent when its influence was most attenuated: no longer allowed to participate in colonial politics in either a formal or a customary capacity, Fedon and his followers instead chose to make their desires known through force. Seemingly marginal colonial actors, like a free coloured small planter in the distant island of Grenada, had in fact experienced a range of political statuses—first as French subjects able to exercise customary rights, then as fully-fledged subjects of the British Crown, and finally—and most alarmingly—as ‘foreigners’ denied any kind of political voice. Their experiences had taught them that agitating for inclusion produced results. When viewed from Grenada, late eighteenth century attempts to broaden both the concept of the body politic and the rights this body would exercise seem less like a revolution than an attempt to reassert former rights.

NOTES

1. Anonymous [Thomas Turner WISE], *A Review of the Events which have happened in Grenada, from the commencement of the insurrection to the 1st of May: By a sincere wellwisher to the colony, Grenada, 1795*, p. 4. Eleven of the town's fifteen English planters were reported killed in the attack.
2. The names of the 48 hostages executed, as well as the insurgents responsible for the executions, are listed in Francis MCMAHON, *A Narrative of the Insurrection in the Island of Grenada, in the year 1795*, Grenada, John Spahn, 1823, p. 129-130.
3. A discussion of British military deployments during the conflict can be found in Timothy ASHBY, “Fedon's Rebellion,” *Society for Army Historical Research* 62, n° 251, 1984, p. 155-168. The figure of £ 2.5 million is given in MCMAHON, *A Narrative of the Insurrection*, p. 128. For an eyewitness account of the destruction throughout the island, see John HAY, *A narrative of the insurrection in the island of Grenada, which took place in 1795*, London, J. Ridgeway, 1823, p. 126.
4. On the role of the French Revolution in driving Fedon's Rebellion, see George BRIZAN, *Grenada: Island of Conflict*, London, Zed Books, 1984; Edward L. COX, *Free Coloreds in the slave societies of St. Kitts and Grenada, 1763-1833*, Knoxville, University of Tennessee Press, 1984; Edward L. COX, “Fedon's Rebellion 1795-96: Causes and Consequences,” *The Journal of Negro History* LXVII, 1, Spring 1982, p. 7-19; Michael CRATON, *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 1982; Raymund DEVAS, *A History of the Island of Grenada, 1498-1796*, St. George's, Carenage Press, 1974. The influence of the Haitian Revolution receives little or no mention in these works, likely because their publication largely predates much of the scholarship on events in revolutionary Saint-Domingue/Haiti.
5. E. L. COX, *Free Coloreds*, p. 77.
6. This analysis builds on my doctoral dissertation, which eschews imperial frameworks in favour of emphasizing how creolised communities acted as a practical and ideological challenge to European rule in the colonial Americas. Instead, I trace the emergence and persistence of a ‘Creole Archipelago’ that united Dominica, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent, and Tobago in a shared social, economic, and informal political space throughout the late-seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. The resultant diplomatic and military contests between imperial designs and existing practices challenged evolving European legal, economic, and racial norms and, by extension,

undermined the practice of imperial rule. Tessa MURPHY, *The Creole Archipelago: Colonization, Experimentation, and Community in the Southern Caribbean, c. 1700-1796*, PhD Dissertation, Chicago, University of Chicago, 2016.

7. Jeppe MULICH, "Microregionalism and intercolonial relations: the case of the Danish West Indies, 1730-1830," *Journal of Global History* 8, 2013, p. 72-94.

8. H. V. BOWEN, "British Conceptions of Global Empire, 1756-1783," *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 26, n° 3, September 1998, p. 1-21.

9. P. J. MARSHALL, *The Making and Unmaking of Empires: Britain, India, and America c. 1750-1783*, Oxford, Oxford University Press, 2005, especially p. 182-206.

10. E. L. COX, *Free Coloreds*, p. 76. Emphasis added.

11. The idea of an 'age of democratic revolutions' was first articulated in Robert Roswell PALMER, *The Age of the Democratic Revolution: A Political History of Europe and America, 1760-1800*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1959 and 1964. See also Jacques GODECHOT, *Les révolutions (1770-1799)*, Paris, Presses Universitaires de France, 1963.

12. Suzanne DESAN, Lynn HUNT, and William Max NELSON, *The French Revolution in Global Perspective*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2013, p. 4.

13. C. L. R. JAMES, *The Black Jacobins: Toussaint L'Ouverture and the San Domingo Revolution*, New York, The Dial Press, 1938. For more on the French Caribbean during the revolutionary era, see Laurent DUBOIS, *Avengers of the New World: The Story of the Haitian Revolution*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2004; Émile MAURICE et al., *La Martinique au temps de la Révolution Française 1789-1794*, Fort-de-France, Archives départementales, 1989; Jacques Adelaïde MERLANDE, *La Caraïbe et la Guyane au temps de la Révolution et de l'Empire, 1789-1804*, Paris, Éditions Karthala, 1992; Frédéric RÉGENT, *Esclavage, métissage, liberté: La Révolution française en Guadeloupe*, Paris, Grasset, 2004.

14. L. DUBOIS, *A Colony of Citizens*.

15. David Barry GASPARD and David Patrick GEGGUS, *A Turbulent Time: The French Revolution and the Greater Caribbean*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1997.

16. This allegation originated in pamphlets published around the time of the insurgency; see Gordon TURNBULL, *Revolt in Grenada: A Narrative of the Revolt and Insurrection of the French Inhabitants in the Island of Grenada. By an eye-witness*, Edinburgh, Arch. Constable, 1795. For works that attribute Fedon's Rebellion to the encouragement of the French Republican regime, see Michael DUFFY, *Soldiers, Sugar, and Seapower: The British expeditions to the West Indies and the War against Revolutionary France*, New York, Oxford University Press, 1987; Douglas HAMILTON, *Scotland, the Caribbean and the Atlantic World, 1750-1820*, Manchester, Manchester University Press, 2005. Works that point to the importance of material support from the French include Beverley STEELE, *Grenada: A History of its People*, Oxford, Macmillan Education, 2003.

For more on Hugues' activities in Guadeloupe, see Laurent DUBOIS, "The Price of Liberty: Victor Hugues and the Administration of Freedom in Guadeloupe, 1794-1798," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 56, n° 2, April 1999, p. 363-392.

17. Raymund DEVAS, *Conception Island, or the Troubled History of the Catholic Church in Grenada*, Sands & Co, 1932, p. 99. For more recent examples of this interpretation, see G. BRIZAN, *Island of Conflict*, especially p. 77, where he states "that Fedon took orders, and received arms, ammunition, and other forms of assistance from Victor Hugues...showed that he was...controlled...by eternal forces."

18. E. L. COX, *Free Coloreds*, p. 84; see also K. CANDLIN, who argues that "the Revolution in France had spread across the Atlantic...bringing revolution to the Caribbean." K. CANDLIN, *The Last Caribbean Frontier*, p. 12-13.

19. M. CRATON, *Testing the Chains*; Laurent DUBOIS and John D. GARRIGUS, *Slave Revolution in the Caribbean, 1789-1804*, Boston, Bedford/St. Martin's, 2006; David Patrick GEGGUS and Norman FIERING (eds.), *The World of the Haitian Revolution*, Bloomington, Indian University Press, 2009; Jane LANDERS, *Atlantic Creoles in the Age of Revolutions*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2010. For one of the first studies of Haiti as an inspiration for slave uprisings elsewhere, Eugene GENOVESE, *From Rebellion to Revolution : Afro-American Slave Revolts in the making of the Modern World*, Baton Rouge, Louisiana State University press, 1992.
20. "the Caribbean is resituated at the center of an analysis from which it was previously excluded." Translations were made by the author of this article.
21. Manuel COVO, "La Révolution haïtienne entre études révolutionnaires et *Atlantic History*, » in Gabriel Entin, Alejandro Gomez, Federica Morelli, and Clément Thibaud (eds.), *L'Atlantique révolutionnaire. Une perspective ibéro-américaine*, Paris, Les Perséides éditions, p. 259-288, quotation on p. 273.
22. Caitlin ANDERSON, "Old Subjects, New Subjects and Non-Subjects: Silences and Subjecthood in Fedon's Rebellion, Grenada, 1795-96," in Richard Bessel, Nicholas Guyatt, and Jane Rendall (eds.), *War, Empire and Slavery, 1770-1830*, New York, Palgrave MacMillan, 2010, p. 201-217.
23. K. CANDLIN, *The Last Caribbean Frontier*, p. 23.
24. Curtis JACOBS, "Revolutionary Priest: Pascal Mardel of Grenada," *The Catholic Historical Review* 101, n° 2, Spring 2015, p. 317-341, quotation on p. 326.
25. For more on the transatlantic nature of Enlightenment thought, see Laurent DUBOIS, "An Enslaved Enlightenment: Rethinking the Intellectual History of the French Atlantic," *Social History* 31, n° 1, February 2006, p. 1-14.
26. Geggus argues that "the French Revolution did not merely inflame latent aspirations but, more important, undermined the institutions that had held them in check;" David Patrick GEGGUS, "Slavery, War, and Revolution in the Greater Caribbean, 1789-1815," in D. B. Gaspar and D. P. Geggus, *A Turbulent Time*, p. 3.
27. A transcript of court proceedings, including the names of all accused and their sentences, has been archived by the British Library's Endangered Archives Project [EAP] 295, online at http://eap.bl.uk/downloads/eap295_2_6_1_transcription.pdf.
28. The colony transitioned to French Crown rule in 1674. On the French colonial history of Grenada, see Jacques PETITJEAN ROGET, *L'histoire de l'isle de Grenade en Amérique, 1649-1659*, Montréal, Les Presses de l'Université de Montréal, 1975 ; John Angus MARTIN, *Island Caribs and French Settlers in Grenada, 1498-1763*, St. George's, The Grenada National Museum Press, 2013. On the early history of the French in the Americas, see, among others, Lucien René ABENON, *La Guadeloupe de 1671 à 1759: étude politique, économique et sociale*, Paris, L'Harmattan, 1987 ; Paul BUTEL, *Histoire de Antilles françaises, XVIIe-XXe siècles*, Paris, Éditions Perrin, 2002 ; Nellis M. CROUSE, *French Pioneers in the West Indies, 1624-1664*, New York, Columbia University Press, 1940 ; Léo ELISABETH, *La société martiniquaise aux XVII^e et XVIII^e siècles, 1664-1789*, Paris, Éditions Karthala, 2003 ; Jean-Pierre MOREAU, *Les Petites Antilles de Christophe Colomb à Richelieu*, Paris, Karthala, 1992 ; James PRITCHARD, *In Search of Empire : The French in the Americas, 1670-1730*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2004 ; Jean-Pierre SAINTON, *Histoire et Civilisation de la Caraïbe (Guadeloupe, Martinique, Petites Antilles) Tome II : Le temps des matrices : économie et cadres sociaux du long XVIII^e siècle*, Paris, Éditions Karthala, 2012.
29. Archives Nationales d'Outre Mer [ANOM] Depot des Papiers Publics des Colonies [DPPC] G1 498, *Estat abregé des hommes, femmes, garçons, filles, neigres et bestiaux estants dans les Isles françoises de l'Amerique, 1671*.
30. ANOM DPPC G1 498, Recensement général pour l'année 1700.

31. ANOM DPPC G1 498 n° 52, Recensement général de l'isle de la Grenade, 1755. On the development of Martinique, see Liliane CHAULEAU, *Dans les iles du vent : La Martinique XVII^e-XIX^e siècle*, Paris, Éditions Harmattan, 1993 ; Jacques PETITJEAN ROGET, *La Société d'habitation à la Martinique : Une demi-siècle de formation, 1635-1685*, Lille, H. Champion, 1980.
32. British National Archives [TNA] Colonial Office [CO] 101/1 n° 5, Heads of enquiry relating to the island of Grenada. Of the enslaved, 10,531 were aged 14-60 and 3,315 were under the age of 14.
33. A brief description of the parish in 1763 can be found in J. A. MARTIN, *Island Caribs*, p. 415.
34. ANOM DPPC G1 496 n° 55, 1755.
35. The remaining 36,600 were in the neighbouring parish of Gouyave. ANOM DPPC G1 496 n° 55, 1755. The French *pie*d was equal to approximately 1.065 English feet, so Grand Pauvre counted approximately 36,849 feet planted with cacao as of 1755.
For more on French colonial measures, see J. PRITCHARD, *In Search of Empire*, p. xxiii-xxiv.
36. The mean number of adult slaves owned by the 61 planters in Grand Pauvre in 1763 was 14.3. TNA CO 101/1 n° 26, Extract from the capitation rolls of the quarter of Grand Pauvre for the year 1763.
37. TNA CO 101/1 n° 26, Extract from the capitation rolls of the quarter of Grand Pauvre for the year 1763. Out of 61 planters in the parish, just 22 reported owning livestock.
38. This was likely because the patriarchs of both families were white men. Out of sixty-one planters in Grand Pauvre, only four were identified as free people of colour. However, many of these white planters had legitimate offspring with women of colour, resulting in the growing number of young free coloured planters like Julien Fedon later in the eighteenth century. See TNA CO 101/1 n° 26, Extract from the capitation rolls of the quarter of Grand Pauvre for the year 1763.
39. Oaths of Allegiance, Grand Pauvre, MS 166, Beinecke Collection, Hamilton College, NY. In the 1763 tax roll for Grand Pauvre, a Jacques Cavelan is listed directly below Pierre Fedon ; Cavelan was the owner of nine adult slaves as well as two enslaved children under the age of 14, two horned cattle, and two horses. Pierre Cavelan, also resident in Grand Pauvre, is listed as owning one adult and two child slaves. TNA CO 101/1 n° 26, Extract from the capitation rolls of the quarter of Grand Pauvre for the year 1763. A British census of Grenada taken in 1772 lists a "Cavelan, FM," or 'free mulatto,' as the owner of a twenty-eight acre coffee plantation worked by ten slaves in Gouyave, suggesting that members of the Cavelan family also moved to the parish. TNA CO 101/18 Part II n° 58, 'State of the Parish of St. Mark in the island of Grenada, 1772'.
40. The lack of authority exercised by Crown officials in French colonial Grenada undermines early modern notions of islands as bounded, easily-dominated spaces, or as sites where officials enjoyed a high degree of autonomy. For more on early modern concepts of island sovereignty, see Lauren BENTON, *A Search for Sovereignty : Law and Geography in European Empires, 1400-1900*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2010, especially p. 164.
41. On French colonial administration in Grenada, see J. A. MARTIN, *Island Caribs and French Settlers*, p. 392-394. On the creation and operations of the *Conseil Supérieur* elsewhere in the French Caribbean, see Emile HAYOT, *Les officiers du conseil souverain de la Martinique et leurs successeurs les conseillers de la cour d'appel 1675-1830*, Fort-de-France, Mémoires de la Société d'Histoire de la Martinique, 1964, p. 11-14.
42. A similar phenomenon occurred in French colonial Louisiana, where subjects exercised considerable autonomy. See Shannon DAWDY, *Building the Devil's Empire : French Colonial New Orleans*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2008, especially p. 192-200.
43. Dominique RODGERS, "On the Road to Citizenship: The Complex Route to Integration of the Free People of Color in the Two Capitals of Saint-Domingue," in D. B. Gaspar and D. P. Geggus (eds.), *The World of the Haitian Revolution*, p. 65-78.

44. The terms of the Treaty of Paris can be found in Clive PARRY (ed.), *The Consolidated Treaty Series*, vol. 42, New York, Oceana Publication, Inc., 1969; terms for Quebec were also applied to Grenada.
45. Richard B. SHERIDAN, *Sugar and Slavery: An Economic History of the British West Indies, 1623-1775*, Barbados, Caribbean Universities Press, 1974, p. 489.
46. TNA CO 101/28 n° 123, State of Grenada 1763.
47. TNA CO 101/18 Part II n° 81, State of Grenada 1772.
48. On British designs for the Ceded Islands, S. MAX EDELSON, *The New Map of Empire: How Britain Imagined America Before Independence*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 2017, p. 197-247.
49. As Helen Dewar argues, scholarly emphasis on the distinctions between British and French imperial strategies in the wake of the Seven Years' War elides the extent to which both empires focused on securing wealth and ensuring defense. Helen DEWAR, "Canada or Guadeloupe ? : French and British Perceptions of Empire, 1760-1763," *The Canadian Historical Review* 91 n° 4, December 2010, 637-660.
50. On contemporaneous French attempts to create a "settlement colony...as strong demographically, territorially, and strategically as the thirteen British colonies combined," see Marion F. GODFROY, *Kourou and the Struggle for a French America*, New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015, 3. Kourou's spectacular failure as a French colony should not diminish the emphasis that Choiseul and his Ministry placed on attempting to reform French practices of colonisation in this era.
51. On British imperial reforms in the wake of the Seven Years' War, see P.J. MARSHALL, *The Making and Unmaking of Empires*, especially p. 158-181; S. M. EDELSON, *The New Map of Empire*.
52. On British conquest of Acadia, see Geoffrey PLANK, *An Unsettled Conquest: The British Campaign against the peoples of Acadia*, Philadelphia, The University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001.
53. On British administration of Acadia, see Elizabeth MANCKE, "Negotiating an Empire: Britain and its Overseas Peripheries, c. 1550-1780," in Christine Daniels and Michael V. Kennedy (eds.), *Negotiated Empires: Centers and Peripheries in the Americas, 1500-1820*, New York, Routledge, 2002, 235-266.
54. On the Acadian diaspora and its consequences in the Atlantic World, see Christopher HODSON, *The Acadian Diaspora: An Eighteenth-Century History*, New York, Oxford University Press, 2012.
55. For an example of these debates, see Thomas WHATELY, The regulations lately made concerning the colonies, and the taxes imposed upon them, considered, London, J. Wilkie, 1765.
56. On economic reforms, see Thomas C. BARROW, "Background to the Grenville Program, 1757-1763," *The William & Mary Quarterly* 22, n° 1, January 1965, p. 93-104.
57. On the problems associated with absenteeism in the British West Indies, Trevor BURNARD, "A Failed Settler Society: Marriage and Demographic Failure in Early Jamaica," *Journal of Social History* vol. 28, n° 1, Autumn 1994, P. 63-82.
58. For more on this strategy, see Ian R. CHRISTIE, "A Vision of Empire: Thomas Whately and the Regulations Lately made considering the Colonies," *The English Historical Review* 113, n° 451, April 1998, p. 300-320.
59. TNA CO 101/11 n° 106, 'Memorial of His Majesty's Adopted Subjects to Robert Melvill', February 14, 1766.
60. TNA CO 101/10 n° 292, Ordinance for regulating the elections for the General Assembly of Grenada.
61. Aaron WILLIS, "The Standing of New Subjects: Grenada and the Protestant Constitution after the Treaty of Paris (1763)" *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History* 42, n° 1, September 2013, p. 1-21, p. 3.

62. Dominique Rodgers argues that free coloured demands for political participation in revolutionary Saint-Domingue were motivated in part by the fact that *gens de couleur* were accustomed to enjoying basic civil rights. See D. RODGERS, "On the Road to Citizenship."

63. This contrasts with the situation in Dominica where, in 1777, more than 110 self-identified "free negroes, mulatto's, and mustees" petitioned King George III stating that they "humbly expect[ed] to partake (*in common with the rest of their fellow subjects and without any discriminating regard had to complexion*) of the common constitutional blessings which they... most humbly apprehend themselves to be justly intitled." TNA Privy Council [PC]1/60/10 N° 30, 'Petition of the free negroes, mulatto's and mustees in Dominica against an act passed there for regulating the manumission of slaves', July 20, 1777. Emphasis added.

64. Personal ties, as well as the belief that political rights should be extended to men regardless of race, may have motivated at least some of the white participants in Fedon's Rebellion: Clozier Darceuil and his brother, both identified as white rebels, were described as having "a numerous progeny of colored children." See F. MCMAHON, *A Narrative of the Insurrection*, p. 26.

65. TNA CO 101/10 n° 292, Ordinance for regulating the elections for the General Assembly of Grenada. Emphasis added. A detailed discussion of the new subjects' attempts to run for election can be found in A. WILLIS, "The Standing of New Subjects."

66. Donald Fyson, "The Conquered and the Conqueror: The Mutual Adaptation of the *Canadiens* and the British in Quebec, 1759-1775," in Phillip Buckner and John G. Reid (eds.), *Revisiting 1759: The Conquest of Canada in Historical Perspective*, Toronto, University of Toronto Press, 2012, p. 190-217.

67. *Ibid.*, p. 197. Because there was no Assembly in Quebec, the question of Francophone Catholic participation in this elected body did not arise.

68. Donald Akenon, *If the Irish Ran the World: Montserrat, 1630-1730*, Kingston, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1997, 161. In 1703, an attempt to exempt voters in the heavily-Catholic parish of St. Patrick, Montserrat from taking the oaths of Allegiance and Supremacy was declared void, see Frederick G. Spurdle, *Early West Indian Government: Showing the Progress of Government in Barbados, Jamaica and the Leeward Islands, 1660-1783*, Christchurch, New Zealand, Whitcombe & Tombs, 1962, 73.

69. TNA CO 101/3 n° 1, September 7, 1768.

70. For an example of public protests against the participation of newly adopted subjects, see TNA CO 101/11 n° 100, 'Memorial of the British Protestant Inhabitants of the island of Grenada'. Among the signatories were Alexander Campbell and Ninian Home, who would both be executed during Fedon's Rebellion.

71. TNA CO 101/18 Part II n° 81, Abstract of the State of the Island of Grenada, taken in April 1772.

72. Grenada was formally restored to British rule on January 6, 1784. ANOM C10A4 Dossier 4 n° 234, Procès verbal de la remise de l'Isle de la Grenade et les Grenadines, 6 janvier 1784.

73. On the effects of the American War of Independence elsewhere in the French Antilles, see Paul Cheney, *Cul de Sac: Patrimony, Capitalism, and Slavery in French Saint-Domingue*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2017, p. 105-110.

74. The terms according to which Grenada was administered during French occupation are outlined in Arrêt du Conseil d'État du Roi, qui fixe les règles, les époques et la forme de la distribution de la Justice en l'île de la Grenade et dépendances, Paris, Imprimerie Royale, 1780.

75. On the role of the Superior Council and local authorities in creating "an organized series of webs that could make use of preexisting client-patron relationships, or that could help foster the creation of new types of relations, beneficial to the temporary goals set by the navy", see Alexandre Dubé, "Making a Career out of the Atlantic: Louisiana's Plume," in Cécile Vidal (ed.),

Louisiana: Crossroads of the Atlantic World, Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2014, p. 44-67, quotation on p. 67.

76. "their good lifestyles, mores, and Roman Catholic Apostolic religion"

77. ANOM FM C10A 3 n° 47.

78. "according to the English custom"

79. "revalidate their marriage, according to the rites of the Roman Catholic church on the seventh of February"

80. Endangered Archives Project [EAP] 295/2/3/1 Gouyave Register of Baptisms, marriages and burials. All spellings in the original.

81. E. L. COX, "Fedon's Rebellion," p. 14; L. DUBOIS, *A Colony of Citizens*, p. 228.

82. EAP 295/2/3/1 Gouyave Register of Baptisms, marriages and burials.

83. TNA CO 101/24 n° 3, 'Arret of the King's Council of State, Concerning the Debts of the Inhabitants of the Island of Granada [sic]', 12th December 1779.

84. ANOM C10A4 Dossier 4, n° 228, Ordonnance sur les evasions d'habitans, & sur les enlevemens de Nègres, 9 juin 1783.

85. "all of the French and English planters, vexed by the government, ruined by the excessive interest rates of London merchants... without recourse to the law because of the enormous costs of justice... must be led towards a softer/gentler legislation, and then towards France": ANOM C10A4 Dossier 4 n° 237, Considérations politiques qui doivent déterminer la cour de France à reconquérir sur les Anglais et à conserver l'isle de la Grenade.

86. TNA CO 101/26 n° 423, Byam et al. to Charles Spooner, March 1, 1786.

87. A. WILLIS, "The Standing of New Subjects," p. 5.

88. C. A. BAYLY, *Imperial Meridian: The British Empire and the World, 1780-1830*, New York, Longman, 1989. For a counterpoint focusing on the similarities and continuities between the so-called 'first' and 'second' British Empires, see P. J. MARSHALL, *The Making and Unmaking of Empires*.

89. TNA CO 102/3, 'Instructions to Governor Mathew of Grenada', March 2 1784.

90. TNA CO 101/26 N° 131, Petition from the Grenada Council and Assembly, April 7 1785.

91. TNA CO 101/27 N° 175, 'An act for regulation elections', 1786.

92. "in fact not represented and rendered incapable of being elected members of the present Assembly": TNA CO 101/26 N° 294, February 27 1786. Emphasis in original.

93. TNA CO 101/26 N° 74, Mathew to Sydney, December 27 1784.

94. TNA CO 101/26 N° 131, Petition from the Grenada Council and Assembly, April 7 1785.

95. TNA CO 101/30 n° 275, Mathew to Grenville, October 30 1790.

96. ANOM FM C10A4 Dossier 4 n° 233, 'Tableau de la population dans l'isle Grenade et dépendances, 1783'. Significantly, 5,986 of the island's slaves reportedly belonged to the French and 11,806 to the English, suggesting the relative economic position of the respective groups.

97. "the ability to be granted Commissions in the militia...the free exercise of their religion"

98. TNA CO 101/26 N° 294, February 27 1786.

99. TNA CO 101/28 N° 226, Mathew to Sydney, August 25 1788.

100. TNA CO 101/30 n° 6, Enclosed in Mathew to Grenville, February 6 1790.

101. TNA CO 101/29 n° 28, Mathew to Sydney, May 30 1789.

102. TNA CO 101/33 N° 11, Williams to Dundas, December 28 1792.

103. TNA CO 101/32 n° 285, Dundas to Home, October 5, 1792.

104. For contemporary accounts of Fedon's Rebellion, see HAY, *Narrative of the Insurrection*; MCMAHON, *A Narrative of the Insurrection*; TURNBULL, *Revolt in Grenada*; WISE, *A Review of the Events*; D.G. GARRAWAY, *A Short Account of the Insurrection of 1795-96*, London, Wells, 1877. For historians' accounts see, among others, BRIZAN, *Grenada: Island of Conflict*, p. 59-77; CANDLIN, *The Last Caribbean Frontier*, p. 1-8; COX, *Free Coloreds*, p. 76-91; STEELE, *Grenada*, p. 115-146.

105. On British abolitionism in this era, see Seymour DRESCHER, *Abolition: A History of Slavery and Antislavery*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2009; Julie L. HOLCOMB, *Moral Commerce: Quakers and the Transatlantic Boycott of the Slave Labor Economy*, Ithaca, Cornell University Press, 2016.

106. E. L. COX, "Fedon's Rebellion," p. 17.

107. For an examination of 1790s insurgencies in St. Vincent and Dominica that affords primacy to longstanding local and regional contests over land, sovereignty, and subjecthood, see T. MURPHY, *The Creole Archipelago*. For analyses of the Haitian Revolution that highlight the conflict's deep ideological and practical roots in the island rather than in France, see Carolyn FICK, *The Making of Haiti: The Saint Domingue Revolution from Below*, Knoxville, The University of Tennessee Press, 1990; John GARRIGUS, *Before Haiti: Race and Citizenship in French Saint-Domingue*, New York, Palgrave MacMillan, 2006; Malick W. GHACHEM, *The Old Regime and the Haitian Revolution*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2012; D. RODGERS, "On the Road to Citizenship." In his examination of the insurgency in St. Lucia during the same period, David Barry Gaspar acknowledges longer-term local conflicts when he notes that whites in the island supported French Republicans because they "nursed a strong grievance against the British." David Barry GASPAR, "La Guerre des Bois: Revolution, War, and Slavery in Saint Lucia, 1793-1838," in D. B. Gaspar and D. P. Geggus, *A Turbulent Time*, p. 102-130, quotation on p. 106.

108. In a detailed inventory of surviving correspondence for revolutionary Guadeloupe (ANOM FM C7A n° 46-59), Grenada is mentioned only a handful of times. In ANOM FM C7A 48 n° 22, Hugues reports on Republican successes at St. Lucia and says that Grenada and St. Vincent will be next, while in ANOM FM C7A 48 n° 39, he mentions that the islands are still in the hands of the English.

109. This characterisation is offered in M. CRATON, *Testing the Chains*, p. 183.

110. "three mulattoes chased from this island [Grenada] because of debts"

111. "abandoned this attempt to its own devices for the space of eight months without doing anything to support it": ANOM FM C7A 49 n° 138, *Coup d'œil sur la Guadeloupe et dépendances en 1797, l'an 5 de la République*.

112. This would be the penultimate time such a legal device was used in the British Empire; its final use came just two years later, in response to the United Irish Rebellion. For more on Acts of Attainder, see Thomas BARTLETT, "Clemency and Compensation: The Treatment of Defeated Rebels and Suffering Loyalists after the 1798 Rebellion," in Jim Smyth (ed.), *Revolution, Counter-Revolution and Union: Ireland in the 1790s*, New York, Cambridge University Press, 2000, p. 99-127.

113. For the act ordering that slaves be tried by Justices of the Peace, see TNA CO 103/19 N° 42, 'An act to secure and detain such persons as shall be suspected of conspiring against His Majesty and His Government within these Islands and for the more speedy trial and punishment of slaves charged with the said offences.'

114. C. ANDERSON, "Old Subjects," 202.

115. G. TURNBULL, *Revolt in Grenada*, 11-12. Emphasis in original.

116. On French migration to Grenada, see TNA CO 101/33 N° 11, Williams to Dundas, December 28 1792; K. CANDLIN, *The Last Caribbean Frontier*, 12.

117. EAP 295/2/6/1 'Court of Oyer and Terminer for Trial of Attained Traitors record book', 1796.

118. In this respect, British attitudes towards adopted subjects in Grenada mirror earlier attitudes towards the Acadians, who were exiled from Nova Scotia after the British failed to assimilate this conquered population. See G. PLANK, *An Unsettled Conquest*, p. 140-157.

119. According to Michael Craton, the July 30, 1796 issue of the *St. George's Chronicle and Grenada Gazette* reported that three white and five free coloured insurgents were executed on the capital's parade. M. CRATON, *Testing the Chains*, p. 208.

120. "an atrocious violation of title 2 of the capitulation"

121. "half of whom, *all propertied planters in the island of Grenada*, were hanged as rebels"
122. ANOM C10A 4 Dossier 5 n° 247, 14 nivose an 6, 'Capitulation entre le Citoyen Jossée et Brigadier General Nicolas Olivier'. Emphasis added.
123. A firsthand account of the contest between Royalists and Revolutionaries in Martinique is *Révolution de la Martinique, Depuis le premier septembre 1790 jusqu'au 10 mars 1791*, Fort-de-France, Société d'Histoire de la Martinique, 1982. For an historical analysis of the conflict, see Liliane CHAULEAU, "La Ville de Saint-Pierre sous la Révolution Française," in Roger Toumson and Charles Porset (eds.), *La période révolutionnaire aux Antilles: Images et Résonnances*, Paris, Groupe de Recherche et d'Étude des Littératures et Civilisations de la Caraïbes et des Amériques Noires, 1986, p. 115-135.
124. G. TURNBULL, *A Narrative of the Revolt*, p. 13.
125. TNA CO 101/34 N° 230, Houston to Portland, July 4 1796.
126. K. J. KESSELING, "'Negroes of the Crown': The Management of Slaves Forfeited by Grenadian Rebels, 1796-1831," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, 22, n° 2, 2011, p. 1-29.
127. EAP 295/2/6/1 'Court of Oyer and Terminer for Trial of Attained Traitors record book', 1796.
128. The importance of legal pluralism within and across early modern empires is explored in Lauren BENTON and Richard J. ROSS, *Legal Pluralism and Empires, 1500-1850*, New York, New York University Press, 2013.

ABSTRACTS

This article examines how the experience of being ruled by different Crowns shaped expectations for inclusion among francophone Catholic planters who became subjects of the British Empire after the Seven Years' War. Attention to the evolving political economy of Grenada in the latter half of the eighteenth century reveals that this small Caribbean island was the site of significant debates over political, economic, and religious participation. Residents of Grenada underwent a number of changes in status, first as marginal subjects of the French Crown and, after 1763, as the focus of British experiments in ruling an increasingly diverse empire. Throughout these imperial transitions, francophone Catholic planters in the island relied on diplomacy to transform customary rights into formal political privileges. In the wake of the American War of Independence, these privileges were denied to them for the first time. Adopting a longer durée view of Grenada's colonial history challenges the notion that Fedon's Rebellion was an outgrowth of the French or Haitian Revolutions; instead, the failure to reassert rights through familiar diplomatic strategies prompted white and free coloured Francophone Catholics in the island to turn to violence in 1795.

Cet article va étudier comment le fait d'avoir été gouverné par différentes Couronnes a modelé les attentes d'inclusion parmi les planteurs catholiques francophones qui devinrent les sujets de l'Empire britannique après la guerre de Sept Ans. L'analyse de l'évolution de l'économie politique de la Grenade à la fin de la seconde moitié du dix-huitième siècle révèle que cette petite île des Caraïbes était le lieu de débats majeurs à propos de la participation politique, économique et religieuse. Les habitants de la Grenade connurent de nombreux changements de statut, d'abord en tant que sujets marginaux de la Couronne française, puis, après 1763, en tant qu'objet des expériences britanniques sur la gestion d'un empire de plus en plus diversifié. Tout au long de ces transitions impériales, les planteurs catholiques francophones de l'île comptèrent sur la

diplomatie pour transformer le droit coutumier en privilèges politiques formels. Suite à la guerre d'Indépendance américaine, ces privilèges leur furent retirés pour la première fois. Interroger l'histoire coloniale de la Grenade sur une plus longue durée remet en question la notion que la Rébellion des Fédon était une conséquence des Révolutions française ou haïtienne ; en fait, l'incapacité à réaffirmer leurs droits au travers des stratégies diplomatiques usuelles a poussé les Catholiques blancs et libres de couleur de l'île à se tourner vers la violence en 1795.

INDEX

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