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# A case study of black West Indian migrants in urban Canada: The decision to migrate

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A CASE STUDY OF BLACK WEST INDIAN

MIGRANTS IN URBAN CANADA:

THE DECISION TO MIGRATE

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THESIS

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<u>A Case Study of Black West Indian Migrants in Urban Canada:</u>
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## Abstract

The main purpose of this study is to examine the extent to which traditional models of the migration decision making process adequately account for and describe the decision making process of black West Indian immigrants in Canada. Traditional models of the migration decision making process have suggested that individuals migrate after a rational comparison of place utilities (Wolpert,1964; Roseman,1971). These human capital models of migration (De Jong et al,1981) suggest that individuals, acting in a very rational manner, seek always to maximize their "profits" at an optimum location. However, this study suggests that in the case of black West Indian migrants potential migrants are not undertaking such an unemotional, calm and rational comparison of place utilities. Rather, it would appear that the decision to migrate is often based on a commonly held notion that migration is the best, inevitable and perhaps only option to be considered by large sections of the population. It would appear that in many cases long before the actual opportunity to migrate presents itself, many black West Indians have already decided that they will eventually leave the Caribbean.

The main methodology employed here is a case study of the experiences of five black West Indian immigrants in

Canada. Aspects of black West Indian culture such as music, literature and history are also examined to demonstrate the extent to which migration has become a major institution within the Caribbean.The institutionalisation of migration within the Caribbean therefore appears to influence individuals to such a degree that many are loathed to consider any other alternative.

Evidence from the case studies appears to confirm the notion that traditional models of migratory behavior have failed to take into account the crucial role of cultural influences in migration decision making. Such a failure ignores a crucial element in any attempt to understand the migration of black West Indians.

# CHAPTER 1:    Introduction

## A) The problem:

As a spatial process the concept of migration has been studied by geographers for a number of years. In their study of migration, geographers (and other social scientists) have often examined "patterns" or "trends" of migration in an attempt to develop various "laws" and "theories" of migration.

Traditionally, alongside this concern with the study of migration there have been various attempts to model different aspects of the migration process at both the macro and micro scale. For example, at the macro level "gravity models" have been developed which attempt to predict the size of migration flows between two centres. At the micro level, most models of migration, such as the "basic human capital model" of migration (De Jong et al, 1981), have been built on the notion that individuals migrate with the expectation of being better off, economically or otherwise, at the second location.

Most of the traditional attempts to model migration or examine the causes of migration have considered factors such as economic motivation and population pressure. They have suggested, for example, that individuals migrate after a comparison of place utilities or that migration occurs as a result of an individual's desire to overcome "stress". However, traditional attempts to model migration processes

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have in the main made little attempt to examine the role of cultural influences on the decision to migrate. This study therefore attempts to examine a hitherto little examined cause of migration. It endeavours to investigate the role of cultural influences in encouraging black West Indian migration.

The actual decision to consider black West Indian migration in particular arises from a personal interest in West Indian culture. In addition, it arises from an observation that the available literature on black West Indians and black West Indian migration to Canada is very limited in its size and extent. Thus, whilst for example, the history and experiences of European immigrants in Canada have been particularly well documented (Elliot, 1988; Simone, 1981), the experiences and history of "visible" minorities in Canada has not. Therefore, this study of black West Indians may help make others more aware of the range of experiences among one visible minority immigrant group in Canada.

The Caribbean is a varied and extensive region. Any attempt to examine processes operative in the entire Caribbean region would be unwise, therefore, for the purposes of this study the terms "West Indian", "West Indies", "British West Indies" and "Caribbean" refer to the English speaking, British commonwealth Caribbean islands and their inhabitants as well as to those from Guyana, on the South American mainland (Figure 1). Whilst there is evidence to suggest that other

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**Figure 1:    The Commonwealth Caribbean (Shaded)**
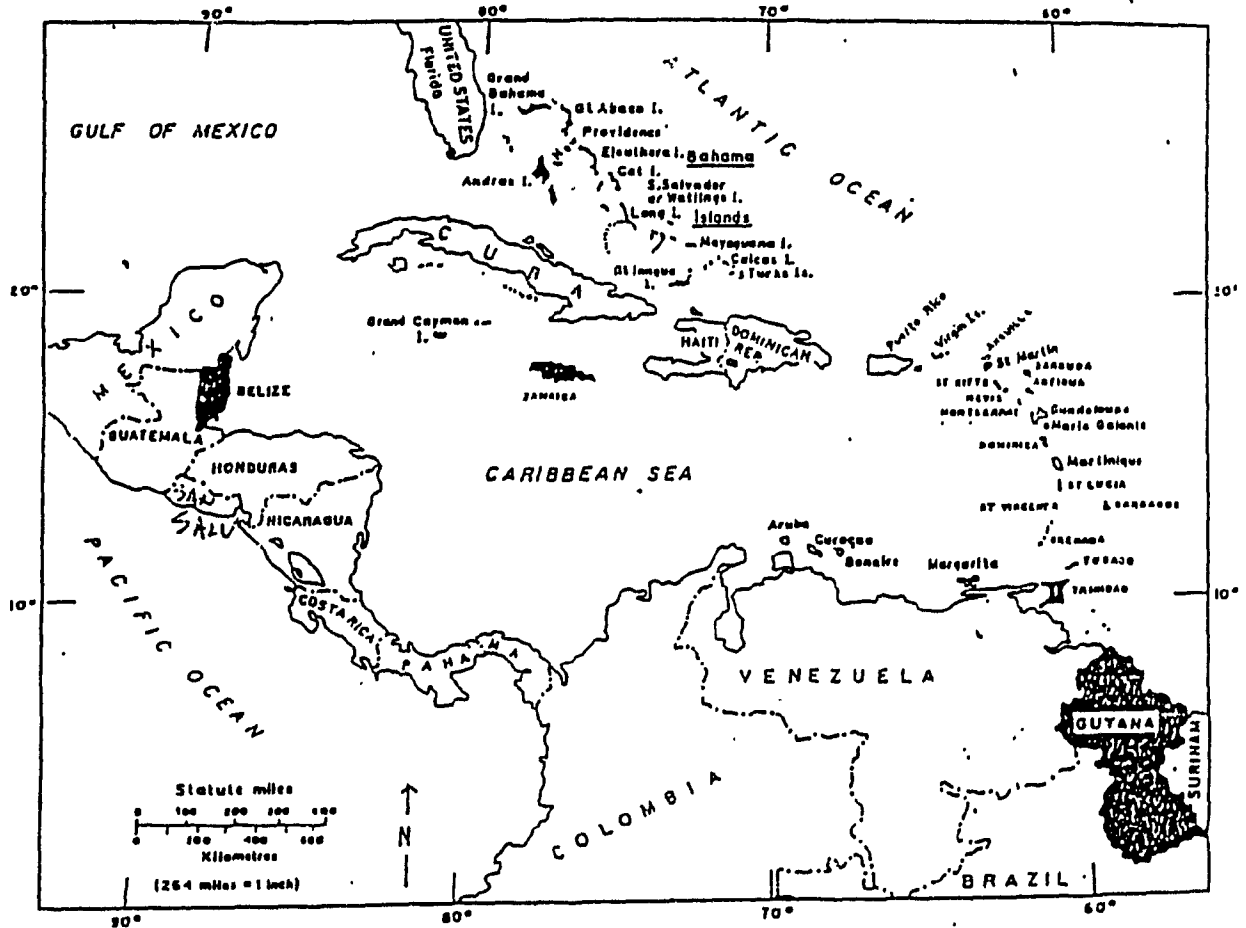


Source:    Payne, 1981

racial and cultural groups have been influenced by a culture of migration. Within this analysis, reference is made only to black migrants from Jamaica and Guyana.

This study begins with an examination of the theoretical background underpinning the thesis. Therefore, it commences with an outline of the conceptual framework as it relates to this study. This is followed by a historical account of black West Indian migration. The concept of culture is then defined before aspects of black West Indian culture are examined in detail. After a discussion of methodology, evidence from five case studies is then presented and analyzed in relation to the notion that black West Indian migration is more a product of cultural influences than the product of individual decision making.

## B) Objectives:

This thesis has three main objectives. The first objective will be to trace the development of a tradition of migration within the region. It is intended to account for and describe the establishment of this tradition, its causes and consequences. Furthermore, it is intended to show that this tradition has become a culture of migration which has been established and perhaps institutionalized within black West Indian societies.

The second objective will be to examine the movement of population from the Caribbean to Canada. This will involve

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tracing the movement from its earliest recorded occurrence in 1796, to the height of this movement in the mid 1970's and early 1980's. This will require an examination of levels of migration and an examination of the characteristics and distribution of migrants.

The final objective, and focus of this study, will be to look behind the statistics and account for the migration decision making process of five black West Indian migrants in Canada. This process will also be examined in terms of Roseman's (1971) generalized decision making model for migration. Drawing on case studies of several individuals, the model will be evaluated, according to the extent to which it adequately describes the decision making process for black West Indian migrants. The study will attempt to outline the strengths and weaknesses of the model when used to examine black West Indian migration and attempt to suggest any changes as appropriate.

## CHAPTER 2: Conceptual Framework and Literature review

### A) Migration:

In this chapter the concept of migration is first defined and its various characteristics are described. Then, some of the elements of basic models of migrant decision-making are outlined. These are shown to be deficient in several respects when accounting for the experience of black West Indian migration. In particular, it is argued that they fail to consider cultural aspects of migration.

Migration has been defined as:

> The movement of people from one areal unit to another, such as between census tracts at the intra urban level, or between states or provinces at the national level (Roseman, 1971: 589).

Thus, migration is often conceptualized as involving the movement of people across political or statistical unit boundaries.

This definition, however, is problematic as shown by the number of criteria commonly used to classify migratory movements. These include time (temporary\permanent migration); distance (long\short); decision making (voluntary\forced migration); numbers involved (individual\mass migration); social organization of migrants (family\clan\individuals); political organization (sponsored\free); and causes (economic\social). Several authors (Wolpert, 1965; Roseman, 1971; Brown and Moore, 1970)

have attempted to examine migration as a behavioral process. They have examined for example, the decision making and information gathering processes. Thus, increasing emphasis has been placed on the individual migrant as a behavioral unit and on the various locational decisions which an individual makes. Migratory movements are largely regarded as being one way, relatively permanent movements in which the home is moved to a new location (Roseman, 1971). Roseman argues that any residential shift can be regarded as migration, since a change in the location of one's home results in a significant spatial modification of an individual's weekly movement cycle (Figure 2). Migratory movements are therefore regarded as being less frequent events, usually associated with episodic events such as marriage, retirement or promotion. They may or may not be related to horizontal movements through a societal structure, such as occupation mobility. In general, therefore, migration is largely regarded as being a residential movement in space (Roseman, 1971). Lee (1966) also argues that migration involves a permanent or semi-permanent change in residential location. It is however important to note that some might argue that local residential mobility should be differentiated from migration.

Thus, it could be argued that migration per se, involves longer distance movements and that shorter distance movements are to be regarded simply as examples of local mobility (Shryock, 1964). However, Roseman (1971) makes no such

**Figure 2: <u>Weekly Movement Cycles and Migration</u>**
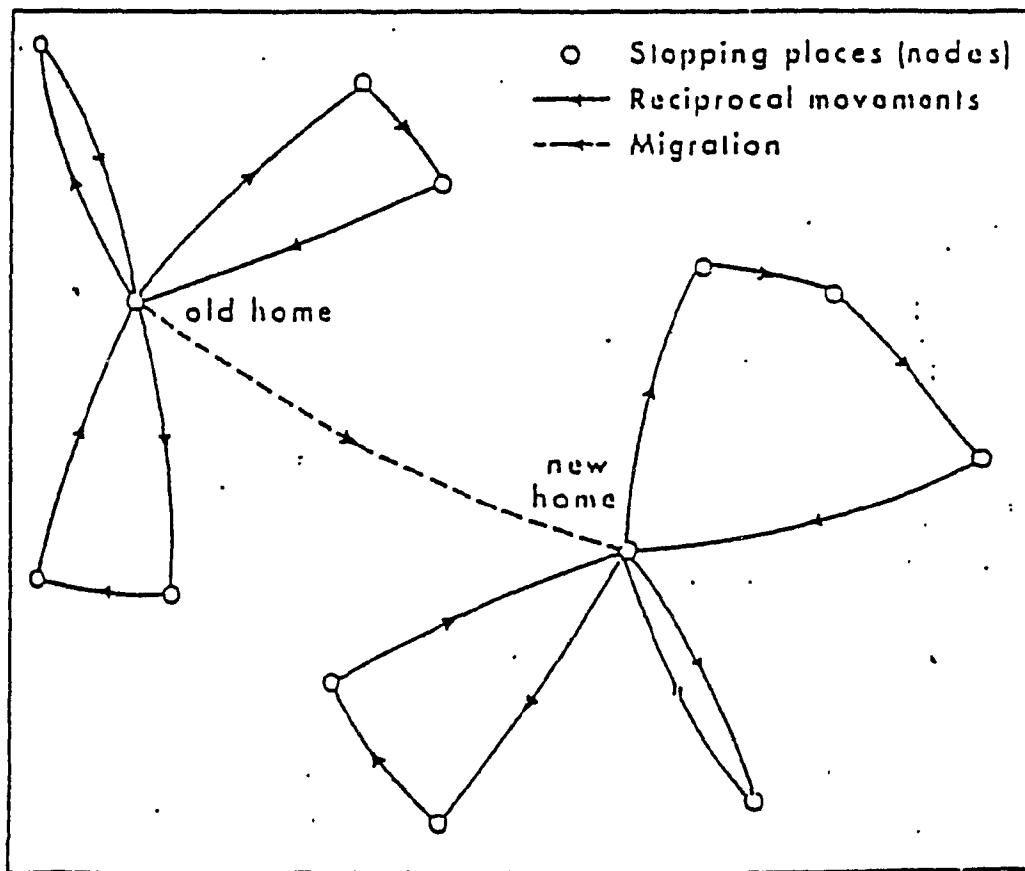


Source: Roseman, 1971

distinction. He argues that all residential moves can be termed as migration. He comments that any distinction between local and longer distance migrations, should be made on the basis of movement characteristics, and not be made according to whether or not some arbitrary boundary has been crossed. However, before an individual or group of individuals moves, over any distance, those involved must formally arrive at the decision to migrate.

B) Models of Migration and the Decision to Migrate:

There have been several attempts to examine and model migration decision-making (Adams and Gilder, 1976; Golledge and Rushton, 1976; Michelson, 1977; Gold, 1980). Rossi (1955) was one of the earliest researchers to comment on the existence of a thorough decision making process before migration actually occurs. He noted that in most cases, households deliberate for approximately one year before moving. This was a notion apparently supported by research conducted by Bohlen and Wakley (1959). Goldsmith and Beegle (1962) attempt to describe the actual dynamics of the migration decision making process as it progresses from the desire to move to the actual move itself. Several attempts have been made to model the migration decision making process (Lewis, 1982; Brown and Moore, 1970). Janis and Mann (1977) break the migration decision making process down, into five different stages. These include (1) appraising the challenge,

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(2) surveying alternatives,(3) weighing alternatives, (4) deliberating about commitment; and (5) adhering despite negative feedback. Lewis (1982), presents a simplified man-environment decision making system. This suggests that when a household wishes to move, individuals form subjective images about opportunities in the outside world. These images then form the basis on which the decision to migrate is based. Brown and Moore's sequential decision making model suggests that the severity of stress is the key determinant in the decision to migrate. The model suggests that when the place utility of the present location is reduced, due to stress, the household will then decide to move, if the stress can not be overcome. The decision about exactly where to move involves examining alternative locations. A decision to migrate will then only be made if the second location has a higher place utility than the first (Brown and Moore, 1970).

Within any study of the decision making aspect of migration, it is important to identify the basic decision making unit. Jakle et al (1976) comment that the "household" (which is defined as "one person or two or more persons who normally live together in a single unit of housing") is in general the usual decision making unit, in the decision to migrate. This is as opposed to the family, since the household forms the basic unit in migration. Hence, the smallest migration unit possible is the single person living alone. In this case, the migration decisions of the

individual affect only that one person. However, at the larger scale, where a married couple live together with several children and possibly other relatives, one decision may cause an entire household to migrate.

In general it is noted by Jakle et al (1976) that the decision to migrate is commonly made by one member of the household, or by agreement among two or more members. Although young children may form part of the household unit, it is generally assumed that they do not directly participate in the migration decision making process. Hence Roseman (1971) comments that more people within a household are often affected by the decision to migrate than the number who actively participate in the decision making process. It has been argued (Beshers, 1967), that in a "typical" household, it is the husband or male partner who exerts the strongest influence in the job related aspects, as regards when or where to move; whereas it is the wife or female partner who determines specific housing needs and the location of the new residence.

Within the black West Indian example it is important to note that there is evidence to suggest that the decision making unit extends beyond the single individual or household. Thus, it would appear that there is a very strong societal influence over the decision to migrate. This would therefore appear to challenge some of the traditional notions regarding the decision making unit.

A second basic model of migration decision making draws on the work of Wolpert. Wolpert (1965) argues that migration represents the outcome of an appraisal, by a potential migrant, of their present location against a number of other potential locations. He suggests that each individual has an "aspiration level" or a "threshold of net utility". This threshold is determined subjectively, it relates to a composite set of yardsticks for achievement. The threshold is therefore a way of measuring perceived success or failure, or for distinguishing between negative or positive net utilities. Wolpert argues that "place utility" or the "net composite of utilities" guides the decision to move and the decision of where to move to. This suggests that when making the decision to move, individuals" compare their present location, with all other locations about which they have knowledge. Brown and Moore (1970), in their examination of intra-urban migration, also suggest that in an effort to better satisfy their needs, households simply substitute one location for another.

Place utility, which may be expressed as a negative or positive quantity, reflects the individual's dissatisfaction or satisfaction with regard to a particular location. It is therefore largely related to past experience. The utility which is associated with potential destinations is by contrast made up of anticipated utility and optimism. If one assumes that most people migrate to improve their lot then, Wolpert (1965) argues, that an individual will usually migrate to a

destination which promises him a relatively higher level of utility. Therefore he suggests that a flow of migrants represents the outcome of a subjective place-utility evaluation by those individuals concerned.

It is perhaps possible to use Wolpert's place utility matrix in a very precise scientific manner. The matrix suggests that based on a number of variables, individuals will be able to calculate scores for each potential location. These scores can then be used by the individual to compare the utility of his current location, to that of another. This suggests that an individual would be able to identify the place with the highest utility value and thereby pin point exactly his optimum location (Woods, 1982). However, it has long been acknowledged that individuals do not always act in a rational, economic manner. Hence, it is noted (Woods, 1982) that the migration decision making process may often lack rationality. Thus, an individual may not in fact migrate when in theory they should. Alternatively, an individual may not always choose the location with the highest place utility. Hence, it is apparent that on its own, the place utility matrix serves only as a model of some of the elements involved in the migration decision making process.

There are several factors which may limit or severely impede the making of a free migration choice (Lewis, 1982). Thus, the choices which are available to a potential migrant may range from a complete freedom of choice as to whether or

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not to move, to being forced to move or remain in their present location.

A middle to upper class individual, for example, may have perfect freedom of choice as regards the decision to migrate. Amongst poorer individuals', however, there may be less freedom of choice. For example, poor individuals living in an economically depressed region may perceive no other choice than to move to a more economically prosperous region. Alternatively, they may have the desire to move, but have insufficient funds to finance such a venture.

As regards the choice of a new location, wealthier individuals may be able to choose from a larger portion of the available housing stock. However, poorer individuals, or members of minority groups, may find that they have reduced access to the housing stock. Therefore as regards the decision to migrate, it would appear that many people have only relative freedom of choice. In essence it is, however, perhaps reasonable to assume that most people in fact operate under some form of limitation.

Following the work of Wolpert, Brown and Moore and others concerned with the migration decision making process, Roseman (1971) devised a generalized decision making model for migration. This model has been widely cited within many other considerations of the migration decision making process (Adams et al, 1973; Jakle et al, 1976; Lewis, 1982; Clark, 1986). The Roseman model is taken to be representative of the

geographic dimensions found within traditional models of migration decision making. It is for this reason and because of Roseman's emphasis on the individual, that this particular model was selected for use in this study. Given that, on the surface at least, black West Indian migration to Canada consists of free movement of individuals from the Caribbean to Canada, one might expect that Roseman's model should also be applicable to this movement.

Roseman (1971) argues that as regards the decision to migrate, there are in fact two decisions to be made, both corresponding to movements at two different geographic scales (Figure 3). The first decision is related to a choice of the general area in which to live. The general area relates to the area surrounding the house. It may be, for example, a decision about which town, city, region or country to move to. The model suggests that if a high place utility is placed upon the present general area, then it may be decided not to move. However, if it is perceived that it would be more desirable to live within another general area, then a new general location will be chosen.

The second step in the migration decision making process relates to a decision about a particular place (or dwelling) in which to live. It is argued (Roseman, 1971) that under normal circumstances, a search for a new general area precipitates the search for a particular site.

In general Roseman's model suggests that if a household

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**Figure 3:** <u>Generalized Locational Decision Schema.</u>

Examine all
general areas

↓

Satisfied with
present general area in ————NO————▶ Choose a new
comparison with others?                          general area

↓                                                          ↓

YES                                              Choose a specific
                                                 site within tha.
↓                                                general area

Examine sites within
present general area,
considering nodes in the
weekly movement cycle
that you desire to retain.

↓

Present site
comparatively satisfactory? ————YES———▶ No move

↓

NO

↓

Choose a new site
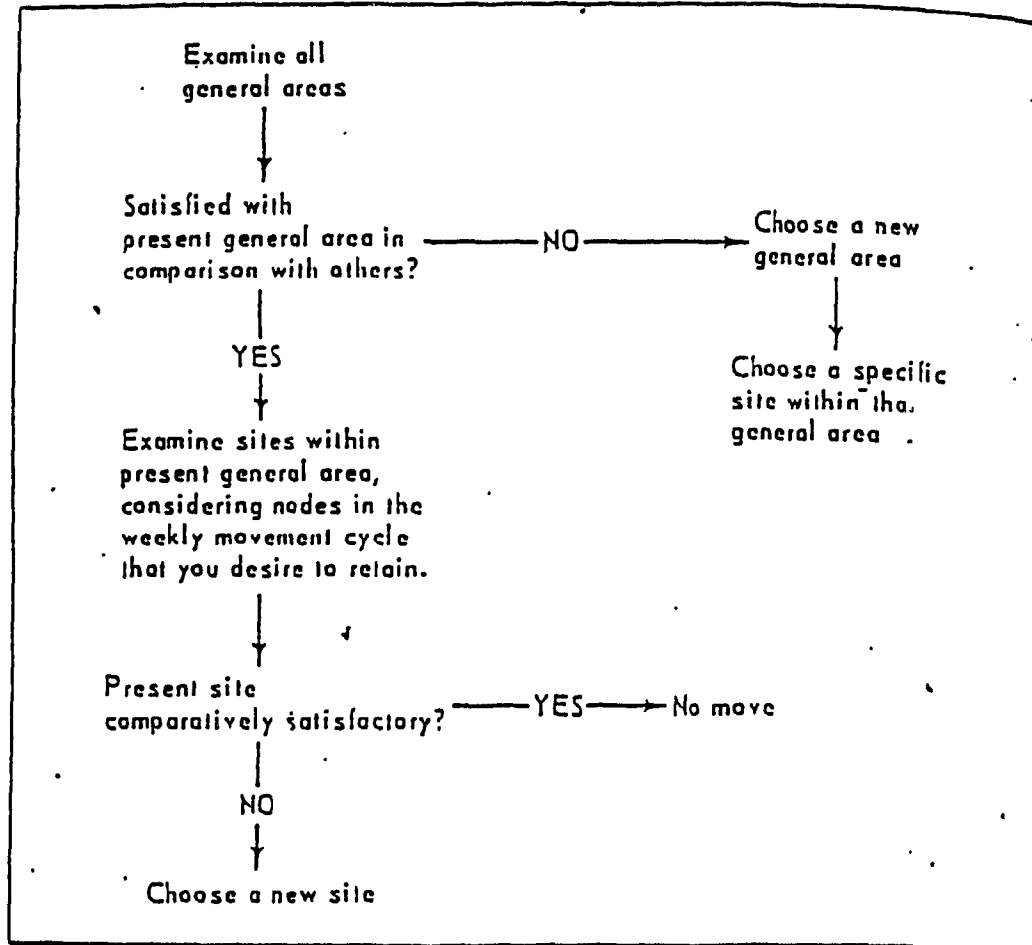
**Source: Roseman, 1971**

is satisfied with its present general area and its particular location within that area, then an individual will decide not to migrate. However, if the household is satisfied with its general area, but not its particular site within the area, then the household will choose a new site within that area. Finally, the model postulates that if a household is not satisfied with their current general area, then a new general area will be chosen and then a specific site within the new area.

By examining the decision to migrate, it is possible to identify two basic types of migration (Jakle et al, 1976). Total displacement migration results from the decision to migrate to a new general area. Partial displacement migration results from a decision to remain within the same general location, but to migrate to a new specific site within that location. Therefore, within this framework, black West Indian migration to Canada can be regarded as total displacement migration.

Total displacement migration in general relies upon different information gathering processes from those utilized in partial displacement migration. Migrants deciding to undertake partial displacement migration are able to utilize several communication channels including, real estate agents, friends, relatives, broadcast media and direct search. However, total displacement migrations are often dependent on the mass media or other people for information about potential

destinations. Therefore, the search space at the total displacement migration level is influenced by the distance decay of information flow (Jakle et al, 1976). Some of the characteristics of places which are used to help determine place utilities and the final choice of destination include, information about employment opportunities, climate and general place image.

It is important to note that traditional models of migration and the decision to migrate appear to totally ignore the importance of a migratory tradition or culture within a society. This is, however, a very serious omission since a tradition or culture of migration may very well shape the migratory movements of a large number of people. More specifically, such a tradition or culture of migration may determine factors such as, the decision to migrate itself, the choice of a final destination, locational choices at the final destination and whether migration is temporary or permanent. It is important to note also that many traditional models of migration and the decision to migrate do not consider return migration, which appears to be an important aspect of black West Indian migration (see chapter 4). Therefore, to attempt to model migration or the decision to migrate without also considering important cultural influences, is to ignore very important factors. Therefore, in addition to examining West Indian migration from the viewpoint commonly adopted in traditional models of migration, this study also places

particular importance on the role of cultural influences in affecting an individual's decision to migrate.

From this theoretical basis it is possible to propose:

(1) That black West Indian migration may be less a result of careful decision making and more as a result of cultural influence.

(2) That potential black West Indian migrants make little attempt to select a new specific site within the Caribbean.

In addition, the general literature on migration suggests:

(3) That individuals only migrate to a place if they believe it will be better able to meet their needs or improve their conditions.

(4) That migrants examine all general areas, of which they have knowledge, before they move.

(5) That an initial location within a new general area, usually chosen with limited knowledge, will be a temporary location.

(6) That migration will result from dissatisfaction with a general or specific site.

These propositions serve as a framework for exploring the decision to migrate. Evidence of them is first sought in the literature on black West Indian migration. Then these propositions became the basis of questions used to interview five black West Indian migrants.

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# CHAPTER 3:     West Indian Migration

## A) General Trends in black West Indian Migration

There have been a number of studies (Foner, 1978; Nutter, 1986; Philpott, 1973, 1977) which have examined migration from the Caribbean. Several authors on Caribbean migration (Thomas-Hope, 1986; Patterson, 1978) have attempted to trace the development of a migratory tradition within the Caribbean. Thomas-Hope (1986) contends that outward migration within the region is an inheritance from the days of slavery. She traces the movement of West Indians from the time of the abolition of slavery in the eighteenth century through to the large scale movements to Britain and North America in the twentieth century. It is argued that the overall institutional framework was the same (i.e. that limited local opportunities restricted the possibility of upward mobility, whilst migration promised the possibility of self advancement).

The notion that limited local opportunities have been responsible for establishing a tradition of migration has been challenged by some authors. Peach (1966) argues that whilst this may have been the cause in part, it is not the sole cause. Hence he argues that West Indian migration has, in certain cases at least, been governed more by circumstances in the receiving country than by conditions in the sending country. For example, he argues that migrant perceptions of

job opportunities in Britain in the 1950's and 60's and British Government policies were the central causes of West Indian migration at that time.

There is a wide body of literature which has examined West Indian migration to Britain during the 1950's and 60's (Peach, 1968; Smith, 1981). Several authors have also commented on the experiences and conditions of West Indian immigrants and their descendants in Britain (Moore, 1975; Richmond, 1988). Peach (1986) has examined the pattern of Afro Caribbean migration and settlement in Britain. He describes not only the movement of West Indians to Britain but also their geographical distribution throughout the country.

Several authors (Cross, 1986; Cashmore et al, 1982; Jacobs, 1986; Solomos, 1988; Bryce, 1979), have examined the condition of West Indian immigrants in Britain. Particular emphasis has been placed on examining their social and economic position and their apparent lack of progress within British society since their arrival. A comparative analysis is made between West Indian migration to England and their migration to the United States (Foner, 1974, 1979, 1986). In a comparison between West Indian migrants in London and those in New York, Foner endeavours to account for the apparent greater success of West Indian immigrants in New York. Several other accounts have also been written concerning West Indian immigrants and immigration to the United States (Palmer, 1974; Miller, 1988).

The growth in West Indian migration to Britain continued until the introduction of the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act which severely restricted West Indian immigration. Increasingly, therefore, potential migrants began to look at North America as a possible destination. During the same period, changes in Canada's immigration policies resulted in the tripling of West Indian immigrant numbers by the mid 1970's (Walker, 1984).

The body of literature on the migration of West Indians to Canada appears to be somewhat smaller than that relating to Britain for example. Walker (1984) has produced a historical account of West Indians in Canada, beginning with movement in 1796. In his account of more recent West Indian migration to Canada he examines levels of movement and their relation to immigration policies. Walker (1984) also explores apparent problems of adaptation faced by West Indian immigrants in Canada. Christiansen et al (1981) also examine some of the problems of adaptation faced by West Indians. They explore aspects of environmental adaptation in particular. This includes for example adaptation to Canadian climate and housing. Christiansen et al (1981) also describe typical characteristics of West Indian immigrants in Canada and typical migration patterns.

Ramcharan (1980) has also considered some of the social and cultural problems which West Indians face in their attempt to adapt to life in Canada. He also attempts to explore the

degree to which assimilation has occurred between the West Indian population as a whole and the Canadian population. An assessment of the economic adaptation of West Indians in Canada is attempted to a certain degree by Bolaria (1988). He endeavors to describe the demographic and economic characteristics of Canada's black population in general (including black West Indians).

In sum, the existing literature discusses various aspects of the West Indian migratory experience. However, it is virtually silent on the decision to migrate, with regard to black West Indian migrants.

From this available literature, it is clear that the demographic, economic and social structures of the Caribbean have been greatly influenced by international migration for centuries. Historically, the Caribbean was an immigrant receiving region. During the colonial era, Africa and Europe were the major source areas for population. Later, during the independence period, Asia became the chief source region (Kritz et al, 1981). Although immigration from Europe continued to be a major source of population even as late as the 1950's, emigration became the more typical movement in the post war period. Hence, throughout the Caribbean region as a whole, people migrated from French, British, United States and Dutch colonies to the colonial "mother" country.

Within the "British West Indies', a tradition of overseas migration had begun to be established with the end of slavery

in the early 1840's. With the emancipation of slaves individuals, faced with land shortage, began to move to other territories where land was still available or where labour shortages meant prospects of higher wages.

For many of the former slaves, migration became the easiest way to demonstrate their newly gained freedom. It was also a means to escape from the plantations and the social, political and economic systems at home (Thomas-Hope, 1986). Migration therefore became a legitimate method of adaptation to the constraints which existed within post-emancipation Caribbean society.

Typically, this inter-island movement took place from one British Caribbean colony to another, this was especially so within the southern and eastern Caribbean. Some of the movement occurred as a result of official requests by planters, other movement was spontaneous. Migration occurred on a permanent basis, as well as on a seasonal basis. For example, the sugar economy of some islands meant that labourers moved from Nevis and Anguilla to St. Kitts, from the Grenadines to Trinidad and from St. Lucia and St. Vincent to Barbados. The exact size of this movement is not known. However, census reports suggest that, for example, by 1871 there were at least 3,000 Barbados born residents in Trinidad (Thomas-Hope, 1986). By 1891, this figure had risen to nearly 14,000.

The movement of population from Jamaica to the eastern

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Caribbean was relatively small. Many Jamaican migrants headed instead to the countries on the Caribbean coast of Central America. Much of this movement was associated with the start of projects aimed at the development of the Caribbean region. For example, many Jamaicans left the island to work on projects such as the construction of the Panama canal, the development of banana plantations in Costa Rica and the expansion of the Cuban sugar industry. Some 24,000 Jamaicans are estimated to have migrated to Cuba in 1919 alone (Nutter, 1986). During this period, Jamaicans also left for the United States, Central and Latin America as well as for other Caribbean islands such as Aruba and Haiti. In total, some 156,000 Jamaicans are estimated to have emigrated between 1881 and 1921 (Nutter, 1986).

The construction of the Panama canal attracted workers from throughout the Caribbean region. It was responsible for one of the largest, continuous periods of migration experienced within the British West Indies. Thus, despite an annual natural population increase of between 1 to 2 percent, between 1891 and 1921, the total population of Barbados fell from 183,000 to 157,000 (Thomas-Hope, 1986).

There was also a large movement of West Indians to the United States and Cuba between 1911 and 1930. For example between 1911 and 1921, 30,000 Jamaicans entered the United states (Thomas-Hope, 1986). Also, during the period 1904 to 1929, an estimated 70,000 Barbadians left for the U.S. The

United Fruit Company sugar estates in Cuba also attracted many Jamaicans and later Barbadians. Female migrants were also attracted to Cuba, to work as domestic servants.

During the 1930's West Indians were again attracted to Panama to work on various projects relating to changes in the structure of the Panama canal. Later, they also filled a shortage of civilian labour, caused by manpower shortages during World War II. This was in fact to be the last of the major movements of West Indians to Central America.

In addition, there were also other "lesser" destinations for Caribbean migrants. For example, migrants from the British West Indies left for the banana plantations of Nicaragua, Guatemala and British Honduras (Belize). The sugar cane fields of the Dominican Republic and Puerto Rico attracted labourers, especially from Anguilla, Antigua, St.Kitts and Nevis (Smith, 1981). Approximately 10,000 West Indians found employment upon the opening of the Venezuelan oil fields in 1916 (Thomas-Hope, 1986). The establishment of oil refineries in Aruba and Curacao in 1925, also attracted many immigrant Caribbean workers. Several phases of migration often took place simultaneously as movements to "new" destinations occurred alongside secondary movements to the "older" established destinations.

However, this was not a period of continual outward migration, there was a substantial flow of return migrants. Migrants returned home for example, upon the completion of

development projects. The seasonal nature of much of the available work in other territories was also responsible for encouraging West Indians to return home. Therefore, it is evident that relatively early in black West Indian history a tradition of "migration and return" was established.

It is important to note that conditions at the migration destinations were often very poor. Indeed, had conditions been favorable one might have expected that migrants from North America or Europe might have been easily attracted. However, earlier attempts to attract migrants from these regions had proved unsuccessful. Evidence suggests (Thomas-Hope, 1986) that in addition to being cheated by employers, migrants often suffered health problems as a result of the climate. There is also evidence to suggest that migrants also endured periods of unemployment. Despite poor conditions, however, it is apparent that West Indians appear to have been very willing to move. The number of complaints made to colonial authorities regarding conditions in the migration destinations meant that potential migrants were aware to some extent at least, of the conditions that they would face. Therefore, one might suggest that migrants were still prepared to leave because of the high esteem in which emigration was held by large sections of the population. Also, the temporary nature of many of these projects may have made it easier for the migrants to endure any hardships. Therefore, one might suggest that as most migrants left with the intention of

returning upon completion of the project, that they were prepared to endure hardship, in the belief that ultimately their personal status and economic standing back home would be improved.

Migration from the West Indies to Central America continued largely until it was brought to an end by legislation within the various destinations. Hence, the 1920's saw the passage of a number of laws, firstly in Panama and later throughout Central America, which aimed to restrict the movement of migrants from the West Indies.

The outbreak of World War II saw a renewed movement of migrants out of the British West Indies. Hence, a large number of workers from Jamaica and other territories were recruited to work in Britain and the United States, in the British armed forces or in other designated war-time employment. Typically, West Indian workers and servicemen were recruited under special contractual arrangements.

The war years in many ways created a new shift in the direction of West Indian migration as West Indians increasingly moved outside of the Caribbean region. A number of West Indians also moved to the U.S. from earlier migration destinations such as Cuba, Panama and Cost Rica. In 1945 a demand for labour in the United States led to the establishment of a contract between U.S. employers and Jamaican workers. Under the terms of this contract some 14,000 Jamaicans, principally farm workers, left for the

United States between 1946-7 (Layton-Henry, 1986). However,
by 1952 British West Indian migration to the U.S. was severely
cut back, with an annual quota of 100 migrants (excluding farm
workers) being imposed. With migration to the United States
severely restricted, West Indian migrants slowly began to look
further afield for potential destinations. Typically West
Indians began to move to the "seat of empire", Britain.

Thus, within the British West Indies, the most recent
manifestation of this outward migration tradition, in the
twentieth century, came with the passage of people to Britain.
The status of West Indians within the British West Indies as
British subjects meant that there were no legal obstacles to
prevent the entry of West Indians. The greater part of this
movement took place in the 1950's and early 1960's. The
movement began at the start of the 1950's at the rate of
between 1,000 to 2,000 annually, and reached a peak net
movement of 66,000 in 1961 (Peach, 1986). The growth in West
Indian migration to Britain continued until the introduction
of the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act. With the passage of
this Act, potential migrants increasingly turned their
attention back towards North America.

B) West Indian Migration to Canada:

In 1796, the first large group of West Indian blacks
arrived in Halifax, Nova Scotia. This was a group of over
500 ex-slaves from Jamaica, called Maroons (Walker, 1984).

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Initially, the Maroons were settled on the outskirts of Halifax, where they were offered employment. This settlement however, proved to be temporary and by 1800 the British Government had resettled most of the Maroons in Sierra Leone, in West Africa.

Despite the movement of a few families and individuals, primarily to Nova Scotia, the number of black West Indians who arrived in Canada over the course of the next century was relatively small. By the end of the nineteenth century however, the number of West Indians in Canada had begun to increase. Potter and Hill (1966), note that between 1911 and 1921, 1,223 black people, mainly West Indians from Jamaica, Trinidad and Barbados were admitted to Canada. Migrants, mainly from Barbados, were recruited to work in the coal mines of Sydney, Nova Scotia. In general, West Indians found employment in the mines of Collingwood and Halifax. They worked as porters, waiters and chefs on the railroad system and as seamen on ships on the Great Lakes (Ramcharan, 1980).

World War I also marked another important phase in West Indian migration to Canada. This period saw a general movement of blacks from the United States and the British West Indies into Canada. Thus, several hundred West Indians were recruited during the war, primarily to work in the mines of Cape Breton. At the end of the war, many of these immigrants began to move to Toronto and Montreal, where other employment opportunities were improved. By 1921, there were an estimated

1,200 West Indians living in Toronto, with another 400 living in Montreal (Walker, 1984). During this period, Toronto's West Indian population was concentrated in the electoral districts of St. Andrew-St. Patrick and in the area around Bathurst street (Ramcharan, 1980). Thus, the heaviest concentration of West Indian immigrants in Toronto occurred in the areas of Alexandra Park, Bathurst-St.Clair, Bathurst-Dundas, Bathurst-College and Bathurst-Spadina (Ramcharan, 1980).

After 1920, West Indian migration to Canada was slowed. Canadian immigration regulations sought to restrict non white immigration. Thus, by 1941, the West Indian population in Canada was smaller than it had been in 1921 (Walker, 1984). Britain and the United States were to become more feasible alternatives for West Indian migrants, such that between 1948 and 1962, over 300,000 West Indians migrated to Britain (Walker, 1984), with thousands also going to the United States. Despite Canada's restrictive immigration controls, it is estimated (Walker, 1984) that after 1952, approximately 1000 West Indians arrived in Canada annually. A rising demand in Canada for domestic labour resulted in the introduction of the West Indian Domestic Scheme in 1955. Under the terms of this scheme, single, females aged between 18 to 35 years could be admitted to Canada to work for a minimum of 1 year as a domestic servant. Upon completion of one year's service, the women were permitted to apply for landed immigrant status and later Canadian citizenship. By 1965, some 2,690 West Indian

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women (Walker, 1984), mainly from Jamaica and Barbados had been admitted to Canada under this program. Many of the women who came to Canada under this scheme had formerly held professional positions within the Caribbean such as nurses or teachers. Therefore upon completion of their one years service, many found alternative employment. They were then free to sponsor other relatives in the Caribbean for immigration to Canada.

There was also in Canada a sizeable population of West Indian students. Students had been coming to Canada from the West Indies since the 1920's. The period after World War II saw a sharp rise in their numbers. Similar to the domestic workers, many of the students applied and were granted landed immigrant status upon completion of their studies.

In general therefore, it was possible to place the West Indians who had migrated to Canada during the 1950's and up until 1967, into one of three categories: university students, women on the domestic scheme, or professional workers and their sponsored relatives (Christiansen et al, 1981).

In 1962, revised immigration regulations were issued which made training, education and skills the main conditions for eligibility for admission to Canada. Thus, skilled and professional people from the West Indies, as well as from other non-European nations became eligible for admission to Canada. This also coincided with a shortage of English speaking teachers and nurses, particularly in Ontario. Hence,

the West Indies became a natural source region to fill such vacancies. Thus, between 1961 and 1966, over 12,000 West Indians arrived in Canada (Christiansen et al, 1981), a greater number than the entire Canadian West Indian population recorded in the 1961 census.

In 1967, a new "points" system was introduced into the Canadian immigration procedure. Under this scheme, points were awarded to applicants depending on factors such as skills, education, age, language, employment prospects and health. It was perhaps inevitable that young, highly educated West Indians would benefit from these changes. In addition, 1967 saw the opening for the first time of Canadian immigration offices in Jamaica and Trinidad. Similar offices were also later opened in Barbados, Guyana and Haiti.

These events marked the beginning of a big rise in the level of West Indian migration to Canada. West Indian immigrant numbers, which had been gradually increasing after 1962, more than doubled between 1966 and 1967 (Table 1). By the mid 1970's, immigration levels had tripled. Hence, by the mid 1970's, West Indians accounted for over 10% of Canada's total immigrant intake. Indeed, the Caribbean, in rank order, as a source of immigrants, jumped from fourteenth place to being the third largest source region (Walker, 1984). Immigration statistics indicate that between 1966 and 1970, 45,450 West Indians entered Canada. This figure was comprised of 20,859 male migrants and 24,519 female immigrants. The

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**Table 1:   Caribbean Migration to Canada**

| Period of immigration | Males | Females | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Before 1946 | 640 | 840 | 1,480 |
| 1946-1966 | 10,420 | 13,605 | 24,025 |
| 1967-1977 | 54,035 | 67,190 | 121,225 |
| 1978-1982 | 13,820 | 18,910 | 32,730 |
| 1983-1986 | 6,295 | 7,680 | 13,975 |
| Total migration | 85,210 | 108,225 | 193,435 |

Source: 1986 Census of Canada

1971 census recorded 68,000 West Indian born residents in Canada (Walker, 1984). An examination of the origin of West Indian migrants in Canada in the period 1965-70 indicates that the largest proportion of migrants came from Jamaica, Trinidad and Barbados, with a significant number also from Guyana (Ramcharan, 1980). In addition there was also "second stage migration" of West indians from Britain and elsewhere. The overwhelming majority of the new West Indian migrants, stated Ontario as their final destination in Canada (Table 2). This period, however, was to prove to be the height of West Indian migration to Canada. By the late 1970's new Government restrictions meant the flow of migrants from the West Indies to Canada had been severely reduced.

1) **Spatial Distribution of West Indians in Canada**:

The large majority of West Indians in Canada live in Ontario, specifically Toronto (Table 2). Toronto is perhaps the natural city in which to stay. It is the nearest port of entry to Canada from the Caribbean. It is also Canada's largest commercial and industrial city. Therefore one might assume that many migrants choose to locate in Toronto, where their employment prospects will be greatest.

Furthermore, the established West Indian community in Toronto, has been in existence at least since the 1920's (Hill, 1960), and therefore acts as an attraction for new incoming migrants. There are also a number of community

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**Table 2:** **Distribution of West Indian's (By Birthplace) Across Canada, By Province and Territory**

| Province\Territory | Jamaica | Guyana | Barbados | Trinidad | Other Caribbean | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Canada | 87,605 | 50,820 | 13,800 | 40,000 | 20,085 | 212,310 |
| New Foundland | 20 | 25 | 10 | 30 | 15 | 100 |
| Prince Edward Island | 10 | 5 | 10 | 15 | 5 | 45 |
| Nova Scotia | 250 | 130 | 155 | 285 | 210 | 1,030 |
| New Brunswick | 70 | 85 | 20 | 80 | 110 | 365 |
| Quebec | 6,070 | 2,510 | 3,070 | 4,435 | 4,210 | 20,295 |
| Ontario | 73,645 | 43,740 | 9,150 | 28,915 | 12,515 | 167,965 |
| Manitoba | 1,455 | 1,090 | 280 | 1,645 | 440 | 4,910 |
| Saskatchewan | 395 | 190 | 100 | 195 | 170 | 1,050 |
| Alberta | 3,660 | 1,880 | 550 | 2,705 | 1,285 | 10,080 |
| British Columbia | 1,995 | 1,140 | 450 | 1,665 | 1,095 | 6,345 |
| Yukon | 10 | --- | --- | 5 | 10 | 25 |
| N.W. Territories | 30 | 30 | 5 | 30 | 20 | 115 |

Source: Adapted, 1986 Census of Canada.

enterprises which will further act as a source of attraction for newcomers.

Within Toronto, Ramcharan (1980), notes that there is a high concentration of West Indians in the Bloor-Bathurst-College street area and in the borough of East York. There is however, also a trend for more established West Indians to move out to the suburbs of Toronto.

This spatial distribution of West Indians in Canada has been shaped to some extent by a tradition or culture of migration. Thus, it would appear that pioneer migrants in Canada chose an urban location, based primarily in Toronto. Subsequently, it appears that later migrants have followed the pattern set by the earlier migrants.


2) <u>Occupational Distribution of West Indians in Canada</u>:

Canada's deliberate selection of well qualified immigrants has meant that the educational and skill background of West Indians in Canada is in general very high. Hence, with the exception of immigrants from Britain and the United States, the proportion of skilled and professional persons from the West Indies entering Canada, is amongst the highest of any other immigrant group. For example, for West Indians the percentage of university graduates entering Canada is double the immigrant average (Walker, 1984). By 1981, over one third of the Caribbean born women and over half of the male Caribbean born immigrants in Canada had received some

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form of post secondary education (Richmond, 1988). Thus
Walker (1984: 13) comments that:

> Under the terms of the 1967 provisions, West Indians
> as a group come closest to the desired immigrants
> to Canada

One might expect therefore to find West Indian immigrants
in Canada well represented in professional and technical
occupations, given their general educational background.
Evidence appears to suggest (Richmond, 1988) that this is true
for immigrants who arrived in Canada before 1969. Richmond
(1988) notes however, that more recent Caribbean immigrants,
both male and female, appear to be concentrated in processing,
manufacturing and service occupations. He argues that lower
levels of achievement attained by West Indians entering Canada
after 1970 can, in part, be explained by movements within the
Canadian economy. However, Walker (1984) notes that problems
of adjustment, discrimination and disorientation mean that the
period of downward dislocation tends to be longer and more
pronounced for West Indians than for any other immigrant
group. Hence, it would appear that many West Indian
immigrants in Canada, relative to other immigrants and the
native born population, experience serious disadvantages.
This has been attributed (Richmond, 1988),at least in part,
to institutionalized prejudice and discrimination.

It is evident therefore, that migration has a very long
history in the Caribbean. It has been well established and
has been a route tried by many. Such is its importance in

the West Indies that some have suggested that migration has become very much a part of the way of life in the Caribbean. This has given rise to the notion of the West Indian culture of migration.

# CHAPTER 4: Culture as a Concept and the West Indian Culture of Migration

The word "culture" is in many respects an ambiguous term. Often when one speaks of a "cultured" individual reference is being made to an individual who displays refined tastes in music and the arts and one who is well read and well educated. This relates to the notion of "high culture" (Brake, 1985). However, culture is an all-embracing term, therefore, in addition to the music, literature and art of a society it also includes other features of a society's way of life. These features include food preferences, living habits, modes of dress, building architecture as well as the Government, educational and legal systems (De Blij and Muller, 1986). This notion of culture as a way of life is referred to as "low culture" (Brake, 1985). It demonstrates the notion that culture not only includes the lifestyles of individuals but also their values and beliefs.

Anthropologists have long been interested in the study of culture. This has led to the formulation of a number of definitions of the term culture. These include:

> The integrated system of learned behavior patterns which are characteristic of the members of a society and which are not the result of biological inheritance .... Culture is not genetically predetermined; it is non-instinctive .... [culture] is wholly the result of social invention and is transmitted and maintained solely through communication and learning (Adamson-Hobel, 1972).

> That complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, arts, morals law, custom and any other capabilities

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and habits acquired by man as a member of a society
(E.B. Taylor, 1871).

Probably the most comprehensive definition of culture is that

attempted by Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952: 2). They note that:

> Culture consists of patterns explicit and implicit,
> of and for behavior and transmitted by symbols,
> constituting the distinctive achievements of human
> groups, including their embodiments in artifacts
> .... the essential core of culture consists of
> traditional (that is, historically derived and
> selected) ideas and especially their attached
> values.

It is apparent, therefore, that there is no final or absolute

definition of culture, yet there are commonalities. Within

this particular study an attempt is made to examine particular

elements of black West Indian culture. This includes an

examination of black West Indian beliefs, art forms attitudes,

habitual behavior patterns, values and symbols.

Due to the long history and many examples of large scale

migration from the Caribbean, it has been argued by some

authors (Patterson, 1978; Nutter, 1986) that migration has

become an institutionalized part of black West Indian society

and culture. Roth (1976: 17) argues that:

> Migration has always been the salvation of the
> West Indies. It has always been seen as a case
> of stay an burn or cut an run.

. Thus societal "forces" have to be considered in an

examination of migration within the Caribbean. It would

appear that migration in the West Indies is supported by a

wider system of social values which form the basis of a

migration ideology (Roth, 1976; Nutter, 1986). The migration process therefore appears to be directly supported and nurtured by this system of social values. Patterson (1978) argues that within West Indian society, migration has become a socio-economic resource, a social good, access to which determines and is seen to determine the economic and social fate of individuals. Therefore, although outward migration is commonly cited as being a response to economic conditions at home and abroad, it can also perhaps be viewed, in part at least, as a reflection of the system of social values.

Studies of several West Indian societies (Nutter, 1986; Philpott, 1973) appear to suggest that these societies accord greater status and respect to people who have gained experience overseas. This may help account for the motivation behind the decision of many West indians to migrate. It may also in part at least, help explain the waves of "migration fever" which are said to have spread through an island's population as rumors spread of a new opening overseas (Thomas-Hope, 1986). Hence, it is suggested (Nutter, 1986; Patterson, 1978) that black West Indian migration can be explained less in terms of individual desire and more in terms of a "culture of migration".

Patterson (1978) also comments that the tradition or culture of migration within the Caribbean can be dated back to the days of black West Indian slavery. Thus, migration as a resource or option was formerly closed to the slaves.

However, the slaves did not always accept this deprivation. Hence throughout Caribbean history there are several examples of slaves rebelling against their captors and migrating to the hills, where they formed maroon communities. Migration as a resource and as a weapon therefore became a source of conflict between two opposing classes. Migration became both a resource and a weapon in the relations between individuals in the Caribbean. As West Indian culture evolved it was therefore perhaps inevitable that migration should play a central role. Migration was after all something which both the slaves and their captors had in common. For the slaves, newly arrived in the West Indies, there was the trauma of their passage from Africa. Many of the slaves (and often their captors also) would have experienced a sense of exile and a desperate yearning to migrate back home. Evidence suggests that in many early slave festivals, migration was a central theme. For example, early accounts of Jamaican slave festivals appear to support this notion. Thus, during the death rituals of slaves in Jamaica, the dead slave was bade farewell and wished a happy journey back home (Patterson, 1978). Other slaves, before placing food and other items needed for the journey back home, into the grave, would ask the dead to take back greetings to Africa.

Migration plays a role in many aspects of Caribbean culture. In Jamaica, the central figure in the Junkanoo festival is a figure wearing a large image of a boat on his

head. It is notable also that migration as a theme is evident in the works of many prominent West Indian novelists (Patterson, 1978). This includes the work of George Lamming The Emigrants, Samuel Selvon The Lonely Londoners, and V. S. Naipaul The Loss of El Dorado. A similar theme of migration can also be found in the work of West Indian poets such as Edward Braithwaite Rights of Passage and Claude Mckay A long way from home (Patterson, 1978). Louise Bennett, one of Jamaica's best known female poetry writers captures the whole theme and meaning of migration to many West Indians in her poem "Colonizing England in reverse" (Figure 4).

In tracing the manner in which migration has become an integral part of contemporary West Indian culture, Patterson (1978) has studied various aspects of West Indian culture. He argues that migration often occupies a central role in West Indian festivals, literature, music and folk traditions. Hence, Patterson argues that migration has become institutionalized within West Indian society to the extent that it is no longer considered simply as one of the options available to individuals. Instead, he argues, migration is now the only option, considered by all but the unambitious. Patterson (1978; 125) states that:

> Migration is thus a major institution as such, it
> dominates and defines the social structure, it is
> a matter of central pre-occupation for individuals
> and it constitutes a dominant theme in the cultural
> and symbolic structures of the societies.

Nutter(1986), also argues that the institutionalized

**Figure 4:** <u>**Colonization in Reverse**</u>

What a joyful news, Miss Mattie;
Ah feel like me heart gwine burs
Jamaica people colonizin
Englan in reverse.

By de hundred, by de tousan,
From country an from town,
By de ship-load, by de plane-load,
Jamaica is Englan boun.

Dem a pour out a Jamaica;
Everybody future plan
Is fi get a big-time job
An settle in de motherlan.

What a islan! What a people!
Man an woman, ole an young
Jussa pack dem bag an baggage
An tun history upside dung!

Some people doan like travel,
But fi show dem loyalty
Dem all a open up cheap-fare-
To-Englan agency;

An week by week dem shippin off
Dem countryman like fire
Fi immigrate an populate
De seat a de Empire.

Oonoo se how life is funny,
Oonoo see de tunabout?
Jamaica live fi box bread
Out a English people mout.

For when dem catch a Englan
An start play dem different role
Some will settle down to work
An some will settle fi de dole.

Jane seh de dole is not too bad
Because dey payin she
Two pounds a week fi seek a job
Dat suit her dignity.

Me seh Jane will never fine work
At de rate how she dah look
For all day she stay pon Aunt Fan couch
An read love-story book.

What a devilment a Englan!
Dem face war an brave de worse;
But ah wonderin how dem gwine stan
Colonizin in reverse.

**Source: Bennet, L. (1983)**

nature of migration and the status granted to those who have gained experience overseas, means that for many West Indians, migration is the only natural recourse.

Patterson (1978) also regards the growth of the Rastafarian movement within the Caribbean as further evidence of the institutionalization of migration. He notes that Rastafarians have their origins in a millenarian cult, whose original members prepared themselves for the return migration to Ethiopia. The influence of Rastafarians has also been very pronounced. It is noticeable that many of the lyrics of reggae songs stress migratory themes such as exile, alienation and oppression. This includes the work of artists such as Bob Marley (Exodus) the Mediations (Running from Jamaica) Peter Tosh (Equal Rights and Justice) and Pluto Shervington (I-man Born Yah). Whilst some rastafarians appear to regard repatriation as a figurative ideal others view it more literally and express a real desire to migrate to Ethiopia (Waters, 1985).

Philpott (1977), notes also that within Montserratian society, with the exception of births, deaths, and marriages, the only other ceremonial occasions commemorated are those associated with migration.

Several other factors also support the notion of the existence of a culture or tradition of migration within the West Indies. Hence evidence shows that large scale migration from the Caribbean has continued even when economic conditions

within the region are favorable. For example, the late 1950's saw an increase in Gross Domestic Product in most of the Caribbean islands, however, it was still accompanied by significant migration (Layton-Henry, 1986).

Traditionally, one might also suggest that high outward migration is also a function of high population growth or high population density. However, Layton Henry (1986) has observed that upon examination of population growth figures for each territory, an inverse relationship exists between population growth and emigration. Similarly, traditional explanations of high population densities as a cause for large scale migration appear to be invalid in the West Indian example. Thus, islands such as Dominica and Montserrat, which have had the lowest population densities, have experienced some of the highest rates of emigration.

Increasingly therefore it is becoming apparent that traditional economic political or demographic factors, by themselves at least, do not appear to account for West Indian migration. Therefore, one has to recognize the institutionalized nature of West Indian migration.

One of the features of West Indian migration during the nineteenth century, as noted earlier, was that upon completion of various projects, migrants usually returned home. For example, between 1886-87, some 7,000 Jamaican's are estimated to have returned to Jamaica, mainly from Panama (Thomas-Hope, 1986). Although more recent information regarding return

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immigrants is not readily available, studies suggest that by the late 1960's migrants who had left for Britain during the late 1950's and early 1960's had begun to return to the Caribbean. Some of these migrants expressed a desire to return to the West Indies permanently, however, a significant number appeared to be returning with the sole intention of later re-migrating to North America (Patterson, 1968; Davison, 1968). Several studies of West Indian immigrant communities (Greene, 1970; Philpoptt, 1970) in Britain and Canada for example, have noted that the ideal of returning to the Caribbean is still very much alive within the West Indian community, even if circumstances do not allow such a move. However, one should note that some authors (Philpott, 1970) relate this expression of a desire to return home, to difficulties of adaptation to the new way of life. Hence, this expression of intent has been referred to as "the myth of return" (Philpott, 1970).

In general, there has been very little attention paid to the study of migrants returning to the Caribbean. This is perhaps related to the difficulty in finding accurate figures. However research relating to return migration to Guyana since the late 1950's suggests that prior to 1965, the annual rate of return was very small, averaging at only 425 people (Strachan, 1983). By 1965 however, approximately 1000 migrants were returning annually. Indeed, during the period 1965-76 approximately 13,700 Guyanese migrants are estimated

to have returned home, at an average rate just in excess of 1000 people annually. The most common reasons given for returning home related to a desire to help Guyana to develop, homesickness or more personal reasons (Strachan, 1983). Whilst the number of return migrants to Guyana was far exceeded by the number of individuals leaving, it is apparent that return migration to the Caribbean is fairly substantial. Therefore, alongside the tradition of migration from the Caribbean, evidence also appears to suggest that many West Indians retain a firm desire to return home. Indeed, in a substantial number of cases it would appear that Caribbean migrants do in fact return to the West Indies. Therefore, it would appear that what exists in the Caribbean, to a certain extent at least, is not only a "culture of migration", but quite often a "culture of migration and return".

Although evidence would suggest that there exists within the Caribbean a culture of migration and return, there are other important features of West Indian migration. An examination of estimates of net migration from Jamaica during the period 1950-83 (Table 3) suggests that there have been four periods of above average migration. The period 1955-57 saw a growth in Jamaican migration as Jamaicans first began moving to Britain. In the period just prior to 1962, there was another large increase in Jamaican migration. This is presumably related to a rush by Jamaicans to beat the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act, which was to severely restrict

**Table 3:** <u>Net Migration From Jamaica 1950-83 (Estimates)</u>

| Year | Total | Year | Total |
|------|-------|------|-------|
| 1950 | 1,700 | 1967 | 20,000 |
| 1951 | 4,450 | 1968 | 20,000 |
| 1952 | 3,890 | 1969 | 29,000 |
| 1953 | 4,300 | 1970 | 23,000 |
| 1954 | 8,400 | 1971 | 31,500 |
| 1955 | 18,900 | 1972 | 11,200 |
| 1956 | 17,400 | 1973 | 10,200 |
| 1957 | 15,200 | 1974 | 12,900 |
| 1958 | 8,200 | 1975 | 12,100 |
| 1959 | 13,100 | 1976 | 22,200 |
| 1960 | 30,300 | 1977 | 21,100 |
| 1961 | 38,500 | 1978 | 17,800 |
| 1962 | 29,700 | 1979 | 21,400 |
| 1963 | 7,300 | 1980 | 24,300 |
| 1964 | 13,500 | 1981 | 5,900 |
| 1965 | 6,500 | 1982 | 9,600 |
| 1966 | 8,900 | 1983 | 4,300 |

**Source: Cooper, 1985.**

West Indian immigration. The third period of increased Jamaican migration, during the late 1960's, can be related to relaxed immigration controls in Canada and the United States. The final period of rapidly increased Jamaican migration, during the mid to late 1970's is commonly thought to be related to a period of political instability within that country (Cooper, 1985). It is of course important to note that these figures relate only to legal immigration. There is, however, reason to believe that there is a considerable number of illegal West Indian immigrants, who remain unaccounted for.

It would appear from an examination of West indian migration statistics that since World War II, Britain, the United States and Canada are almost the only three potential destinations considered by West Indian migrants. Migration statistics are most readily available pertaining to Jamaican migrants. These appear to confirm that Britain and North America have been the principal destinations for Jamaicans during this post war period (Figure 5).

If one examines changes in the volume of Jamaican migrants to the three main destinations, these changes appear to be directly related to changes in the immigration controls in each of the receiving nations (Table 4). Thus for example it would appear that Jamaican migration to Britain grew until the imposition of immigration restrictions in that country at the beginning of the 1960's. There was apparently another

**Figure 5: <u>Jamaican Migrants By Receiving Country 1953-4</u>**
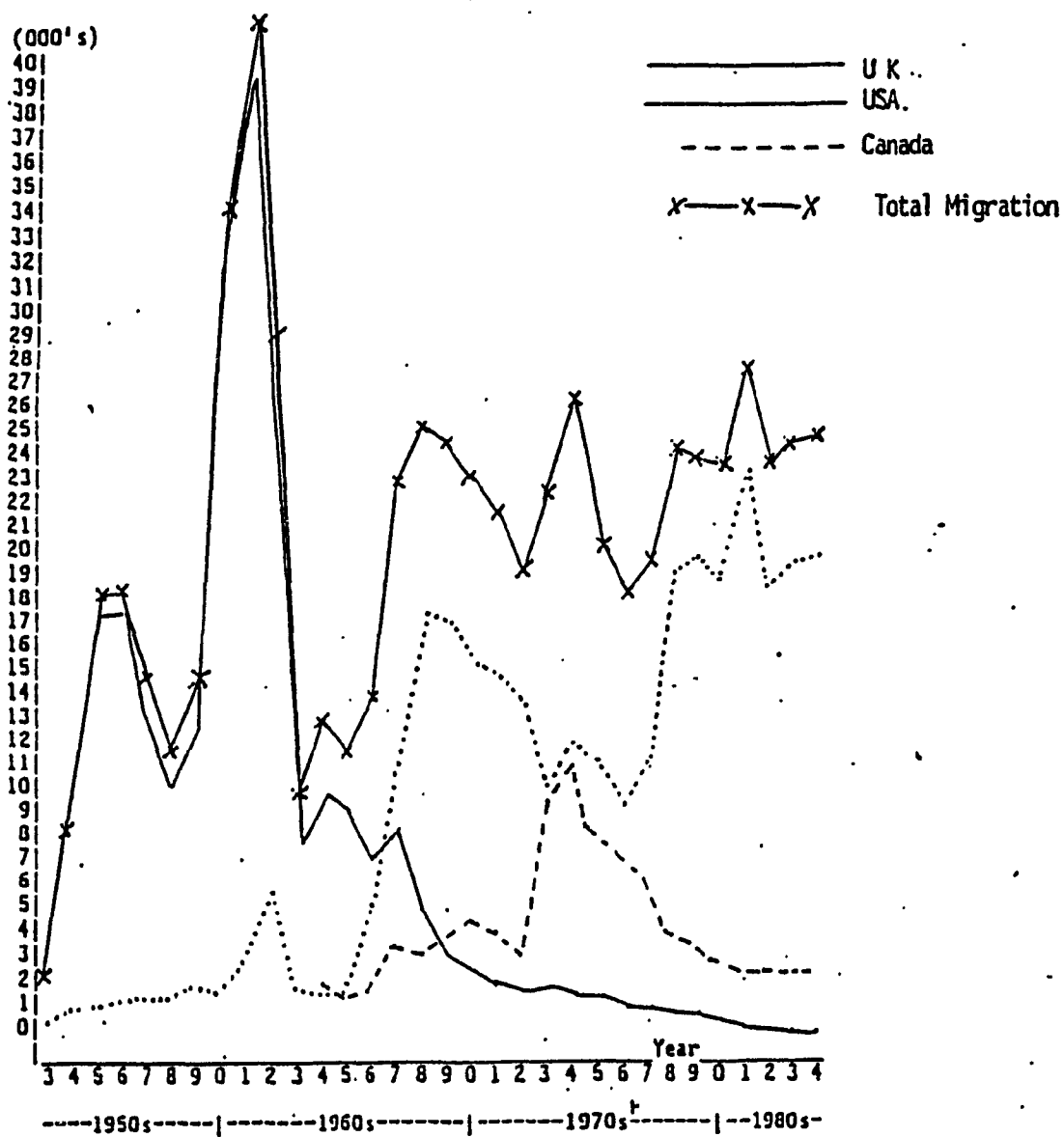


Source: Adapted, Cooper, 1985.

## Table 4: Jamaican Migrants By Receiving Country 1953-84

| Year | UK | USA | Canada | Total |
|------|------|-------|--------|--------|
| 1953 | 2,210 | 252 | NA | 2,462 |
| 1954 | 8,149 | 798 | NA | 8,947 |
| 1955 | 17,257 | 940 | NA | 18,197 |
| 1956 | 17,302 | 1,168 | NA | 18,470 |
| 1957 | 13,087 | 1,207 | NA | 14,294 |
| 1958 | 9,992 | 1,300 | NA | 11,292 |
| 1959 | 12,796 | 1,732 | NA | 14,528 |
| 1960 | 32,060 | 1,472 | NA | 33,532 |
| 1961 | 39,203 | 2,757 | NA | 41,960 |
| 1962 | 22,779 | 5,619 | NA | 28,398 |
| 1963 | 7,497 | 1,650[b] | NA | 9,149 |
| 1964 | 9,560 | 1,200 | 1,762 | 12,522 |
| 1965 | 9,160 | 1,317 | 1,214 | 11,691 |
| 1966 | 6,859 | 5,003 | 1,407 | 13,269 |
| 1967 | 8,107 | 10,483 | 3,459 | 22,049 |
| 1968 | 4,640 | 17,470 | 2,886 | 24,996 |
| 1969 | 2,699 | 16,947 | 3,889 | 23,535 |
| 1970 | 2,372 | 15,033 | 4,659 | 22,064 |
| 1971 | 1,759 | 14,571 | 3,903 | 20,233 |
| 1972 | 1,620 | 13,427 | 3,092 | 18,139 |
| 1973 | 1,872 | 9,963 | 9,363 | 21,198 |
| 1974 | 1,397 | 12,408 | 11,286 | 25,091 |
| 1975 | 1,394 | 11,076 | 8,211 | 20,681 |
| 1976 | 1,198 | 9,026 | 7,282 | 17,506 |
| 1977 | 1,029 | 11,501 | 6,291 | 18,821 |
| 1978 | 766 | 19,265 | 3,858 | 23,889 |
| 1979 | 737 | 19,714 | 3,213 | 23,664 |
| 1980 | 649 | 18,970 | 3,161 | 22,780 |
| 1981 | 421 | 23,569 | 2,553 | 26,543 |
| 1982 | 441 | 18,711 | 2,593 | 21,745 |
| 1983 | 389 | 19,582 | 2,423 | 22,394 |
| 1984 | 349 | 19,822 | 2,479 | 22,650 |

Source: Cooper, 1985

growth in Jamaican migration to the U.S. during the mid 1960's as immigration controls there were relaxed. However, as immigration controls in the United States were tightened in the mid 1970's, so there was an increase in Jamaican migration to Canada. It would appear that in the case of Canada and the United States, it is possible to identify almost an inverse pattern of West Indian migration between the two countries (Table 4). This inverse pattern again, appears to be related to changes in the immigration controls within these countries (Cooper, 1985).

It is now becoming apparent that within recent years there has in fact been a shift in the focus of West Indian migration. This has meant that certain traditional destinations are now becoming even more popular than others. Hence, it would appear that Britain has now become a net exporter of West Indians. This was a trend which had been observed as early as the early 1970's. Hence, between 1971-73, 9,000 West Indians entered, whilst 14,000 departed. Again, in 1974 some 2,000 more West Indians left Britain than had arrived (Layton-Henry, 1986). If one considers that due to the immigration controls in place in Britain, many of the West Indians arriving in Britain were children or other dependents of earlier migrants, then it is would suggest that Britain appears to have lost some its appeal to potential West Indian migrants.

It is apparent, therefore, that the West Indian tradition

or culture of migration has many facets. It has a long history and is deeply ingrained within many aspects of West Indian culture, ranging from West Indian literature to religion. Within recent times it appears to have greatly influenced the migration decision behaviour of many west Indians, influencing the decision to migrate itself as well as the choice of a final destination and to a certain extent at least, locational choices at the destination. It is now intended, after a discussion of the methodology used in this study, to investigate the exact extent to which this culture or tradition of migration can be said to have influenced actual West Indian immigrants and their decision to migrate to urban Canada.

CHAPTER 5:    Methodology

The main methodology employed in this study relates to the compilation of five case studies or life histories. During the compilation of these case studies respondents were asked to reflect upon their experiences as immigrants and in particular to reflect upon their decision to migrate. The data was collected during the course of personal interviews and the information was recorded on a loosely standardized interview schedule. A more detailed examination of the methodology used in this study now follows:

A) Humanistic approaches in geography and the case study (or life history).

The major division in geography is between human and physical geography. Physical geography, which is a natural science, is largely concerned with the study of the natural forces which shape the surface of the earth. Human geography, however, which is a social science, is largely concerned with the study of the interrelationships of peoples and places (Austin et al, 1987). It involves the study of how people change their environments and how the environment influences the behavior of people. Human geography is primarily concerned therefore, with the study of man. Physical geography however, is therefore concerned with the study of non human things.

The division between human and physical geography

reflects a wide division between humanist and positivist approaches to science. In general, whilst positivism spotlights science, humanism seeks to illuminate the lived world (Christensen, 1982). Positivistic approaches to science attempt to gather data and use this data to test various hypotheses. Based on the outcome of such testing, positivists develop various laws and theories. In contrast, however, humanists do not attempt to make predictions. Rather, humanists and the humanist approach seek to understand why people act in a particular way. Humanists challenge the notion that general laws can be developed which govern the behavior of people. Humanistic approaches therefore attempt to focus on the subject or individual himself. They attempt to expose the subject's cwn subjective interpretation of his world to uncover the intentions and meanings behind the actions of an individual. The role of the humanist researcher then becomes to promote thought and reflection as well as to increase both self awareness and mutual awareness (Goodall, 1987). The aim of the humanist approach is to put humans, with all their reflective capacities, back in the center as the unit of study. Humans are therefore, viewed both as producers and as products of their world (Ley and Samuels, 1978).

Methodologically, the humanist approach has demonstrated a willingness to adopt a number of techniques. These range from participant observation and indepth interview to archival

research and interpretative understanding. These methodologies seek to uncover the perspective of the individual in his own environment and then convey this perspective to a wider audience. In many respects humanistic methodologies can be regarded as much more subjective and in stark contrast to the systematic, formalised and structured positivistic approaches. Thus, humanistic methodologies attempt to achieve an empathetic understanding of the subjects perspective instead of attempting to explain aggregate spatial patterns (Jackson and Smith, 1984).

Humanism and humanistic approaches began to be adopted by human geographers in the 1970's as critics charged that positivistic methodologies were inappropriate for a geography of human experience (Jackson and Smith, 1984).

To date, existentialism, phenomenology and idealism are the three humanist philosophies which have been most widely discussed in humanist geographical literature and are widely regarded as being the philosophical base of modern humanist approaches in geography (Jackson and Smith, 1984).

With this philosophical background there are a number of methodologies which humanist researchers have adopted. Anthropologists in particular have been keen to utilize the case study as a tool for studying various cultures. In fact, much of current anthropological theory has been built up from the use of a number of case studies.

In behavioural geography the case study enables the

individual to explain their own experiences and their own interpretation of those experiences. The case study (or life history) is therefore employed in this study.

The use of the case study assumes that it is possible to acquire knowledge of a particular phenomenon through intensive exploration of a single case (Becker, 1968). A comprehensive study of a social unit, such as an individual, a group of individuals, a social institution or a community is called a case study (Young, 1966). Typically, case studies are made of organizations, communities and individuals. Hence, Burgess (1949), describes the case study as "the social microscope", enabling the researcher to attempt to study the "inner life" of a person.

Every individual views their world differently. The case study allows the researcher to attempt to enter the subjective world of the "subject". The case study (or life history) attempts to present the experiences and the interpretation of these experiences as the subject views them. Thus, Denzin (1973, 220) comments:

> The life history presents the experiences and
> definitions held by one person, one group, or one
> organization as this person, group, or organization
> interprets those experiences.

Three basic types of case studies or life histories have been identified (Denzin, 1973) i.e. "complete", "topical" and "edited". The complete life history attempts to cover every aspect of the subject's life in its entirety. In addition to

first person description it often contains data concerning features of the subjects neighborhood and data from people in close proximity to the subject. The topical life history shares many of the same features as the complete life history. However, in the case of the topical life history, only one phase of the subject's life is presented. The third type of life history, the edited life history may be either topical or more expansive in form. However, the interspersal of comments, explanations and quotations by someone other than the main subject is the distinguishing feature of the edited life history.

What is being attempted here can be regarded as an edited topical life history. It is an attempt to focus mainly on one aspect of the subject's life, that is the subject as an immigrant in Canada. This method was selected as it was felt that a certain amount of editing and observer comment would facilitate the final analysis. Hence, where appropriate, comments made by the subject are related to some of the relevant underlying concepts and theories.

The humanistic approach and case study method were thought to be the most appropriate approaches for two main reasons. Firstly, in the literature, several quantitative accounts relating, at least in part, to black West Indian immigrants in Canada were found (Head, 1981; Ramcharan, 1980). However, only one case study was found (Hill, 1981).

Secondly, it was felt that the research methods employed

during the compilation of a case study would best reveal the influence of the culture of migration on the decision making processes of the individuals interviewed here. This is apparently borne out by the comments of Becker (1968) who argues that one of the main aims of a case study is to develop a comprehensive understanding of the individual being studied. Given that the case study aims to describe the experiences of the subject, through their own eyes, it was felt that this was the natural method of research to be adopted. Additionally, it was felt that the case study was the best method to adopt in an attempt to allow the personality of the immigrant to come through. Thus, the case study has been described (Goode and Hatt, 1952) as a way of organizing social data which preserves the unitary character of the social "object" being studied. This suggests that whereas the character of the individual is preserved in the case study, the "survey" type analysis replaces the person with the "trait" of the unit of analysis (Goode and Hatt, 1952). Therefore, this particular methodology was also chosen in agreement with Denzin's (1970) suggestion that the case study allows the subject to be literate and vocal in a way which questionnaires and checklists do not allow. The indepth face to face interviews involved with this method enable the researcher to gain the trust and respect of individuals as well as to obtain their more intimate thoughts and experiences. Thus, the case study approach allows one to gain an insight into the intentions and

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motivations of an individual in a manner which other methodologies do not allow.

One of the main criticisms of the case study method appears to be that the case is unique and therefore cannot be the basis for future generalization or inference. Case study researchers are challenged by critics therefore to prove that their case is in fact "typical".

Mitchell (1983) argues that such a challenge to the case study researcher would suggest that the only valid basis for inference, is that which has been developed by the use of statistical analysis. Mitchell suggests that any inference made from "survey" type research is done on a statistical basis, whilst inference made from case material is logical or causal. Therefore, he is able to argue that researchers employing the case study method are able to infer that features present in the case study will be related to a wider population, not because the case is necessarily representative, but because the research is unassailable. This would suggest that any inference or generalization based on case material is based on the validity of the analysis as opposed to the representativeness of the case per se. The basis of this argument therefore is that it is possible to make inferences both from a single case as well as from numerous cases.

Denzin (1970) also challenges the criticism that case studies are invalid because they may be "atypical". He

suggests in fact that this may be one of the biggest strengths of the case study method. This is because any theory or generalization which is accepted because it has a statistical basis should be able to account for individual cases. If it is unable to do so, then the theory or generalization itself may be suspect.

B) <u>Data collection:</u>

In order to build migrant profiles or individual case studies, five willing respondents were interviewed in their homes. This involved conducting an informal interview using a prepared interview schedule (Figure C). The formal interview in each case lasted approximately 40 minutes. During the course of each interview the questions from the interview schedule were applied. Additional questions were also asked as respondents raised issues not covered by the schedule itself. A verbatim account of each interview is attached (see Appendix).

In addition to the evidence which was taken from the formal interview, which supports the notion of the importance of a tradition or culture of migration, a number of personal observations were also made. These observations included, for example, the type of music being played and the type of literature on display in the home. However, it should be noted that in order to protect the personal privacy of the respondents and also in accordance with mainstream academic

procedures, most of these personal observations have been largely discounted and are not presented here as formal evidence.

It is also important to note that during the compilation of these case studies a total of 11 potential respondents, from a range of different back grounds, were approached for interview. However, six of those individuals approached declined the offer to be formally interviewed. The most common reason given for not wanting to be interviewed was shyness and or a feeling that they had little to offer. In at least two cases, however, more personal reasons were given.

The propositions, which formed the basis for the questions asked during the interviews, were based on the findings of earlier studies of migration and the decision to migrate. A fuller account of the propositions is given in Chapter 2. The interview was recorded on audio tape and brief comments made on the schedule itself.

In preparation for the main case studies, it was decided to conduct a pilot study. This was done in order to test the interview schedule, interview technique and data analysis. The interviewee was Lyn Green (pseudonym). Lyn was selected for interview because she was known to me well enough to establish a good rapport, but not as a very close personal friend.

In general, it was felt that the interview schedule worked well. However, some adjustments were made as the focus

of the study shifted slightly from that which was initially contemplated (Figure 6). Originally it was intended to investigate motivation for migration, however, it was at this stage that it was decided to investigate more fully the notion of the culture or tradition of migration. It was also decided to make fuller use of the prompts and probes in the final case studies.

The main objective of the data analysis was to attempt to interpret the decision making processes of black West Indian migrants to urban Canada and relate them to the theoretical concepts. The objective here was to attempt to assess the extent to which the decision making experiences and processes described by the black West Indian migrants, mirror that which is postulated by Roseman"s (1971) model or the extent to which they suggest that other processes were operative.

## Interview schedule

## Subject Characteristics:

**Name:**

**Address:**

**Sex: Male     Female**

In which age group do you fall:

          20-30 30-40 40-50 50-60 60+ (years)

Birth place:

Occupation:

**Marital status:**            **No of people in household:**

**No of children:**

 (1) In which category does your annual income fall:

under $4,999                    between $1500-20,000

between $5,000-9,999            over $20,000.

between $10,000-14,999

(2)  In what type of housing do you live? :

      Apartment, terraced house, detached house, semi-detached

      house.            •

(3)  Do you own or rent your present accommodation? :

**Proposition**: That individuals only migrate to a place if they believe it will be better able to meet their needs or improve their conditions.

1) GQ:    **Why did you decide to leave the Caribbean?**

    **Prompts\probes**

    How long ago?
    Economic motivation?
    adventure?
    desire to travel?
    Was it intended for good ?
    Will you return to Caribbean ?
    Life in the Caribbean ?


2) GQ:    **Were you happy with your achievements in (Jamaica\Guyana)?**

    **Prompts\Probes**

    Life in Caribbean?
    What were your likes\dislikes ?
    Economic achievements?
    Occupation in Caribbean?
    Occupation in Canada?


**Proposition:** That black West Indian migration may be less as a result of careful decision making and more as a result of cultural influences.

3) GQ:    **As a youngster in the Caribbean, did you always imagine that you would leave one day?**

4) GQ:    **Did you sit down and weigh up the pro's and con's of moving to Canada, or were you just determined to leave the Caribbean anyway?**

5) GQ:    **Had other people you knew migrated from the Caribbean?**

    **Prompts\probes**

    Why?
    What had others told you about abroad?
    If you had heard negative reports, would you still have migrated?
    Did the migration of others influence your decision to migrate?

**Proposition**: That migration will result from the decision of a decision making unit.

6) GQ:     **Who was it who actually decided that you would migrate?**

           **Prompts\probes**

           **Self**
           **Friends**
           **Relatives**
           **Spouse**


**Proposition**: That migration will result from dissatisfaction with a general or specific site.

7) GQ:     **Where exactly did you live in (Jamaica\Guyana) prior to migration?**

           **Prompts\Probes**

           **Specific location**
           **urban or rural?**
           **living conditions?**
           **Living with whom?**


**Proposition:** That potential black West Indian migrants make little attempt to select a new specific site within the Caribbean.

8) GQ:     **Did you consider moving to another part of (Jamaica\Guyana) or elsewhere in the Caribbean, rather than leaving the region altogether?**

           **Prompts\probes**

           **Why\not?**
           **Another town\city \island**
           **Did you choose a new location?**
           **What was wrong with new location?**

Proposition: That migrants examine all general areas, of which they have knowledge, before they move.

9) GQ:     Did you consider any other countries outside of the caribbean region besides from Canada?

Prompts\Probes

Which ones?
How did you hear of others
What did you hear about others
Who informed you about others
Why did you reject the others?

10) GQ:     Why did you decide to come to Canada in particular?

Prompts\probes

What did you know about Canada?
What sources told you about Canada?
What had you heard about Canada?
Influence of Friends\relatives ?

Proposition: That an initial location within a new general area, usually chosen with limited knowledge, will be a temporary location.

11) GQ:     Where did you first move to in Canada?

Prompts\probes

Which Province\Town\Part of town.
Why that particular Province\Town\Part of town.
Influence of friends\relatives\spouse.

12) GQ:     How many times have you relocated since arriving in Canada?

Prompts\probes

Why the need for relocation?
specific sites.
How did you find out about these new locations.
Spatial search behaviour

## CHAPTER 6: Five West Indians in Urban Canada

The following case studies are the stories of five black West Indian immigrants in Canada. I have attempted to present the stories of these five individuals in the same vein in which they were presented to me by the individuals concerned. The names of the respondents have been changed to protect their privacy, however, all other factual information remains unaltered. Each case study begins with a brief biography of the subject, followed by an examination of their decision to migrate to Canada.

### Pauline

Pauline is a married woman in her early thirties. She lives with her husband, mother and two children in a spacious town house in Etobicoke, Toronto. Pauline was born in Guyana and moved to Canada sixteen years ago, where she married and where her two children were born. She is now employed by a private Toronto based company, where she works as a private secretary.

Before moving to Canada, Pauline lived with her five sisters and one brother, in her parents house in New Amsterdam, a small coastal town in south eastern Guyana. Living conditions, Pauline remembers, were good and her material needs were met. This is perhaps supported by the

fact that at no point during our conversations did Pauline mention economic considerations as part of her reason for leaving the Caribbean.

Pauline explained to me that her decision to leave the Caribbean was made at an early stage in her life cycle. When I asked her whether she had wanted to leave Guyana as a youngster, she replied:

> Yes, Always. I always wanted to leave. I used to dream about leaving Guyana. It wasn't until I actually got on the plane to come to Canada that I thought to myself, I don't want to leave.

Rather than economic motivation, Pauline stated that her main reason for deciding to come to Canada was that she wanted to further herself by going back to school in Canada. However, her replies would suggest that there was also perhaps another motivation for her wanting to leave Guyana. Hence, Pauline commented that:

> I guess I wanted a change, I was adventurous, I wanted to see what the outside world was like. I just wanted a change. I was working and still at home. In the West Indies a girl doesn't leave the house until she is married. On top of that, I was sixteen years old and I just wanted to move on ....
> I don't know exactly if I wanted to leave Guyana as a whole or leave the shelter of my parents house. But, one or the other, I just wanted to leave.

The first stage of Roseman's (1971) generalized decision making model suggests that potential migrants examine all new general areas and attempt to compare their present general location with other locations, about which they have

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knowledge. It is interesting to note, however, that evidence
from Pauline's replies suggest that she was prepared to move
only to Canada. Hence, she informed me that, despite having
heard of other countries (England and the USA), she never
considered any other country besides Canada, either within the
Caribbean region or outside. In fact, Pauline's comments
would suggest that at no time did she consciously attempt to
compare her prospects in Guyana with those outside. Hence,
Pauline informed me that:

> I didn't weigh up any pro's and con's. I just
> wanted to get out .

This statement is very important since I would suggest that
for many West Indian migrants, the decision to migrate is
simply a result of socialization within the culture or
tradition of migration. This is a culture which promises that
grass is always greener on the other side. Once exposed to
a situation in which family and friends have migrated and then
returned to espouse the benefits of migration, it is perhaps
very hard to ignore their comments and return home. It would
appear that there were definitely strong outside influences
in Pauline's decision to leave Guyana. Hence she comments
that:

> Most of my friends were out too, that was also a
> contributing factor .... Yes, many, many of my
> friends had gone. That was definitely a
> contributing factor.

The fact that many of Pauline's friends had decided to
migrate, I would suggest, put extra pressure on Pauline to

follow suit. In addition, friends and relatives who had
returned to Guyana for vacations informed her that:

> It was great. They don't tell you anything else,
> like how hard you work, the pressures you have to
> go through, or the prejudice you have to go through.
> I never heard anything about all that. Everything
> was just fine. I heard how easy it was to find
> work, the fun you had, the things you can do, the
> things you can have. That's all they used to say
> .... I had heard that Canada was very quiet, that
> it was a very good place to live, a good place to
> further your interests and study. Basically, I had
> heard that it was just a good place to live.

If one considers that Pauline had already decided that
she wanted to leave Guyana at a very early age, then coupled
with the glowing reports that she had heard about life in
Canada and overseas in general it would therefore appear that
her final decision to leave was less as a result of conscious
decision making in which she attempted to compare place
utilities and more as a result of outside factors.

Further, I would also suggest that in deciding to migrate
from the Caribbean, the decision to move is often based on a
belief that migration will be a temporary process. This would
suggest that many migrants are not making a conscious decision
to replace their present general location with a new general
location on a permanent basis, rather, many migrants move in
the hope that they will be able to earn some of the financial
benefits to be gained overseas, before returning to the
Caribbean to enjoy the fruits of their labour. The reality
of the situation however tends to be quite different. Some
sixteen years after leaving Guyana Pauline reflected that:

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I never wanted to stay away for good, not at all ...
Oh yes, I definitely had intended on going back.

I would therefore suggest that Roseman's model best applies when a migrant decides to replace one general location for another, on a permanent basis. If one considers that many West Indian migrants, as part of the culture of migration, have seen migrants return either permanently or on vacation, then they perhaps have no reason to regard migration as being permanent. Therefore, there would be less of a need to compare place utilities in such a formal manner as postulated by the model.


## Allen


Allen is a single man from Jamaica, in his early thirties. He has no children and lives alone in a rented apartment in Victoria Park, in Toronto. Although he has been visiting Canada since 1979, he did not move here permanently until 1984. He now works for a Toronto based company as an assembly worker.

Allen explained to me that he lived with his mother and eight brothers and sisters in rural Jamaica (Westmoreland). As the eldest of nine children Allen appeared to feel that he had to try to take the place of his deceased father. This meant that life could at times be very tough. He explained:

It was bad (life), it was hard, it was tough. It was just about everything. With eight brothers and

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sisters and no father alive, it was like I was the
father for the eight. So it was tough for me since
I was the eldest of the children.

Living in rural Jamaica the family was dependent upon
agriculture for its survival. However, Allen explained that
farming in Jamaica was far from being a lucrative business:

In Jamaica you have to farm a lot to inherit what
you want. In Jamaica for me that just couldn't work
because you can't farm enough, because you don't
have the land space.

In response to poor economic conditions in rural Jamaica,
Allen then moved to Montego Bay, the nearest urban center to
his mothers home, where he stayed with an aunt and found farm
work on the outskirts of town. This can therefore be regarded
as an attempt by the  migrant to select a new specific site
within a new general area, since Westmoreland is located
within a different parish from Montego Bay and this would have
resulted in  the displacement of Allen's weekly cycle.  The
move to Montego Bay, however, was to prove to be a temporary
one, since it was from there that Allen left to move to
Canada.

Allen's opportunity to come to Canada arose from his job
on the farm in Jamaica.  He explained that whilst working
there he got a card which enabled him to come to Canada and
work on the farms here.  It was therefore as a migrant farm
worker that Allen initially left Jamaica and came to Canada.
He worked initially on a farm in Dresden, Ontario and later

Wallaceburg, Ontario. Allen explained that the choice of a final location in Canada was not his own. Under the terms of the migrant farm workers scheme, Allen was simply sent to these particular locations.

An accident on the farm brought an end to Allen's employment as a farm worker. Rather than return to Jamaica or go else where in Canada, Allen decided to move to Toronto. He explained that:

> Why I decided to stay in Toronto, is that I have a lot of cousins here and I can see them or go at their homes and stay if I want to stay. So I said it is best to be around someone you know.

It is apparent from Allen's comments that his choice of a specific location within Canada largely resulted from the locational decisions which his relatives had already made. Since Allen's migration from Jamaica to Canada is an example of total displacement migration, this would appear to confirm that which is suggested within the theoretical framework.

If one attempts to examine Allen's decision to migrate to Canada within Roseman's generalized decision making model, there are at first glance at least, some apparent similarities. Allen's comments would suggest that he was not satisfied with the conditions within his previous general location (Jamaica) and therefore based on that, he chose a new general location (Canada). However, I would suggest that Allen's decision to migrate to Canada was also largely a product of cultural influences and due in part to his

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socialization in the notion that if one migrates, life will automatically be improved. When asked whether as a youngster growing up, he imagined that he would someday migrate, Allen replied that:

> Yes (emphasis), I imagined that boy, one day I have
> to leave Jamaica.

It would appear also that there was a very strong influence of friends and relatives in Allen's decision to migrate. He explained that:

> I had a lot of friends who migrated to Canada before
> me. They came back to Jamaica and they said, "Oh
> Canada is nice. I would like to meet you up there
> ....". They never said anything bad of Canada, they
> said it was nice and they enjoy it.

Allen also explained that:

> I heard about Canada from my parents, my mother's
> family and my father's family. I had a lot of
> cousins here in Canada that used to go and come
> between Jamaica and Canada and they told me about
> Canada.

If one accepts in total Roseman's model, as it applies to black West Indian migrants, then it would have involved Allen making a conscious comparison between his prospects in Jamaica and those in Canada. However, Allen's comments suggest that even as a youngster he had already made up his mind that he was going to migrate to Canada. Hence he comments that:

> From I was born, I just loved the name "Canada"
> (emphasis). I just loved the name Canada. I heard

about the Soviet Union, I heard about England, I heard about America, I heard about Cuba and I heard about Canada and Canada was to my liking. I didn't know it (Canada), but that was my liking.

From these comments we perhaps begin to get some idea of the extent to which overseas is discussed within the Caribbean. Allen informed me that although he had never known what Canada was like, he just made up his mind that one day he would have to come to Canada. It is also interesting to note that evidence from Allen's experiences also appears to contradict Rosemans's suggestion that potential migrants examine all general areas (of which they have knowledge) before deciding whether or not to move. Hence, in Allen's case, despite having knowledge of several other general areas and despite having relatives in England and the USA, Canada was the only place that Allen considered. Hence, in contradiction to that which is postulated within the model, there was no attempt to compare the place utilities of various locations. Rather, it would appear that through the influence of tourists, friends and relatives Allen had decided at a very early stage to move to Canada.

## Lillian

Lillian is a well educated, mother of two children who currently resides in the Kitchener-Waterloo region of Ontario. She is employed as an administrative worker in a local

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institution, where she has worked since her arrival in Canada some sixteen years ago.

In many respects Lillian appears to believe that her decision to migrate to Canada was a decision over which she had very little control. This is largely because she moved here to join her fiance, who had already moved to Canada. However, it is interesting to note that many of Lillian's comments would suggest that she had been largely influenced by the tradition or culture of migration within the Caribbean. Thus, Lillian's own final decision to move and join her fiance in Canada would appear to have been made under the influence of this tradition.

Lillian appears to have come from a fairly affluent family. She grew up in Georgetown, Guyana. Her mother was the headmistress of an elementary school, whilst her father held a fairly senior position, as head of pensions, in the Guyanese Civil Service. Lillian and her sisters attended a well respected all girls school. One might even go as far as to suggest that Lillian came from a fairly middle-class background. Certainly Lillian agreed that life was fairly affluent. Hence, she commented that:

> For me I think that it was (life was affluent). I never had anything that I wanted, my needs were certainly met.

From Lillian's comments it would appear that she was certainly very happy with Guyana and her life in Guyana. Roseman's (1971) model would suggest that under these

circumstances, that a potential migrant would decide not to migrate. However, despite this apparent happiness, Lillian still decided to leave the Caribbean, she explained that:

> I was dating a young man at the time. His family were migrating to Canada. He asked me to marry him and I said yes. It seemed like a natural thing to do, to follow him.

This would at first suggest that Lillian's decision to move to Canada was based squarely on the earlier decision of her fiancee to migrate. However, I asked her whether she would have migrated eventually, even if not to get married. She replied:

> Oh yes, but at a later date .... Because at the same time my family were also migrating, my siblings were migrating. I knew that I would probably be gone shortly after.

As noted earlier, within the culture of migration, migration is often perceived as being a temporary process. I would suggest therefore that many West Indian migrants leave with the intention that when they have made their fortune abroad, they will return home to settle. This would appear to support my earlier contention that few West Indian migrants actively decide to permanently replace their present general location with another. Hence, Lillian also informed me that she had regarded migration as being a temporary process. She commented that:

> We had set up a sort of timetable. We were going

to give ourselves X number of years, go to school
and then go home. That was our plan.  Well, it
didn't happen that way.

It is quite apparent from comments made by Lillian that
there were strong influences in the Caribbean which encouraged
her to move out of the region.  Firstly, Lillian commented
that by the time she actually made her own decision to leave,
that many of her own friends had already left.  She noted
that:

I didn't really feel pressured, because they had
left, but it was a natural process.  People were
leaving gradually and I knew that I would leave as
well.

Lillian informed me that in addition to having a sister
who had already migrated to Canada, that she also had several
friends who had migrated to England and the United States.
With many friends and relatives already overseas, one might
suppose that there was almost a feeling of obligation in
Lillian's decision to move.  After all, as Lillian commented,
her own family and friends as well as the family of her fiance
were already in the process of moving from Guyana.  This must,
one assumes, have placed some indirect pressure on Lillian to
do the same.  This is especially so given that, as Lillian put
it:

Canada was being talked up to be the land of
opportunity.

Of the five respondents interviewed during the course of
this study, Lillian was one of the two who had visited Canada

prior to coming here to live permanently.  Hence, Lillian informed me that she had come to Canada in 1972, two years prior to her own migration, to visit her own sister who was already living in Toronto.  This was in fact quite an important visit, since Lillian commented that:

> When I came in '72 , I thought I might want to come
> (back to Canada) at a different time.

I would suggest that Lillian's decision to move to Canada was very much influenced by the movement of her own family and friends out of Guyana.  She herself commented that it was "a natural process", everyone else around appeared to be leaving therefore it really was quite natural that she should go also. The tradition or culture of migration had by this time been very firmly established. North America was by the mid 1970's very much the "in" destination and I would suggest Lillian, under the influence of this tradition, simply followed suite. This is also perhaps borne out by Lillian's own admission that she did not seriously attempt to contemplate migration and weigh up the pro's and con's.  She commented that:

> I had to leave, I didn't weigh up any pro's and
> con's.  If I did, I might not have come.

Indeed, given the nature of Lillian's apparent relative economic prosperity in Guyana before she left, this may have been true, since the theoretical framework would suggest that an individual only moves when they believe that their economic

situation will be improved.

## Marilyn

Marilyn has now been resident in Canada for two years, arriving here from Jamaica in 1988. Presently, she is employed as a nurses aid in a Toronto hospital. She is now married and lives with her husband in privately owned accommodation in the east side of metropolitan Toronto.

Marilyn grew up originally in rural Jamaica, where she lived with her widowed mother, six brothers and three sisters. At the relatively early age of fifteen, Marilyn left her mothers home and moved to Montego Bay to live with an aunt. However, when her aunt in Montego Bay died, Marilyn then moved to live with another aunt in Kingston.

Roseman's (1971) model suggests that in deciding whether or not to move, an individual will compare the place utilities of their present location with the utilities of potential destinations. However, Marilyn's comments would suggest that her decision making process did not rely on careful assessment of potential benefits and losses or advantages and disadvantages. Indeed, when questioned as to whether or not she had weighed up the pro's and con's before moving, in common with the other respondents, Marilyn replied simply,:

No, I just wanted to go.

Perhaps more than any of the other respondents interviewed here, Marilyn was able to verbalize the influence

which other return migrants had on her own decision to migrate. When asked why she decided to leave the Caribbean, she replied:

> Nothing special I guess, but really I suppose it was just to see how the other half lives. At the time I had no idea about leaving Jamaica. I left because I hear people always talking about leaving. Lets face it, everybody wants to leave, to see New York, England, Canada, to see what it looks like. So I decided to come because people were always coming back and saying how beautiful the country (Canada) is. I don't know really why I left.

Marilyn's decision to choose Canada as her final destination might at first seem curious, since at the time she had no immediate friends or relatives in Canada. However, it must be remembered, that in the post-war period only three destinations, England, Canada and the USA are considered within the tradition of West Indian migration. Marilyn informed me that she would not have migrated to the USA because of reports she had heard concerning violent crime there. She informed me also that she had originally wanted to go to England. She explained that:

> My cousins went to England and that left me .... One of them told me that when she gets there, she would send for me, but she didn't. So I came to Canada.

This suggests that Marilyn moved to Canada almost by default. Therefore her decision to move to Canada was not as a result of comparing place utilities in the same way that Roseman's model suggests. Instead, by Marilyn's own admission she moved

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simply because of the various reports that she had heard from returning migrants and because other members of her family were also moving. It was therefore almost natural for her to go as well.

Marilyn's comments also demonstrate the extent to which the theme of migration and its benefits are verbalized within the Caribbean and the power which this has. Hence, Marilyn commented that:

> I always saw people coming and going and they said it's a very beautiful country (Canada), so I came ... It was just by word of mouth that I heard. Like you would say something to that person, that person would repeat it and I overheard it.

It is interesting to note that within the tradition or culture of migration, certain destinations appear to be popular whilst others are unpopular. Thus, during the post emancipation period it was popular to move to other destinations within the Caribbean region. However, during the post independence period, it would appear that other Caribbean areas were no longer popular destinations (see Chapter 3). Instead, England, Canada and the USA were to become the sought after destinations. Hence, in common with the other respondents here, Marilyn rejected another Caribbean territory as a possible destination (or anywhere else for that matter) simply because it was not one of the areas currently being discussed by return migrants.

Roseman's model suggests that after selecting a new

general area that a migrant will select a new specific site within that area. It is interesting to note that Marilyn's experiences would suggest that she did not consciously select a new general area within Canada at all. Remembering that Marilyn had no relatives in Canada when she arrived, I questioned her as to why she had selected Toronto, Ontario. She replied:

> I don't know (why I chose Toronto), it just happened. I didn't really choose it, it just happened .... I guess, I just boarded the plane and it landed at the airport in Toronto, so that was it.

Evidence from Marilyn's experience again appear to suggest that there was very little careful decision making and comparison of place utilities. Instead it would appear that Marilyn decided to move to Canada largely as a result of the tradition or culture of migration which has been established within the Caribbean.

## Vernan

Vernan, who is in his late fifties, is the eldest of the respondents interviewed here. The significance of this fact shall become evident later. He lives in the Scarbrough region of Toronto, with his wife and daughter. He works for a Toronto based company as a works supervisor. Vernan was of particular interest, as he did not migrate to Canada directly

from the Caribbean. Instead, he left Jamaica to migrate to England in 1957, before moving to Canada in 1964. Of all the respondents interviewed here, Vernan had therefore been in Canada the longest.

Vernan grew up in rural Jamaica, the son of a farmer and his wife. He was one of nine children, all of whom grew up helping their parents plant crops and raise animals. Vernan remained in the country until he was eighteen, when he moved to Montego Bay to learn a trade, as a brick layer. He remained in Montego Bay for approximately two to three years, before leaving from there to go the England.

If one considers that the first West Indian migrants to England did not leave until 1948 and that the greater part of the movement did not start until the late 1950's (see Chapter 3) then it is perhaps fair to say that Vernan (unlike the other respondents here) did not grow up within a tradition or culture of migration to Britain and North America to the same extent as the others. In view of this fact and Vernan's age it is interesting to note therefore that he was the only respondent who did not recall hearing people talking continuously of migration. Rather, I would suggest that as Vernan left the Caribbean at such an early stage, that he was one of the pioneer migrants, whom later migrants followed.

Vernan recalls that his decision to migrate (originally to England) was not his own free choice. He recalled that:

> I didn't decide, I was mainly sent by my parents. I didn't want to leave Jamaica. My elder
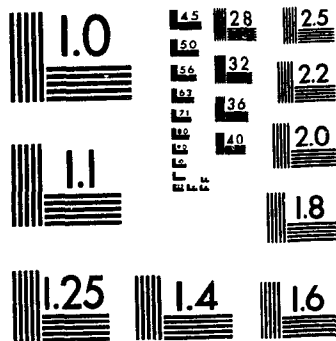
MICROCOPY RESOLUTION TEST CHART
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STANDARD REFERENCE MATERIAL 1010a
(ANSI and ISO TEST CHART No 2)

brother was in England before me. He wrote to my
parents and said that he was lonely and that one of
us (another sibling) should come, so they sent me.
I wasn't that keen on leaving at that time.

Roseman's (1971) model suggests that in deciding whether
or not to move to a new location, that a comparison of general
locations is made by the potential migrant. Vernan, who was
the first to migrate , of those interviewed here, was the only
respondent who actively recalled weighing up the pro's and
con's of migration. He recalls that:

> According to him (my brother) he was doing alright
> (economically). They (my parents) thought that if
> I went there (to England) with him that I would do
> better than I was doing back home too. So they sent
> me and I decided to go in the end .... I did weigh
> it up (the pro's and con's). I really didn't want
> to leave Jamaica. My mother confronted me with it,
> about going to England quite a few times and I
> turned it down. When she decided to send somebody
> else (another brother), I started feeling guilty,
> saying that maybe there is a pot of gold there for
> me and I was refusing to go. That's when I decided
> to go.

Hence, this early migrant, who had not been exposed to the
influence of return migrants, espousing the benefits of
migration and who had not grown up almost expecting to
migrate, appears to fit more easily into Roseman's generalized
model.

However, there are still some aspects of Vernan's
decision to migrate which appear to fall into the established
notion of the culture or tradition of migration and return.
Vernan, in common with the other migrants who left at a much

later time, only intended leaving the Caribbean on a temporary basis. Hence, he recalled that:

> I didn't give myself any time limit, but I always said whenever I get enough money, I want to go home and open up my own business.

Despite an absence of over thirty three years, this dream of return to the Caribbean is one which is apparently still held by Vernan. He informed me that although he has not as yet returned permanently to the Caribbean, he hopes to retire there and he continues to return to Jamaica for vacations, usually every two years.

It is important to note, however, that in Vernan's actual decision to migrate to Canada, there appear to have been some cultural influences although these appear not to have been totally overwhelming in his decision to move. Vernan informed me that after some seven years in England, he returned to Jamaica to visit his sick parents. It was whilst he was back in Jamaica that Vernan recalled first hearing people talking about moving to Canada. Upon his return to England, Vernan then enquired about migration to Canada, via the immigration authorities. He recalled that on his return to England:

> I felt somehow I had to move some place again. I wasn't that comfortable when I got back (to England) .... It was the going thing at the time. Canada was young and they were looking for people with qualifications .... So I went to Liverpool in England, just to find out about what was going on in Canada.

Vernan's comments would again suggest that of all the

respondents, he who was amongst the earliest migrants, was actually comparing place utilities. Therefore he is perhaps better able to fit into Roseman's generalized model.

It is also important to note that of all the respondents interviewed here, Vernan was the only one to have achieved landed immigrant status before he arrived in Canada. This would suggest that whilst the other respondents migrated in a sense of simply following the example set by many others, that Vernan's decision to leave the Caribbean was much more calculated. He migrated at the start of the latest twentieth century movement out of the Caribbean, before a precedent had been firmly established. He migrated without the knowledge that many of his friends and relatives had already left. Whereas the other respondents, who had grown up slightly later, all looked towards migration in the future, Vernan did not. He commented that:

> No, I didn't imagine that (I would migrate) when I was a kid. People hadn't started moving out yet. When we were kids we used to break eggs and put them in the sand. They said it used to tell you your destiny. My one broke in the shape of a ship. I was told that I am going to travel, by someone that went around in the district reading peoples' hands. I didn't believe it because this guy was telling everyone that they were going to travel, so I didn't believe it at all that I was going to leave Jamaica.

Vernan's choice of a specific site within Canada was, he informed me, largely a result of the decision of Canadian immigration officials in Canada. The role of such agents is

not considered within Roseman's model. Vernan informed me that immigration officials suggested Toronto as a possible destination and he simply followed their suggestion. Vernan also informed me that upon arrival in Toronto, Ontario, it took him several moves before he was able to find what he considered a suitable location within the city. This would appear to coincide with that which is postulated within the theoretical framework, which suggests that total displacement migration often proves to be inefficient as regards the collection of information about a new specific site within a new general area.

It would appear therefore that of all the migrants studied here, Vernan's experiences appear to fit most closely into that which is postulated by the generalized decision making model. Of those studied here, Vernan appears to be the only case where a clearly defined decision making process can be identified. He appears to have consciously weighed up the options involved in the decision to migrate, originally deciding to leave the Caribbean in search of the "pot of gold" in England. He was the only respondent who at the time of migration expressed some real concern at the prospect of leaving the Caribbean. This was in contrast to the other respondents who went in search of all the bounties that they had heard about for so many years. They simply followed in the footsteps, followed the tradition which had been set by Vernan and other "pioneer" migrants from the Caribbean.

# CHAPTER 7:    Analysis and Conclusions

The evidence presented here would appear to confirm the notion that much if not most black West Indian migration is now a result of a West Indian tradition or culture of migration. This suggests that black West Indian migration can perhaps be explained less in terms óf individual decision making or traditional explanations of the causes of migration and more in terms of this tradition or culture.

Roseman's (1971) generalized model of the individual's decision to migrate can perhaps be best applied to "free migration" i.e. migration of individuals strongly motivated to seek improvement or adventure (Allen, 1971). However in many respects West Indian migration to Canada (England and the USA) does not appear to be totally free migration, given the cultural influences. Thus, in many respects it can perhaps be regarded as being an example of "impelled migration" i.e. migration whereby migrants are confronted with state or societal pressure, but where the final power of decision is left with the individual (Peterson, 1958).

Roseman's model takes no account of societal pressures operating within either the "sending" or "receiving" nations. In the case of black West Indian migrants, whilst individuals make the  actual final decision to migrate, it is against a background of a society which in many respects appears to encourage migration. The decision to migrate is made in a

society which has a long tradition or history of migration and in some respects appears to accord return migrants a higher status than those who have no overseas experience.

It is evident therefore that there are number of constraints on an individuals spatial behaviour which are not considered within this model. The notion of constraints on spatial behaviour is an issue considered by Desbarats (1983). She is critical of behavioural models which do not adequately consider the various constrains which act to shape human spatial behaviour. Desbarats argues that such models promote the myth that people control their own existence.

Therefore, it is reasonable to assume that any attempt to apply a traditional model to black West Indian migration would have failed to take into account important cultural aspects of West Indian society. This is because traditional models often do not consider wider influences acting on the individual.

Wood (1982) has commented that a purely behavioural approach to the study of migration (such as that adopted by Roseman's model) provides an essential framework, but that it tends to over emphasize "free choice" and minimize the role of external forces or constraints. This would perhaps suggest that in the case of black West Indian migration, Roseman's model captures only some of the elements involved in the decision making mechanism. Hence, Roseman's model appears to work best when applied to the early migrants who left the

Caribbean, before the culture or tradition had become firmly established. Hence, of the five case studies here, Roseman's model appears to best fit the decision making process for Vernan who was the first of these five individuals to leave the West Indies.

Based on the evidence from the respondent's replies it would appear that several of the ideas contained in the propositions were confirmed, whilst some of the ideas were challenged. Firstly the notion that black West Indian migration is largely a result of cultural influences and not a product of a careful decision making process, is supported by evidence from all respondents. Also, it would appear that all the migrants moved to Canada in the belief that their needs would be met and conditions improved. As all the respondents moved after a relatively short time after arriving in Canada, this reinforces the notion that the initial location within a new general area, is only a temporary location. There is no evidence from the replies of the respondents to suggest that they tried to select a new location within the Caribbean before ultimately deciding to move to a new general area (Canada). Likewise, there is no evidence to suggest that the respondents considered a wide number of general areas before deciding to come to Canada. Rather, the tradition or culture of migration appears to have meant that only a limited number of well established destinations were considered.

Many of the comments made by the individuals interviewed would suggest that they were very much influenced by the tradition of migration and the migration of others. It is interesting to note that despite having been resident in Canada for a considerable length of time in some cases, all the respondents identified themselves as being West Indians first and Canadians second. They appear on the surface at least, to be well settled and well adjusted to life in Canada. However, three of the five respondents interviewed here also expressed a strong desire to one day return "home", thereby confirming the notion that the return part of the West Indian culture of migration is in many cases still very much alive.

The expression of intent to return home to the Caribbean also relates to the phenomenological concept of sense of place. To a large extent evidence presented here would suggest that these individuals have yet to fully establish a sense of place with regard to Canada. They still view the West Indies as being their home. Even Allen, who has no plans to return to the Caribbean permanently and who thought he would remain in Canada indefinitely, regarded Jamaica as being his home. This may also help to explain why many West Indians frequently return to the Caribbean for vacations or permanently.

It is also important to note that during the course of these interviews, not one of the subjects mentioned any other country besides England, Canada and the USA as a potential

destination which they would have considered. Within the post war history of Caribbean migration, these are the three traditional destinations. This would suggest that people considered only these destinations because these were the only ones being discussed within the Caribbean. If black West Indian migration was totally free and occurring outside of this tradition or culture of migration, one would expect that alternative locations would also be considered. However, evidence presented here would appear to suggest that whilst the earlier migrants may have followed a careful decision making process, the later migrants appear simply to have followed the example set by the pioneer migrants.

All the respondents mentioned the strong influence of the migration of friends and relatives on their own decision to migrate. This would suggest that they migrated largely because others had already done so. Allen and Pauline in particular remarked on their yearning to migrate, a yearning which was established early on in their childhood as others talked of life overseas and the benefits of migration. These are factors which are not considered within Roseman's model.

Although there does in fact appear to be strong evidence to indicate the existence of a tradition or culture of migration within the Caribbean, it does in many respects appear to be very subtle in nature. It is important to note, for example, that none of the respondents mentioned the existence of such a culture. None of the respondents

mentioned having read any of the many novels by West Indian authors, or listened to any of the West Indian music for example, which contains a strong migratory theme. Nor did any of the respondents mention any desire to achieve improved social status upon return, as part of the reason for deciding to leave the West Indies. However, when prompted several of the respondents were able to recall a number of these elements as being part of life in the Caribbean. It would appear, therefore, that the reports from overseas and the example of the migration of others, were the strongest elements within this migratory culture.

Roseman's model suggests that individuals compare the place utilities of their present location with those of other potential destinations and based on this comparison, they decide whether or not to move. However, it is important to note that it is more than simply a comparison of potential destinations which will determine whether or not an individual moves. For example, lack of economic resources may deter an individual from moving, even though a direct comparison of place utilities might encourage such a move. Roseman's model also appears to suggest that individuals always act as rational beings, relocating whenever their own general location fails in comparison with another general location. However, economic geographers have long since established that man does not always act in a rational manner. For example, an individual might still decide not to move even though his

present general location compares badly with another general location.

In general, evidence from this study would suggest that where, as in the case of black West Indian migration, a strong tradition or culture of migration has been established, individuals do not necessarily act in a rational decision making manner as Roseman's model suggests. Instead, rather than comparing place utilities before deciding whether or not to migrate, they just move, almost automatically, following the example set by so many others. In the case studies here, with the exception of Vernan, all the other respondents commented on the fact that at no point did they sit down and rationally weigh up the advantages or disadvantages of moving. Rather, after having heard so much about overseas migration and after seeing so many people leaving, they followed the example of others and moved. Thus, the influence and importance of the cultural aspects of migration appear to precede rational decision making.

It would appear that, in general, from birth to adulthood many black West Indians are exposed to strong cultural influences which encourage migration as the most easily available means of economic prosperity. This amounts to the preparation of individuals for migration from a very early age (see Figure 7). Thus, from a very early age individuals hear about what can be achieved overseas, they hear about the good life abroad. Individuals also see return migrants in their

**Figure 7:    West Indian Culture of Migration**

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                    ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                    │  Cultural influence of        │
                    │  migration                    │
                    │                               │
                    │      - music                  │
                    │      - literature             │
                    │      - example of others      │
                    └──────────────┬───────────────┘
                                   │
                                   ▼
                    ┌──────────────────────────────┐
                    │  Preparation for migration    │
                    └──────────────┬───────────────┘
                                   │
                                   ▼
     ┌───────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
     │              Birth to  Adulthood                       │
     └──────┬─────────────────────┬──────────────────┬────────┘
            │                     │                  │
            ▼                     │                  ▼
┌──────────────────────┐         │      ┌──────────────────────────┐
│ Opportunity to       │         │      │ No Opportunity to migrate│
│ Migrate              │         │      │                          │
│                      │         │      │  - no economic ability   │
│ - economic ability   │         │      │  - no relatives overseas │
│ - relatives overseas │         │      │  - no skilled occupation │
│ - skilled occupation │         │      │  - etc.                  │
│ -  etc.              │         │      └───────────┬──────────────┘
└──────────┬───────────┘         │                  │
           │            ┌────────────────────┐      │
           │            │ Patriotic decision │      │
           │            │ not to migrate     │      │
           │            └─────────┬──────────┘      │
           ▼                      ▼                 ▼
   ┌──────────────┐      ┌──────────────┐   ┌──────────────┐
   │  Migration   │      │ No Migration │   │ No Migration │
   └──────┬───────┘      └──────────────┘   └──────────────┘
          │
          ▼
┌──────────────────────────┐
│ Choice of a new general  │
│ and specific site.       │
│ - based on locational    │
│ choice of pioneer        │
│ migrants.                │
└──────────────────────────┘
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midst who appear to be economically prosperous, who tell tales of great wealth to be obtained in England, Canada and the USA. In addition to which, there are other influences such as music, literature and television. Upon reaching adulthood, those with the opportunity to migrate are therefore virtually compelled to do so.

There are of course those in the Caribbean who do not migrate. I would suggest, however, that broadly speaking those who do not migrate are those who do not wish to migrate because of patriotic love of their country or those who are not able to migrate, through lack of opportunity. This suggests that those who remain are not those who have compared place utilities and decided to remain. Opportunity to migrate and a patriotic decision not to migrate are therefore very important points to be considered (Figure 7). There are a number of West Indians who resist the temptation to migrate through love of their country. This might be interpreted, by some, as a concious rejection of the culture of migration since it results from a concious decision to remain at home despite the forces which may have been encouraging migration. Thus, whilst travelling in the Caribbean, I have personally met a number of West Indians who have said that they refuse to leave their country under any circumstances. These have often been individuals who refuse to leave, even knowing that they would be economically better off outside of the Caribbean.

Opportunity to migrate is, I would suggest, in many cases the deciding factor as to whether or not many black West Indians leave the Caribbean. In Britain, the United States and Canada, the traditional post war destinations for West Indians, there have been increasingly restrictive immigration controls passed within recent years. These controls mean that only those people with highly sought after skills or substantial economic ability are allowed entry to these countries. The long line-ups outside the North American embassies in particular, in the Caribbean and the huge demand for entry visa's, is I believe evidence that there still exists, within many people in the Caribbean a strong desire to emigrate. However in most cases, failure to meet entry requirements means that many black West Indians are in fact denied the opportunity to migrate.

As regards the actual spatial choice of a location upon arrival at the destination, it is interesting to note firstly, that in common with most other West Indian migrants in Canada (see Chapter 3 and Table 2), all the respondents chose an urban location, in Ontario. All the respondents appear to have been strongly influenced by the decisions of others in their choice of a final location in Canada. For example, Vernan simply took the advice of immigration officials. Marilyn chose Toronto simply because that was where the aeroplane landed. Lillian and Pauline
simply relied on the decision of their respective fiancee's,

whilst Allen chose Toronto because of family connections in the city. It would appear therefore that in regard to the choice of a spatial location, there is very little evidence of a formal decision making process. Instead, the respondents appear again to have been content to follow the example set by earlier migrants.

Whatever the causes, consequences or wider implications, the fact is that black West Indians have continued to migrate, ever since the 1840's and they continue to do so even today. Although the destinations may have changed and the individual situations may have changed, its institutionalized nature means that individual decision making remains secondary in the migration of black West Indians.

It is perhaps inevitable in a study such as this, that a number of questions and issues will be raised which are outside the scope of any one piece of research, or which can only be commented upon very briefly. However, this study raises a number of issues which would benefit from future investigation.

One issue which could be investigated relates to the central concept of migration itself. Migration still continues to play a significant role in West Indian society. Indeed, studies suggest that up to 60% of Jamaica's population, if given the opportunity, would migrate to the United States (Stone, 1982). In addition, West Indian labourers are recruited annually to help with the fruit

harvests in the fruit producing regions of the United States. Thomas-Hope (1986), argues that West Indian migration in the twentieth century must be seen as part of the global transfer of human resources from the third world to the developed world. She suggests that the way in which the developed world has been able to selectively import labour from the Caribbean, is perhaps symptomatic of the dependency relationship which exists between the developed and developing nations of the world. It therefore adds to the perception of the Caribbean as a source of surplus labour.

The existence of this dependency relationship between the Caribbean and the developed world, in which the Caribbean plays the role of the poorer partner, is perhaps demonstrated by the way in which migration levels have tended to rise and fall according to the leniency of the immigration laws in Britain and North America. It would appear that the Caribbean has continued to supply labour until the stage at which the developed countries have decided that their labour requirements have been met. This has perhaps meant that the economic, social and political interests of Britain and North America have been met, perhaps at the expense of the needs of the Caribbean countries.

In addition, if one accepts that migration has become institutionalized within the Caribbean, then the consequences of this may also include the manner in which in economic terms, the Caribbean nations have become so externally

orientated and dependent upon foreign economies.

It has been suggested (Cooper, 1985) that migration within the Caribbean is now such a force and of such importance that certain sections of the West Indian community have, in the past at least, used migration or the threat of migration, to influence Caribbean Government policy. Therefore, one area which future reseaechers might like to investigate more fully concerns the wider political, social and economic implications of migration.

A number of other questions or issues could also be considered in future research. There are several different methodological approaches which a similar study could adopt. Firstly, because of the relatively small sample size used in this particular study, future researchers might like to carry out a similar study utilizing an enlarged sample, to enable a comparison of results. Secondly, because this study dealt primarily with migrants from the English speaking Caribbean, it would perhaps be interesting to try to establish whether a similar tradition or culture of migration exists elsewhere in the Spanish, Dutch or french speaking Caribbean. Thirdly, availability of information and personal interest meant that most of the examples used in this study relied upon data from Jamaican and Guyanese migration. It would be interesting perhaps to see a study which utilized more data from elsewhere in the English speaking Caribbean.

From the evidence presented in this study it is evident

that return migration to the Caribbean is very important. The notion of return migration to the Caribbean, however, is one which has received little attention and one which would benefit greatly from further investigation. Within the positivistic approach also, it would perhaps be beneficial to see the concept of return migration incorporated more fully into future models of migration processes.

One of the main aims of this study has been to demonstrate the great importance of cultural constraints on West Indian migration. It is my hope, therefore, that future attempts to model migration will also consider much more fully the importance of cultural influences on migration and the decision to migrate.

Finally, in view of the very important consequences and wider implications of migration in the West Indies, future researchers might also be interested to investigate more fully the role of political and economic relations in the creation of a culture of migration in the Caribbean and elsewhere.

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**Appendix**

Interviewee: Pauline (pseudonym)
Interviewer: Patrick
Date: June 9th, 1990

Patrick: The first question I would like to ask you is why did you decide to leave the Caribbean?

Pauline: Originally I wanted to leave because I wanted to better myself. I wanted to go back to school. I was having a lot of problems getting out. As it so happens I got out by another route and these plans were laid to rest as I got married.

Patrick: You are from Guyana right?

Pauline: Yes.

Patrick: How long ago is it since you left?

Pauline: This year it will be 16 years since I came to Canada.

Patrick: When you left the Caribbean, was it your intention to stay away for good?

Pauline: No! I never wanted to stay away for good, not at all.

Patrick: So you had intended on going back?

Pauline: Oh yes, I definitely had intended on going back. I never wanted to stay away for good, no. I had intended to go back, but when I went back in '79 I was so disappointed that I said forget it! I'm not coming back -

from the things that I saw and heard from my sisters and my family, I just knew I couldn't live back there. The poverty and the cost of living, I just couldn't handle that.

Patrick: From what you remember, what was life in the Caribbean like for you, what was your standard of living like?

Pauline: I have to say that it was very good. I had everything I needed. I guess because I didn't have any responsibilities. I was young and single. I was still at home, so I didn't find that I had any problems.

Patrick: So life was good, so what was the motivation to make you leave a good life for something that you are not sure about?

Pauline: I guess I wanted a change, I was adventurous, I wanted to see what the outside world was like. 'I just wanted a change. I was working and still at home. In the West Indies a girl doesn't leave the house until she is . .. married. On top of that I was 16 years old and I just wanted to move on.

Patrick: When you decided to leave Guyana, did you sit down and weigh up the pro's and con's of moving, or were you just determined to move?

Pauline: I didn't weigh up any pro's and con's. I just wanted to get out.

Patrick: Why in particular did you choose to move to

Canada?

Pauline: I heard a lot about Canada. I had an uncle in Calgary - I didn't think I would like the states too much because of what I had heard about it and read about it, because of all the drugs and the violence -

Patrick: What had you heard about Canada?

Pauline: I had heard that Canada was very quiet, that it was a good place to live, a good place to further your interests and study. Basically, I had heard that it was a good place to live.

Patrick: Who did you hear all this news from?

Pauline: Friends, relatives, radio and T.V.

Patrick: As a youngster in the Caribbean, did you always think that one day you would leave?

Pauline: Yes, always. I always wanted to leave. I used to dream about leaving Guyana - It wasn't until I actually got on the plane to come to Canada that I thought to myself, I don't want to leave. When I came here, first I used to phone home every day, I cried so much - I used to speak to my mum and my sisters on the phone and tell them that I wanted to come back. Our phone bill used to be about $1,000 every time.

Patrick: Why did you always want to leave?

Pauline: I don't know exactly. To me, at that time Guyana had a lot of limitation - I don't know exactly if I wanted

to leave Guyana as a whole or leave the shelter of my parents house. But, one or the other, I just wanted to leave. I didn't want to leave just to get married, I wanted to leave as part of my own decision to leave. I guess most of my friends were out too, that was also a contributing factor.

Patrick: So had many people you know already left Guyana?

Pauline: Yes, many, many of my friends had gone. That was definitely a contributing factor.

Patrick: In general, what had they told you about life outside Guyana?

Pauline: Well obviously, they told me it was great. They don't tell you anything else, like how hard you work, the pressures you have to go through or the prejudice you have to go through - I never heard anything about all 'that. Everything was just fine. I heard how easy it was to find work, the fun you had, the things you can do, the things you . . . can have. That's all they used to say.

Patrick: If people who had already left, had told you negative things about Canada, would you still have come?

Pauline: I don't know, I guess I should say no, but probably. I suppose I would just have wanted to see it for myself.

Patrick: Who was it who actually decided that would move to Canada?

Pauline: The first time when I wanted to leave, when I wanted to go back to school, it was my decision. But, when I wasn't getting through, it was my mother who started to say that it was time that I got married - I was getting frustrated and migration was still at the back of my mind.

Patrick: So your decision to migrate was made in conjunction between you and your mother?

Pauline: Yes, we had talked a lot about it.

Patrick: Where exactly in Guyana did you live?

Pauline: New Amsterdam, it's very small.

Patrick: Who were you living with exactly?

Pauline: My parents, my sisters and my one brother.

Patrick: In general what were living conditions like?

Pauline: Very good, we had everything we needed and we were ok for space.

Patrick: Did you ever consider moving to another part of Guyana, as opposed to leaving the country totally?

Pauline: Yes. I wanted to live in the big city, Georgetown.

Patrick: Did you at any point move to another part of Guyana?

Pauline: No, I never made it, basically I left Guyana from New Amsterdam.

Patrick: Up until the time that you left, were you happy with what you had achieved in Guyana?

Pauline: Em, (pause), at the time, yes, I suppose so. I was working. I was doing ok.

Patrick: Did you consider any other country inside the Caribbean region?

Pauline: No, I only wanted to go to Canada.

Patrick: Did you consider moving to any other country apart from Canada and the United States?

Pauline: No, I never thought of going anywhere else.

Patrick: Where did you first live in Canada, where was your first location?

Pauline: Toronto.

Patrick: So why did you choose to move to Ontario, of all the ten provinces?

Pauline: I wanted to go to Calgary where my uncle is, but he wasn't getting through with school, so I came to ‛Toronto because my fiancee was here. I didn't really choose Toronto, he was already here - I didn't have anyone here, so . . ⋅ when I first came, I came to him.

Patrick: Have you moved outside Toronto at any point?

Pauline: No, never!

Patrick: Since you have been in Toronto, how many times have you moved?

Pauline: I have only moved house twice since I've been here.

Patrick: How did you find out about those locations within

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Toronto?

Pauline: We heard of the first through a mutual friend. The other one, we looked for that location in the newspaper.

Patrick: Thank you very much, that's it.

Pauline: Thank you.

Interviewee: Marilyn
Interviewer: Patrick
Date: 17 June 1990

P:  Marilyn, could you tell me why did you decide to leave the Caribbean?

M:  Nothing special I guess, but really I suppose it was just to see how the other half lives - At that time I had ro idea about leaving Jamaica - I left because I hear other people always talking about leaving - Lets face it, everybody wants to leave, to see new York, England, Canada, to see what it looks like - so I decided to come because people were always coming back and saying how beautiful the country (Canada) is - I don't know really why I left -

P:  How long ago did you leave?

M:  Twenty two years ago, 1968.

P:  Why did you decide to come to Canada of all the other countries that you could have chosen to go to?

M:  No specific reason, because I didn't know anybody when I came here.  I came here on my own.

P:  When did you decide to leave the West Indies?

M:  Probably as a teenager I think.  After a while I had heard so much about places like England and America.  After a while I just wanted to see it for myself.

P:  So what you heard as you grew up was important in helping you make your decision?

M: I would say so.

P: Before you came, what had you heard about Canada?

M: That it was a nice country. Not much in those days, but I always saw people coming and going and they said its a very beautiful country, so I came.

P: So had you known any friends or relatives who had come to Canada before you?

M: Not friends, no - It was just by word of mouth that I heard - Like, you would say something to that person, that person would repeat it and I overheard it - But no, at that time, no friends, no family -

P: Before you left did you sit down and weigh up the pro's and con's of leaving?

M: No, I just wanted to go -

P: Had other people you know migrated from the Caribbean?

M: Not too many that I knew personally, but there were many people going.

P: So what about your own friends?

M: Well, most of them went to New York and a few to England.

P: Why didn't you go to New York then with your friends?

M: I heard about the violence and guns. I wouldn't go there to live.

P: Did the fact that people you knew had already left, did that influence you in leaving?

M: Maybe, because my cousins went to England and that left me - we were going to the same school, in the same class and they went to England - One of them told me that when she gets there she would send for me, but she didn't - so, I came to Canada -

P: Where exactly in Jamaica did you live before you left?

M: Several places (laugh).

P: Ok, where did you grow up then?

M: In Westmoreland.

P: What were living conditions like? Who did you live with?

M: My father died when I was seven. I lived with my six brothers and three sisters. I lived with my mum until I was 15. Then I went to live with my aunt in Montego Bay. When she died I had to go to my other aunt in Kingston - People move from place to place back home, they don't live at one place for too long.

P: So where were you actually living just before moving to Canada?

M: Kingston. I can't remember the exact address now - It was a long time ago and my aunt died quite a few years ago so I've never been back there - There is nobody to go back to.

P: Instead of moving to Canada, did you ever consider moving to any other part of the Caribbean region?

M: No, because in those days you didn't really hear people talking much about other islands - Well, actually maybe I thought about it, but I said what's the use because I'm in one (island) already. What's the use in going to another island? The same things you see in one, to me, I thought you would find it in the next - There's no difference.

P: Did you at any point consider going to any other country apart from Canada?

M: England, once.

P: What kind of things had you heard about England?

M: I don't know (pause), my brother is there so I just figured that I might go there. In the end I just left for Canada.

P: Up until the point when you left were you happy with what you had achieved in Jamaica?

M: Well (pause), what would I say now (pause)? Its a free country, you can do what you like, you don't have to be in any rush to go to work. If you don't feel like going to work you don't go (laugh). Here (Canada), its a different story. If you don't go to work you don't get paid - Yes, I could say I was happy but I was younger then anyway - I think I was (happy) to some extent anyway. When you are young you don't think about lots of things - You just live free and go anywhere you want to go, do anything you want to do, up to a certain point I guess -

P: When you first moved to Canada which was the first part of Canada that you came to?

M: The first part? Toronto.

P: There are 10 provinces in Canada, why did you choose Ontario?

M: I don't know, it just happened - I didn't really choose it, it just happened.

P: Ok then, why Toronto of all the other cities?

M: I guess, I just boarded the plane and it landed at the airport in Toronto, so that was it.

P: Have you travelled around Canada?

M: No, No, I haven't been anywhere.

P: How many times have you moved since you have been in Toronto?

M: One, two, three (pause), four times.

P: How did you find out about these places?

M: They were rooms, you just looked in the papers.

P: So far, would you say that you are still happy with your decision to leave the Caribbean?

M: Of course I am.

P: Why is that?

M: You have to make a life of your own. In my own case I had a job but out there (in Jamaica) there aren't enough jobs to go around - sometimes you work, sometimes you don't. You can't make a life like that - Anyway, anywhere I went I

would be happy anyway! I could go back to Jamaica, the only thing that would bother me now if I went back to Jamaica is the heat because of my (blood) pressure. So, in that respect I am a little better here than in Jamaica. I go to Jamaica all the time, but I have to stay in the shade, I cannot take the heat.

P: Ok, that's all for now. Thank you.

M: Ok, thank you.

Interviewee: Vernan

Interviewer: Patrick

Date: 17 June 1990


P: The first question I wanted to ask you Vernan, was why did you decide to leave the Caribbean?

V: Well, I must say that I didn't decide, I was mainly sent, by my parents - I didn't want to leave Jamaica. My elder brother was in England before me - He wrote to my parents and said that he was lonely there and that one of us should come, so they sent me - I wasn't that keen on leaving at that time -

P: So, they actually sent you. Why do you think your parents would actually send you to England, apart from the fact that your brother was lonely - Do you think that there were any other reasons why they would have sent you?

V: Well, according to him he was doing alright - They though that if I went there with him that I would do better than I was doing back home too - so, they sent me and I decided to go in the end.

P: When you left did you intend leaving the Caribbean for good?

V: No.

P: How long did you intend being away for?

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V: I didn't give myself any time limit, but I always said whenever I get enough money, I want to go back home and open up my own business.

P: Could you tell me a bit more about your life in the Caribbean, who you lived with, what you did etc?

V: My parents made cigars for a living and they were farmers - They planted crops like peas and corn - They raised cattle, cows, pigs, goats and chickens, everything! That's what I used to do too until I reached approximately 18 - Then I left the country and went to live in Montego Bay. I went to learn a trade there as a brick layer. I was working with my aunts husband, learning the trade for approximately 2 or 3 years -

P: Where about in the country were you living?

V: Ashton (Westmoreland).

P: Do you ever imagine that you will return to live in the Caribbean permanently?

V: I talk about that every day. I would love to go.

P: So far, you have not done so (returned to the Caribbean). Why haven't you done so?

V: Well, the Caribbean has developed a lot now - Its not like when I left there. Its a lot faster, there are better things there - You need money to live there, so you have to make sure that when you leave here, that you have enough money to cover that ground - You want to be comfortable,

build a house, don't go there looking for a job -

P: Do you imagine that you will retire there?

V: I have it in mind, I really do have that in mind. I hope it comes true. My goal is that when I retire, to go back there, collect my pension and live easy.

P: How long is it since you left the Caribbean originally?

V: I left Jamaica in 1957.

P: You went to England first, how long did you spend in England?

V: Seven years.

P: For some reason you decided not to stay in England. Why?

V: I did love England but while I was there my parents were sick and I went back to Jamaica - I spent six weeks back in Jamaica - when I went back to England from Jamaica I felt somehow I had to move some place again - I wasn't that comfortable when I got back (to England). So I went to Liverpool in England, just to find out about what was going on in England, because they were recruiting people to Canada at that time - so, I went down the first day, just to find out all the procedures and they accepted me - I did all my tests and the medical. In the space of four weeks they sent me a paper to say that I would be a landed immigrant in Canada and they gave me a limited time that I should leave by.

P: Any other reasons why you chose Canada in particular?

V: It was the going thing at the time. Canada was young and they were looking for people with qualifications - I'm good with plastics, that's my job, I was pretty good in England in that field - They told me when I went to Liverpool that they were looking for people like me here (in Canada) - That's why I decided to come -

P: Can you remember when you were a youngster did you imagine that you would migrate?

V: No, I didn't imagine that when I was a kid. People hadn't really started moving out yet. When we were kids we used to break eggs and put them in the sand. They said that it used to tell you your destiny - My one broke in the shape of a ship. I was told that I am going to travel by someone that went around in the district reading people's hands - I didn't believe it because this guy was telling everyone that they were going to travel - so, I didn't believe it a t all that I was going to leave Jamaica.

P: Before you left Jamaica initially, did you sit down and weigh up the pro's and cons of leaving?

V: I did weigh it up because I really didn't want to leave Jamaica. My mother confronted me with it, about going to England, quite a few times, and I turned it down. When she decided to send somebody else (another brother) I started feeling guilty, saying that maybe there is a pot of gold

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there for me and I was refusing to go — That's when I decided to go —

P: Had other people that you knew migrated from Jamaica?

V: Yes, but only a few then.

P: If people had told you negative things about abroad do you think that you would still have left at that time?

V: Well, since I didn't want to leave I don't think that I would have gone — What was the point of leaving there, going somewhere else, if there's nothing to gain? I would have travelled if I had, had the money. I would have travelled to see what it was like. But, if there wasn't something to gain, I don't think I would have left.

P: You said that other people you knew had migrated. Did that influence you at all?

V: Yes, it influenced me — Other people were going so after a while you want to go too.

P: So whose actual decision was it finally that you should leave Jamaica?

V: My mum, my parents —

P: Did you consider moving to any other part of the Caribbean?

V: Not really, no — when my brother left Jamaica two years before I left, I was worried to death — I thought he was going to drown in the sea — But, then he sent back to say everything was alright — He didn't love it (emphasis), but

he felt that he would grow to like it.

P: Did he? (grow to like it).

V: He did.

P: Up until the time when you left would you say that you were happy with what you had achieved in Jamaica?

V: No, I felt that I could have achieved more but I was young so I didn't really have a chance to establish myself in Jamaica -

P: Did you think of migration to any other countries apart from England and Canada?

V: If there was any other place that I would have gone to it would have been the states - That's the only place I really thought of.

P: What had you heard about England or Canada when you were in Jamaica? What were the kind of things that people had told you?

V: They told me how cold it was (England). They told me about snow and all that kind of stuff - They said you can find a job there and that they were prejudiced there and stuff like that - They said you have to live in somebody else's place. They put you in the attic and say no visitors. They want you to live there like a hermit. I heard all that but I still wanted to go mainly for my brother's sake because I felt sorry for him - we have a big family. There were nine of us (children), so I said if we

are gonna suffer, lets suffer together -

P:  Which was the first part of Canada that you came to?

V:  Toronto.

P:  Of the 10 provinces in Canada, why Ontario?

V:  Well, at first they were going to send me to Montreal  -
But, the guy at the ministry (in England) said that  Toronto
was one of  the fastest growing  cities - He  asked me if  I
would want to go there and  I said yes, I'd rather go  there
to Toronto -

P:  How  many times have  you moved since  you have been  in
Toronto?

V:  Seven times.

P:  Each of these places, how did you find out about them?

V:   I just relied  on looking  at newspaper  ad's and  then
going to see the place - It was a little difficult at first
when I didn't really know the city - still, I managed.

P:   Ok, Vernan,  thank  you very  much.   That  ends  the
interview.

V:  Great, thank you.

Interviewee:  Allen
Interviewer:  Patrick
Date:  June 10th, 1990

P:  Thank you for speaking to me today. The first thing I
want to ask you is why did you decide to leave the
Caribbean?

A:  Well, in the first place I got a card to travel on the
farm. At first I said that I wasn't coming. Anyway, my mum
told me that I should give it a try because my father had
passed on years ago and it was just her alone and I had 8
more brothers and sisters. So I said ok, I'm gonna take my
chances - anyway, I took my chance and I came. I liked it,
then I went back to Jamaica. When I went back to Jamaica
employment was there but the wages were very low. I knew
that I could earn better wages in Canada and have better
working conditions - I decided that I would go to the
immigration department and apply for status in Canada - I
went, it was accepted and I came to Canada. I came here and
I like it. I go back to Jamaica, I mostly go for 3 weeks or
2-1/2 weeks and I come back.

P:  How long is it since you came to live in Canada?

A:  I have been coming here to visit since 1979, but I have
been living here since '84.

P:  When you left Jamaica was it your intention to come and
settle here permanently?

A: No, I didn't know the place, I didn't know what it was like - so, I decided to come and do farm work and I live on the farm and see what it was like - I said if I like it I would try and get married here, but when I came I said that was not wise so, I went back to Jamaica and I applied to come and it was accepted.

P: Can you tell me a little more about your life in Jamaica?

A: Well, my life in Jamaica. Jamaica is nice, but life can be rough. You have to go the hard way. For my life in Jamaica I mostly did farming. In Jamaica you have to farm a lot to inherit what you want. In Jamaica for me that just didn't work because you just can't farm enough because you don't have the land space - That's why I said...Canada it is.

P: Did you live with your mother?

A: Yes, I lived with my mother and my eight brothers and sisters.

P: In general, would you say that life was good or bad?

A: It was bad, it was hard, it was tough. It was just about everything! With eight brothers and sisters and no father alive, it was just like I was the father for the eight - so it was tough for me - I was the eldest of the children.

P: Do you ever envisage going back to live in Jamaica

permanently?

A: I don't think so.

P: Why not?

A: Well, it is better in Canada. Jamaica is for the tourists who go and visit, spend their money, enjoy their selves and them come out - But, Jamaica is not for the working class.

P: Of all the places in the world that you could have gone to, why was it Canada in particular that you chose?

A: Well, from I was born I just loved the name Canada (emphasis)! I just loved the name Canada - I heard about the Soviet Union, I heard about England, I heard about America and I heard about Africa - I heard about Cuba and I heard about Canada and Canada was to my liking - I didn't know it (Canada) but that was my liking.

P: So what did you hear about Canada? What did people tell you?

A: Well, I saw a lot of tourists from Canada in Jamaica and I ask them how is Canada? What is Canada like? They told me and I said to myself, I have to know Canada one day. I heard about the place, I didn't know it, but I just liked it because of the name 'Canada'. I came here and I liked it, so, I decided that I want to stay here.

P: Apart from tourists, did you hear about Canada from anyone else?

A: I heard about Canada from my parents, my mothers family and my fathers family, they all talked about it. I had a lot of cousins here in Canada, a lot of family members in Canada that used to go and come between Jamaica and Canada and they told me about Canada.

P: Can you remember, as a youngster in Jamaica, did you always imagine that one day you were going to leave?

A: Yes (emphasis)! I imagined that boy, one day I have to leave Jamaica.

P: Why from such an early stage did you decide that you were going to leave?

A: Well, in Jamaica at that age, money is the number one problem - As a youngster I would go and work for a man and he would pay me $6.00 a week - I worked for a man and he paid me $1.50 a day, for a day's work - when I got $1.50, I had to take it in to the house (my mother) and I had nothing left in my pocket - If I want a pair of pants, I can't buy it, if I want a pair of shoes, I can't buy it - I could buy it, but it takes time, I have to save towards it. When I came to Canada, I work and every week if I want a pair of pants, I can buy a pair of pants. I can't do that in Jamaica.

P: Had other people that you know migrated to Canada before you?

A: Yes, I had a lot of friends who migrated to Canada

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before me. They came back to Jamaica and they said, oh Canada is so nice. I would like to meet you up there - I said to them try and help me if you want to meet me up there. They told me your mother has to be there or your father has to be there or you have to have a brother or sister up there before you can get to go up there. They never said anything bad of Canada, they said it was nice and they enjoy it. The only thing they said, its a lot of work and the tax is a burden. They said when they work they pay tax and when they go to the store they pay tax and when they go to the liquor store its just tax, tax, all over, but yet it still works out.

P: So you decided even though you would have to pay a load of taxes, it was still worth it?

A: Yes, definitely.

P: So who was it who actually decided that you would migrate?

A: I was the one, the final decision was my own.

P: Where exactly in Jamaica did you live?

A: In Montego Bay.

P: What were living conditions like in Montego Bay?

A: In Montego Bay conditions were good, but wages were just too low and the responsibilities were very big on me - It was a burden.

P: Did you consider moving to another part of Jamaica?

A:  No.

P:  Why didn't that enter your head?

A:  Well, I was born in Westmoreland (near Montego Bay) and I left Westmoreland and went to Montego Bay where I stayed by my aunt - I liked Montego Bay, I didn't like Kingston. I didn't even care to visit Kingston, so if it wasn't business or compulsory that I had to go, then I didn't go.

P:  So even though wages were going to be higher in Kingston, you still wouldn't go?

A:  If I was getting say $100 a week in Montego Bay and I was offered $200 a week in Kingston, I would rather work for $100 in Montego Bay rather than move to Kingston.

P:  Did you consider going to another island or another part of the Caribbean region?

A   No, I didn't even think of it.

P:  Up until the time that you left Jamaica, were you happy with what you had achieved so far?

A:  Yes, but I knew I could do even more in Canada.

P:  Apart from Canada, did you at any time consider going to another country?

A:  I did consider going to England because my mother has a lot of brothers and sisters there. I did consider going there for a visit.

P:  But you didn't consider going there to live?

A:  No, never!

P: What about the U.S.?

A: I would only go there to visit because of all the bad things I hear.

P: Where was the first place in Canada that you moved to?

A: When I first came to Canada, I came on the farm. I was in Dresden in Ontario.

P: Why specifically did you go to Ontario?

A: Well, when you come on the farm, you cannot choose where you want to go - You just have to go where they send you.

P: Would you have been quite happy to go anywhere in Canada?

A: Yes.

P: When you came off the farm where did you go?

A: Well, I had an accident on the farm so I was in hospital in Wallaceburg for a while - Then I was moved to Chatham General Hospital where I spent a couple of months. Then I left Chatham and I came to Toronto where I was in St. Michaels for a couple of weeks. Now, I'm on my own.

P: Why did you decide to stay in Toronto? Why didn't you go to another Canadian city?

A: Well, why I decided to stay in Toronto, is that. I have a lot of cousins here and I can see them or I can go at their homes and stay if I want to stay. So, I said it is best to be around someone you know.

P: Does the fact that there are a lot of other Jamaicans in

Toronto influence you at all?

A: No, not at all.

P: Have you been outside Toronto to any of the other provinces?

A: No.

P: Do you have any relatives outside of Ontario, in one of the other provinces?

A: Well, I have about 3 relatives outside of Ontario, but I don't know where they are located or how to locate them.

P: Do you know anyone in the Jamaica-Canadian Association?

A: Yes, I know some of them when I was in Jamaica but I don't really keep in contact with them.

P: Ok Allen, thank you very much for your time.

A: No problem! Thank you

Interviewee: Lillian
Interviewer: Patrick
Date: 15 June 1990

P: The first question I would like to ask you Lillian, is why did you decide to leave the Caribbean?

L: I didn't really decide to leave, I didn't really have a choice - I was dating a young man at the time - His family were migrating to Canada - He asked me to marry him and I said yes - It seemed like a natural thing to do, to follow him, so I didn't really have a choice.

P: How long ago was that?

L: Well, I came in the spring of 1974 -

P: When you left Guyana then was it your intention to leave for good?

L: Oh no!

P: So you had imagined then that you were going to return?

L: Yes.

P: So how long did you think you were going to be away for?

L: We had set up a sort of timetable - We were going to give ourselves X number of years, go to school and then go home - That was our plan - Well, it didn't happen that way -

P: Well, after now having been here since 1974 do you still imagine that you will return to live in the Caribbean permanently?

L: I would certainly like to.

P: From what you remember, can you tell me more about your

life in the Caribbean?

L: My mother was a teacher, she was a headmistress, at a school. My father was in the civil service. He was in charge of pensions for a certain area of the country. I went to a girls school - I guess you would say it was a fairly comfortable life - we grew up with maids in our house.

P: So when you left Guyana did you leave straight from school or had you started working?

L: No, I was working before I left - I was a school teacher before I left -

P: Was life fairly affluent then?

L: For me I think that it was - I never had anything that I wanted. My needs were certainly met.

P: If your needs were met, they why the need to migrate?

L: Well, like I said, I was asked to marry this person, having agreed to do so I had to come because he was coming.

P: If you were not about to marry him do you think you still would have migrated?

L: Oh yes, but at a later date.

P: Why yes, but at a later date?

L: Because at the same time my family were also migrating, my siblings were migrating. I knew that I would probably be gone shortly after.

P: How many brothers and sisters do you have?

L: I have three sisters and one brother.

P: Were you all living at home?

L: No, actually when I left, I was the last one home at the time, along with one younger sister and we knew that we were gonna go (migrate). It was just a matter of time.

P: So why was it Canada in particular?

L: Well, I didn't really have much choice. This was the situation which was presented to me. It was yes or no and I said yes -

P: Do you have any idea why your husband's family chose Canada in particular?

L: Not really, but his family had chosen to migrate to Canada so it seemed like a natural thing for him to follow - There was nobody left.

P: Before you came what did you know about Canada? What had you heard?

L: Well, before I came in '74 I had come to Toronto in '72. My sister was living in Toronto (she still does). When I came in '72 I thought I might want to come at a different time.

P: What sources told you about Canada?

L: Well, it's the typical North American experience. Canada was being talked up to be the land of opportunity. When your home country is economically depressed, that sounds appealing in spite of the cold (laugh).

P:   Was there an influence of friends at all in your decision to come to Canada?

L:   My friends had already left.

P:   Did the fact that your friends had already left, did that put pressure on you, or make you want to leave as well?

L:   I didn't really feel pressured because they had left, but it was a natural process - People were leaving gradually and I knew that I would leave as well - But it wasn't actual pressure from them - They didn't tell me to leave.

P:   Before you left, did you at any time sit down and weigh up the pro's and con's of leaving?

L:   I had to leave  - I didn't weigh up any pros and cons  - If I did, I might not have come.

P:   Who were the other people that you knew that migrated?

L:   My sister  in Toronto.  At that  time I also had one  or two friends in Toronto too and my fiancee's relatives.

P:   What about outside of Canada, had other people  migrated to other places?

L:   My other friends went to America or to England.

P:   Did you at any point consider moving elsewhere?

L:   Well, like I said  I didn't have too much choice in  the decision I made to come here (to Canada).  I would  probably have preferred going to the states.

P:   Why?

L:   It's hard to pinpoint it.   I wanted to go to school  in

the states, at the time they were offering what I wanted to do - I didn't know of any school in Canada that was, they might have been, but I just wanted to go to the states.

P: So who was it who actually made the final decision that you would migrate?

L: It was a combination I guess, between me and my fiancee.

P: Where exactly in Guyana did you live?

L: I lived in Georgetown, the Capital -

P: Had you at any point considered moving to another part of Guyana or another part of the Caribbean region?

L: No, I never really thought of that -

P: Were you happy with what you had achieved, your personal achievements in Guyana, before you left?

L: Yes, definitely.

P: Yet you still left?

L: I know - It seems a bit silly now.

P: Where did first move to in Canada?

L: To Waterloo.

P: Was that based on your fiancee's location?

L: Yes, he was already in Waterloo - He had a job here so that's why I ended up in Waterloo.

P: Since you have been in Waterloo, how many times have you moved?

L: Well, we haven't moved out of the city (Waterloo) at all, but we moved twice before we settled where we are now -

P:   For those locations how did you actually go about finding a house?  Who or what did you rely on?

L:   When I came my fiancee had an apartment so I didn't have to look for that  - After that,  we had to  go out and  find one, we read the ad's and knocked on doors.

P:   So it was a personal search then?

L:   Yes.

P:   So  far, are you  happy with what  you have achieved  in Canada, was it worth it?

L:   I'm not happy with what I have achieved, because I don't feel I have  achieved anything  much, but it  had better  be worth it, the little that I have achieved.

P:   Would you  do it  all over  again with  the benefit  of hindsight?

L:   Yes, but faster - It was a slow process and still is -

P:   How often do you go back to Guyana?

L:   I only went once, ten years ago.  My mother is in Canada now so there's not so much need.

P:   Thank you  for speaking to me  today, that's the end  of the interview.

L:   My pleasure, thank you.