

ABSTRACT**Capitalism, Metayage and Development: A shifting
Pattern of Development in Dennery,
St. Lucia 1840-1957.**

Peter Adrien

This thesis attempts to explain the phenomena of transformation and marginalization in rural and urban Dennery, a rural district in St. Lucia, by tracing the nature, direction and pace of social and structural changes in the district between 1840 and 1957.

Based on the assumption that the dominant form of production in society provides the motor for social change, the thesis posits the view that the metayage system (practised extensively in export agriculture between 1840 and 1957) set in train mechanisms for the changes which ensued.

The central argument of the thesis is that the metayer class was the "feeder class" from which the "capitalist" peasant classes which presently dominate the export agricultural sector evolved. It shows that the character of the accumulation process under metayage (among other factors) led to the emergence of an agrarian "capitalist" class from the labouring population which altered the character of the social structure in the colony and influenced the pace of development of the rural district.

The data analyzed suggest an increasing differentiation among the labouring class and the emergence of a large and influential differentiated free peasantry under metayage. The data suggests that the rural area enjoyed a greater share of the wealth accumulated under metayage since the practice was concentrated in that locality. It was this marked differential in accumulation, in particular, which conditioned the simultaneous transformation and marginalization of the lowland and highland communities.

Finally, thesis considers some policy implications based on the issues discussed in the analysis.