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Title of Thesis:

THE UWI ST AUGUSTINE CEMETERY: AN APPRAISAL

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This thesis would not have been completed without the assistance of key individuals and their tireless efforts. Great thanks are extended to Dr. Gelien Matthews, my thesis supervisor and Ms. Jo-Ann Georges, the UWI St Augustine Campus Records Manager.

ABSTRACT

This thesis gives an evaluation of the UWI St Augustine Cemetery and seeks to discover and evaluate the criteria for burial. By doing so the thesis gives some historical context on the cemetery's existence and detailed biographies of a few persons interred at the cemetery. The cemetery came into existence in 1926, which predates the existence of the UWI. It was launched as an attempt to honour the dignified academics and staff members of the university for their years of dedicated service to the institution. This research also examines the extent to which the cemetery is inclusive of all staff members, from secretaries or custodians to lecturers and those in leadership positions such as Campus Principals. Although the university has no written criteria for burial, the research possibly reveals that there was also a lack of diversity in burials since a large majority of the interred were those of a higher socio-economic status. The thesis analyses the life and achievements of two of the interred and concludes that the cemetery performs the critical role of providing a private and esteemed, eternal resting place in honour of the hard work and contributions of alumni.

Keywords: burial practices, Trinidad cemeteries, UWI cemetery, interred alumni, UWI St Augustine campus.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures	5
Introduction	6-8
a. Rationale	6
b. Thesis Title	6
c. Thesis Statement	6
d. Parameters of Study	6
e. Objectives	7
f. Methodology	7
g. Chapter Outline	7-8
Literature Review	9-14
Chapter 1	15-20
Chapter 2	21-25
Chapter 3	26-33
Conclusion	34
Bibliography	35-37
Appendix	38-39
Turnitin Receipt	40

LIST OF FIGURES

TABLES

APPENDIX A: Table 1- List of UWI Staff Members Interred at the Cemetery

FIGURES

Figure 1- Memorial of the Honourable George Maxwell Richards

Figure 2- Headstone of the late Sharon Moss

Figure 3- Headstone of the late Compton Eustace Seaforth

Figure 4- Headstone of the late Carol Keller

Figure 5- Headstone of the late Marianne Diana Soares Ramesar

Figure 6- Headstone of the late Kemlin Marina Laurence

Figure 7- Headstone of the Braithwaites

INTERVIEWS

Interview 1- Follow-up questions from Sherlese Luke third year student HUMN 3099 about
The UWI Cemetery

INTRODUCTION

Rationale

This study fills a void in the scholarship on private burial practices in Trinidad. No academic studies on The University of the West Indies Cemetery have been done and this study intends to explore this untapped data.

Thesis Title: The UWI St. Augustine Cemetery: An Appraisal

Thesis Statement

The UWI Cemetery indirectly practices exclusivity in its burial criteria to the benefit of elite alumni and staff of the University.

Parameters of Study

The area of focus for this study is the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine Campus, in Trinidad with specific reference to its cemetery. The cemetery is located near the southern entrance of the university campus. In terms of personalities, special attention will be given in the study to two academics who have been interred in this final resting place; Professor Emeritus K.O. Laurence and Professor Emeritus Nazeer A. Ahmed. Nevertheless, mention will be made of several others who have been buried here. The word limit of the paper, however, makes it impossible to examine in-depth more than the two previously mentioned who have served the university community for many years in varied and important ways. This paper also covers the theme of burial practices for illustrious members of society in Trinidad; a topic that is under-researched. The cemetery was officially established on November 10th, 1926 has been the final resting place for many of the university's staff and their close relatives with the latest addition being the late Compton Eustace Seaforth in 2018.

Objectives

The objectives of this study will be to discover the criteria needed to be buried at the University of the West Indies Cemetery. It also attempts to understand and examine the burial process of the University cemetery and examine the logistics involved in determining which members of alumni are interred there and why. Another objective is to determine and assess the contributions of some of the buried alumni.

Methodology

Since no published material on the UWI's private cemetery at St Augustine exists, most of the data used were primary data. Primary data was gathered using university records from the campus registrar, Ms. Jo-Ann Gorges, newspaper articles and oral interviews. The limited secondary data found in books and website articles which have been perused are about burial practices in general in Trinidad and Tobago in general but not specifically on the cemetery at the UWI, St Augustine Campus. Using primary data helps to ensure that the research is empirical and valid. Qualitative analysis will be used to analyse the data because it evaluates the information deeper, it allows for more discussion on the subject, it assists in formulating conclusions and provides better explanations for human behaviour. However, qualitative analysis does run the risk of being biased or subjective. This study falls within the branch of social history because it takes into consideration human life, death and accomplishments.

Chapter Outline

This study includes three chapters. Chapter one is entitled 'Historical Context of the UWI Cemetery.' It examines when, how and by whom the cemetery was established. Its exact geographical location and the dimensions of the cemetery are also examined here. The features of the funeral paraphernalia used there and the impact of the paraphernalia, if any, are examined here. Chapter one also looks at the maintenance of the cemetery and also any records kept of

the interred. It also identifies the total number of persons buried at the cemetery, the names of the interred as well as the first person to be buried there. Chapter one looks at the burial process of the university, the body at the university charged with the responsibility of overseeing the affairs of the cemetery. Chapter one also details how announcements are made to the university's staff and student body when someone passes.

The second chapter, 'Criteria for Burial', is an analysis of the oral interviews done and the primary data collected from official university records to determine a set of standards alumni must meet to be honoured with a campus burial. It also examines the possibility of social class or financial status being a determining factor in who gets buried there.

The final chapter, 'Interred at UWI's Cemetery', gives brief biographical information on the life of both Professor Lawrence Aldridge Wilson, a former lecturer at the university and Professor Emeritus Nazeer A. Ahmad. The chapter then goes on to analyse their contributions to the university in the field of agriculture and any contributions they made to the Caribbean.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The University of the West Indies, St Augustine cemetery is a private cemetery used only by illustrious members of the academic community and perhaps, for this reason, the UWI cemetery has not yet become a subject of academic scrutiny. This does not mean, however, that there are no studies on cemeteries in the Caribbean in general and those in Trinidad and Tobago in particular. One article, for instance, is *Lapeyrouse Cemetery*, written by Gerard A. Besson in the *Caribbean History Archives*. Besson is a published Trinidadian historian and recipient of the Trinidad and Tobago Gold Humming Bird medal as well as the National Trust of Trinidad and Tobago's Lifetime Achievement Award. Besson's article focuses on the Lapeyrouse cemetery located on Phillip Street, Port-of-Spain, Trinidad and Tobago. Besson's publication covers the period 1778 to 2011. The article discusses the history of the cemetery against the background of the capture of Trinidad from the Spanish by the British in 1802 and how that transformed the manner in which the cemetery has been used. Besson's article examines the impact of Trinidad's Catholic, Anglican, Protestant, Hindu and Baptist burial practices and types of burial paraphernalia used in this cemetery. He also notes the impact of Trinidad's Spanish, French, British, Chinese and even Latin cultures on the burial practices, inscriptions and tombs or mausoleums used. Even though the cemetery is a part of the National Trust of Trinidad and Tobago's Heritage Asset Register, it has still deteriorated from its former glory due to lack of maintenance, prominent vagrancy and robbery. Lapeyrouse is a public cemetery and therefore is not exclusive in terms of social status, wealth, race or religion. Besson's article also mentions the influence of Trinidad's past colonial rulings and indentured period (British, French and Chinese) on the style, inscription of graves and religious or cultural burial customs (Besson 2011). Although Besson's article covers many aspects of burial practices at Lapeyrouse, it does not focus on the names of any dignitaries buried there or what specific monuments were created in their honour. His article also does not focus on how or by

whom the cemetery is maintained. Besson's article gives information on public burial practices, emphasizing the point that there are limited studies done on private cemeteries in Trinidad. Therefore, the present study is necessary since it investigates the burial practices of a private university cemetery that seems to have escaped the gaze of the historian. Besson's study, nevertheless, is valuable to this current research since it highlights the importance of culture and religion on burial practices in Trinidad, themes that will be considered in this research.

The text, *Walking with the Ancestors*, (2010) is written by Angelo Bissessarsingh, Trinidadian recipient of the Humming Bird Gold Medal, historian and creator of the Facebook group, *Virtual Museum of Trinidad and Tobago*. Bissessarsingh's text focuses on several prominent cemeteries in Trinidad and Tobago in the form of case studies. Some of these include the Lapeyrouse Cemetery and, the Colonial Cemetery, located respectively at the Orange Grounds of the Botanical Gardens in Port-of-Spain and Paradise Cemetery in San Fernando. The period of this text is expansive due to the number of cemeteries it discusses. Bissessarsingh's study starts in 1788 with the creation of Lapeyrouse. For each cemetery, the author discusses its history, the contributions of the dignitaries buried there, the impact of religion, culture, wealth and societal status on burial practices. It also discusses the maintenance of the cemeteries. Lapeyrouse serves as an example of wealthy burial practices. The Colonial Cemetery is a private cemetery for Trinidadian dignitaries. This cemetery was established by Sir Ralph James Woodford, one of Trinidad's former governors. This cemetery is maintained fairly better than the public cemeteries in Trinidad. However, the government of Trinidad seems to have a lack of appreciation for members of society who made outstanding contributions which makes burials at this private plot seem inconsistent. For instance, the late wife of Sir Solomon Hochoy, Thelma Hochoy, was not given a national funeral despite her societal and academic contributions to Trinidad (Bessessarsingh 2013, 60). The burial practices for persons of such high status are often lavish, widely attended by common citizens and

government officials and announced publicly (Bessessarsingh 2013, 61). Paradise Cemetery (1868) is another public cemetery segregated by race and religion. This cemetery like Lapeyrouse is not properly maintained physically or in terms of security. It was prone to criminal activity. Although Bissessarsingh's text gives a great appraisal of multiple cemeteries in Trinidad, both private and public, the focus of this text was not on the maintenance of the cemeteries. He also does not mention any possible reasons why these cemeteries are not being maintained, despite their historical significance. Additionally, he does not elaborate on the criteria that dignitaries must meet to be buried at the Colonial Cemetery. The present study, while it adds to Bissessarsingh's scholarship, widens the parameters by focusing on burial criteria. Nevertheless, the work that Bissessarsingh has published on the subject is beneficial since it highlights biographical information. He has demonstrated the importance of focusing cemetery studies on persons.

The dissertation, *The Cemeteries of Eustatius, N.A.: Status in a Caribbean Community* is written by Laurie J Paonessa, American Archaeologist and Historian. St Eustatius is one of the islands that consists of the Netherlands Antilles. This study examines two-hundred and forty years of burial practices on the island and was published in 1990. Fourteen cemeteries of St Eustatius are examined and some of these include, the Anglican Churchyard, the Old Churchyard, the Lazareto Leper Cemetery, Jewish Cemetery, the Dutch Reformed Churchyard, the Catholic Cemetery and the Methodist Churchyard. Paonessa's study examines the similarities and differences between the aforementioned cemeteries. Comparisons are made in terms of age of the cemeteries, types of burial paraphernalia and religious influence on burial practices. Much like the cemeteries in Trinidad, these also suffer from deterioration and lack of maintenance (Paonessa 1990, 6). Paonessa uses religion as one of the tools in the analysis of the burial practices among the Catholic, Methodist and Anglican faiths. Paonessa's work is an excellent model to use in constructing his history of the cemetery

at the UWI, St Augustine Campus. It helps the researcher to focus not only on religion and objects used at burial sites but also on the community togetherness that is evident in preparing for and participating in a funeral. Although Poanessa's dissertation made the distinction between wealthy and poor burials, it does not focus on dignitaries buried at the cemeteries. Similar, to the aforementioned text, this dissertation does not state who is responsible for the upkeep of funerals. Burial criteria for the more private, religious cemeteries such as the Jewish cemetery or the Anglican Churchyard was also not emphasized in this study. The present work will address some of the areas Poanessa's study did not examine.

The text *A-Z of Jamaican Heritage* was written by Jamaican novelist, poet and recipient of the Musgrave Gold Medal, Olive Senior. Senior's text covers the establishment of the National Heroes Park in 1953 and the previous Kingston Race Course. National Heroes Park can be described as a botanical garden located in Kingston, Jamaica. It currently serves as a memorial and gravesite for the country's heroes. The former name of National Heroes Park was George VI Memorial Park. The change took place after Jamaica's independence from Britain in 1962. Although Senior's text does not provide much analysis on the burial practices of this site, it is one of the few sources found that specifically covers the topic of a private burial for illustrious members of society. For instance, Sir Alexander Bustamante, Norman Manley and Marcus Garvey are buried there (Senior 1987, 116). Others honoured there include the victims of both World Wars and Cuban patriot, General Antonio Maceo. These heroes share a revolutionary background, in the areas of labour, independence, suffrage, and black equality. Their activism could have served as their qualification for such an honorary burial, but no clear declaration was found to confirm this statement. What this text does not mention is who and what determines which citizens are suitable enough to be buried there and the authoritative body charged with the responsibility of overseeing the affairs of the park. Senior also does not delineate the contributions to the state and region that the interred have made. Senior's work

has left a gap in the historiography of cemeteries in the Caribbean which will be partly filled by this project.

Lastly, the *Encyclopedia of Jamaican Heritage* (2003) also written by Senior, further describes the burial practices for the national heroes at the National Heroes Park Jamaica. This text also details the origins of the park and outlines the monuments and other paraphernalia used for memorials. The images from Senior's text depict lavish and intricate sculptures, tombs, vaults, statues, busts and religious crosses. This only further emphasizes the high stature of these persons in society. This memorial ground, like many other private cemeteries for important societal figures, allows for family members to be buried next to each other. For instance, Senior mentions that the Honourable Edna Manley was buried next to her husband Norman Manley (Senior 2003, 347). Those interred were artists, musicians, comedians and writers which shows that not only activists and leaders are honoured with a burial. This suggests that the criteria for burial include those who have made contributions to the arts of Jamaica. However, similar to Senior's other text, *A-Z of Jamaican Heritage*, this text does not mention who and what determines which citizens are suitable enough to be buried there nor the authoritative body charged with the responsibility of overseeing the affairs of the park. Senior also does not mention the contributions to the state and region that the interred have made. The information in this text makes this study necessary since it will examine the neglected aspects of burial practices previously mentioned.

The literature surveyed in this review proves that there is a need for more academic research to be done on burial practices for elite members of specific organizations in Trinidad. This study intends to do just that. Many of the aforementioned works did not specify burial criteria required for the interred whereas one main objective of my study is to assess this criterion. From the majority of the literature, it appears that there is not much research done on private cemeteries that specifically honour dignitaries, or accomplished persons both in the

Trinidadian society and the wider Caribbean. This omission, therefore, justifies the need to examine the UWI cemetery.

CHAPTER 1

Historical Context of the UWI Cemetery

The University of the West Indies St Augustine (UWI) Cemetery was established on November 10th, 1926 after his Excellency the Governor Sir Horace Archer Byatt granted Dr. Martin Leake a formal license to do so. Dr. Leake at the time was a Professor and the Principal of the then Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, the forerunner of the UWI. He can be credited as the founder of the cemetery. In 1925 he came up with the proposal to establish a cemetery for the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture which would be used by the academic staff and any of their close relatives. He found this convenient and appropriate since the staff at the college mainly came from England and it was expensive and difficult to send deceased bodies back to England to be buried. The cemeteries in Trinidad at the time were not properly maintained and “in 1911 the Port-of-Spain Gazette reported that mausoleums and vaults at Lapeyrouse were being broken into and robbed. Jawbones were being smashed for their gold dentures and even skulls were stolen and being sold to obeah practitioners for five dollars apiece” (Bissessarsingh 2015). Nothing was done to improve the condition of the cemeteries or address the neglect. Therefore, the condition of these cemeteries at the time of Dr. Leake’s request would have been in a less than desirable condition which increased his urge to establish a private cemetery for the Imperial College which would be under the care of the College community. It is clear that the origin of the cemetery came less out of necessity since there were ample cemeteries at that time. It was more a reflection of the colonial mentality of the time in which whites from Britain considered themselves superior to locals, since Dr. Leake himself was a white, British citizen and graduate from the University of Cambridge and later came to join the academic staff at the College. The simple fact that he specified the use of the cemetery to be for members of the academic staff that came from England highlights the desire to demonstrate prestige or hierarchy of the members of staff who were English born and

to distinguish themselves from the Trinidadian creole population as a whole. To further prove this point, many of the staff buried at the College between 1926 (year of first burial) and 1960 (the year it merged with the UWI) were white or of British nationality (see Appendix A: Table 1).

Dr. Leake then wrote a letter to Dr. Algernon Aspinall, the Secretary of the Imperial College expressing his desire for a private cemetery (Office of the Campus Registrar 1925-present). Mr. Aspinall agreed with Dr. Leake's suggestion and further contacted the College's governing body and the Bishop of Trinidad, who was Bishop Arthur Henry Anstey at the time. Dr. Leake made a verbal request to the Warden Office to have a license to establish a private burial ground at the college and he was given verbal consent pending the granting of a formal license from his Excellency Governor Sir Horace Archer Byatt (Office of the Campus Registrar 1925-present). This was all formalized through a letter from the Acting Warden County of St George on September 13th, 1926 and detailed the regulations Dr. Leake should follow. In this same year, the Principal of the college (Dr. Leake) requested a license for the private burial ground.

At the time of the cemetery's establishment, it was located at the southeast corner of the College Estate. Due to the close proximity of the College Farm and a lack of fencing around the cemetery, cows often wandered into the cemetery and destroy headstones (Office of the Campus Registrar 1925-present). The College Farm "was situated on the lands now occupied by JFK complex, the Engineering building, the Canada Hall and Worrel Playing Fields area" (Ragbir 2015, p. 6). Aside from being used for educational and research purposes, the farm and its animals became very important during 1942-1945 (World War Two) because they "provided seeds and plants to local farmers engaged in the 'Grow More Food' campaign" (Ragbir 2015, p. 6). To prevent further destruction from these animals, a three-foot hollow brick wall around the cemetery was erected in 1950 which still stands today. There was no

specific reason given for the choice of location of the cemetery. Today the location of the cemetery can be described as south of the St Augustine UWI campus, east of the southern entrance, behind the JFK Car Park, near the Canada Hall residency. The cemetery is exactly one hundred feet by one hundred and fifty feet in dimension (Office of the Campus Registrar 1925-present). This is small in comparison to the cemeteries mentioned in the introductory paragraphs.

The cemetery is very simplistic in design, with well-maintained, low cut grass, paved walkways that facilitate access to graves. The walkways divide the cemetery into four sections with uniformly aligning graves alongside each other. Many of the headstones were made out of cement which extends to form a rectangular barrier around the graves. Some headstones contain marble plaques which provide brief biographical information about the deceased such as whether he/ she was a child or an adult, how they died, where they died, where they were from, when they were born and passed away, their time served at the university, their association to the university, hobbies they enjoyed, warm fair wells, religious quotations and images, names of close relatives, images of faces, personalised monograms or even their academic status at the university such as Dr., Principal or Professor.

Some headstones are entirely made of marble and have a glossy finish which indicates the social status of the interred since marble costs more than concrete. There are also some notable height differences between the headstones as some are flat on the ground, some resembled podiums and some mimic the look of scrolled paper. Some headstones have more inscriptions on them than others and this additional customization can also be an indicator of the deceased's social status. For instance, the Honourable George Maxwell Richards (former UWI Principal 1985-1996) has a lengthy inscription on his memorial as shown in Figure 1. Not all of the headstones indicate the religious beliefs of the deceased. However, there is the Jewish symbol engraved on the tombstone of the late Sharon Moss (association to the university is

unconfirmed) as shown in Figure 2 and the symbol of praying hands on the tombstone of the late Compton Eustace Seaforth, (Dean of UWI from 1973-1975) among many others which indicate their religious background as seen in Figure 3.



FIGURE 1- Memorial of the Honourable George Maxwell Richards, captured by Sherlese Luke on November 15th, 2019.



FIGURE 2- Headstone of the late Sharon Moss, captured by Sherlese Luke on November 15th, 2019.



FIGURE 3- Headstone of the late Compton Eustace Seaforth, captured by Sherlese Luke on November 15th, 2019.

Some even have appropriate Bible verses such as the one of the late Carol Keller (former Head of Department for the School of Education) as seen in Figure 4. While some contain religious inscriptions, others contain literary quotations that represent the field of work of the deceased such as the grave of the late Kemlin Marina Laurence, a former lecturer of Spanish Literature at the UWI as seen in Figures 5. It can also be noted that the cemetery is religiously inclusive as persons of various faiths such as Islam, Christianity or Judaism are interred there.



FIGURE 4- Headstone of the late Carol Keller, captured by Sherlese Luke on November 15th, 2019.



FIGURE 5- Headstone of the late Kemlin Marina Laurence, captured by Sherlese Luke on November 15th, 2019.

In terms of maintenance, the cemetery is the responsibility of the University's Division of Facilities Management. Some of the headstones show visible signs of weathering and the inscriptions were difficult to read. Despite this, there are no current plans to improve or upgrade the cemetery according to the Campus Records Manager, Ms. Jo-Ann Gorges (Gorges, 2019). All requests to use the cemetery for burial are addressed to the Office of the Campus Registrar.

The University of the West Indies is informed about the deaths of staff members or past staff members through their families and the Marketing and Communications Department of the university which then takes the responsibility to send out an announcement or obituary to the university's community. This usually takes the form of an email notice to staff and students along with an article written on the *UWI Today* or *Campus News* websites.

The cemetery has been existence for almost one hundred years in its present location. It is no longer a reserved space for British based university lecturers since its merger with the UWI. Over the years, it opened its gates to any high-ranking employee of the UWI regardless of race, nationality or religion.

CHAPTER 2

Criteria for Burial

Throughout the cemetery's existence, from its service to the staff of the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture to the University of the West Indies, St Augustine, it has been the final resting place for the staff and close relatives of staff. There are currently fifty-seven persons interred at the cemetery and the first person to be buried at the cemetery was the wife of Professor Cecil Yaxley Shepherd (a Professor of Agriculture at the Imperial College to Tropical Agriculture) who was buried there in 1926. The cemetery contains burials from the year 1926 to 2018 (see Appendix A: Table 1) with the latest entry being Compton Eustace Seaforth (1935-2018). Persons buried at the cemetery must have a close association with or have been a member of staff of the University. So, the sons, daughters, brothers and wives of staff members are eligible to be buried there.

This criterion ties back to the origin of the cemetery and the reason for its creation, which was to secure a place of burial for English staff members at the Imperial College. Since it would be natural that these staff members would travel with their families or come to Trinidad and start families, there would need to be provisions and allowances for their family members to be buried in the same place as they, hence the inclusion of close relatives in the university cemetery as seen with the Braithwaite graves as seen in Figure 6. This practice continued when the institution evolved from College status to university.



FIGURE 6- Headstone of the late Braithwaites, captured by Sherlese Luke on November 15th, 2019.

From this, it is clear that the UWI theoretically welcomes all members of staff at the cemetery but based on the list available of persons interred, only former senior members of staff, very few members of the non-teaching staff and their close relatives have taken advantage of this opportunity. There are no records of non-academic staff, such as janitorial staff, maintenance staff, clerical staff, students and teaching assistants buried at the cemetery. Burials at the cemetery, in theory, do not specify a level of social, academic, or economic status of the deceased. However, the exclusion of the aforementioned lower-ranking staff members suggests differently. Ideally, persons buried at the cemetery do not need to hold high authoritative positions at the university or hold high positions in society. However, most of the interred were involved in very high profiled positions at the university. They were also well known not just within the University but locally, regionally and even internationally as discussed further in chapter three of this research with both Professors Wilson and Ahmad. This commonality between the interred also suggests that maybe one's level of accomplishment and contribution to the world, region or university is assessed when determining who gets an honorary burial.

Although the burials that occurred under the UWI were far more diverse in terms of nationality and race than those under the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture, it seems to still mimic the colonial mentality which maintained a hierarchy over the lower-ranking staff members. There seems to be some unwritten norm that the cemetery is for the use of senior members of the academic staff who made several contributions to both the university and the world. This may have hindered lower members of staff from being buried there or requesting that their relatives be buried there.

To some extent, however, there does need to be a level of exclusivity practiced in the cemetery since allowing all staff members the opportunity to be buried there is simply impractical due to the limited space in the cemetery versus the number of persons employed by the university which according to the campus' LinkedIn page is somewhere between one thousand to five thousand employees ("University of the West Indies St. Augustine Campus"). The uniqueness of the cemetery may also be tarnished since the quality that makes it distinguishable from other cemeteries (its exclusive access to accomplished UWI academic staff) will be eroded if it is open up to less accomplished staff members.

In terms of the overall funeral service, the family of the deceased takes full responsibility for the planning and execution, not the university since this is a highly personal and emotional event. Also, the main purpose of the university is to serve as a place of education and research. Therefore, placing too much focus on non-academic functions would not be ideal. The university has very little responsibility in terms of the actual funeral arrangements. The Division of Facilities Management would arrange for the digging and closure of the grave once the burial spot is allocated by the Office of the Campus Registrar. Additionally, the staff of the Office of the Campus Registrar will liaise with the family to ensure that their needs for the interment are met. The university does, however, take the responsibility of managing the cemetery which includes: grave-digging, landscaping and horticulture, maintaining records,

ensuring knowledge of and compliance with all legal requirements, ensuring security, maintenance and upkeep of the cemetery (Office of the Campus Registrar 1925-present).

In terms of funeral costs, it is also the responsibility of the family to pay for and arrange all aspects of the funeral. The decision of the university to not cover funeral costs makes the process less complicated and easier for the family to freely customize the service to their desire without the concern of a budget set by the university. Also, funerals are a very personal and emotional send-off so the university's decision to leave the planning and execution of the service entirely to the family of the deceased shows great respect for the family and their loss. Funeral costs can also be an expensive undertaking which can be a strain on the institution's limited resources. Providing financial support for funerals can also lead to a comparison between the resources allocated to different families for the events which can cause speculation about biasness. Additionally, the university simply cannot rationalise a policy that considers offering financial aid for a funeral as seen in Interview 1.

Follow-up questions from Sherlese Luke third year student HUMN 3099 about The UWI Cemetery

1. Is there any particular reason the university does not take up the responsibility of planning the funerals along with the family of the deceased?

The Cemetery provides a place for families associated with The University to bury/inter human remains.

Cemetery management includes many skill sets. These include:

- *grave-digging*
- *landscaping and horticulture*
- *maintaining records*
- *ensuring knowledge of and compliance with all legal requirements*
- *ensuring security, maintenance and upkeep of the cemetery.*

None of the above tasks require that The University's staff involve themselves in the planning of a funeral. Funeral planning is the job of a Funeral Home/Director.]

2. Is there any particular reason the university does not offer to cover the funeral costs of those interred at the cemetery?

My apologies for answering your question with another but why should The University offer to cover/cover the funeral costs?

3. Has there ever been an instance in which a family requested their loved one be buried at the cemetery and the request was rejected by the Campus Registrar? If yes, may I ask why?

The file does not contain any instances in which the request to bury/inter remains was refused by The University.

INTERVIEW 1- Follow-up questions from Sherlese Luke third-year student HUMN 3099 about The UWI Cemetery, on January 13th, 2020. Interviewee: Ms. Jo-Ann Gorges, Campus Records Manager.

The decision on who is interred at the cemetery is made by the Campus Registrar in consultation with Senior Management, and, therefore, persons wishing to have their loved ones buried there must contact the Office of the Campus Registrar and then this request is examined by the Campus Registrar before a decision is made. The university itself does not choose persons to be buried at the cemetery. Instead, the university responds to requests made by family members which helps maintain the objective of equal opportunity. This process also demonstrates that the decision is an unbiased one not based on favouritism, nepotism, social class, or social influence. Additionally, the official file, *The University Cemetery*, has no recorded instances in which the request to bury/inter remains was refused by the University. However, this does not guarantee that there were persons who were denied burial at the cemetery.

In terms of the actual religious service as well as the burial, no members of the university staff or student body are required to attend. However, staff members who knew the deceased and wish to pay their respects are welcomed to attend the funeral service as well as the interment. There is also no requirement for a representative of the University to make a speech at interments but there were cases in which members of staff made speeches at funerals. For instance, the Deputy Principal at the time, Professor Rhoda Reddock delivered a touching eulogy at the funeral of the late Professor Lawrence Wilson, a former Senior Lecturer under the faculty of Food and Agriculture (Doughty 2013).

The research supports the conclusion that any employee of the UWI and his/her family can be interred at the institution's cemetery. In practice, however, the top-ranking academic staff has dominated this opportunity which without knowledge of the cemetery's criteria, can make the cemetery seem exclusive towards other members of staff.

CHAPTER 3

Interred at UWI's Cemetery

The University of the West Indies St Augustine campus Cemetery serves as the final resting place for many of the university's past alumni who have made several great contributions in their fields of study that benefitted the university, their country of origin, the wider Caribbean and the world. Their dedication and selfless global services make them exemplary members of the university's alumni hence it is fitting that they are honoured with a campus burial. In the limited length of this research, all of the outstanding alumni buried at the UWI cemetery cannot be examined. Thus, only two of the most outstanding persons interred have been selected for a special examination. Professor Emeritus Wilson and Ahmad will be examined further since they made several contributions to the current university and the field of agriculture which was the basis of the university's establishment. There was also an abundance of information on these individuals since they passed away fairly recently.

Professor Emeritus Lawrence Aldridge Wilson, former alumni of the University is interred at the campus' cemetery. He was born in Barataria Trinidad on November 14th, 1934, twenty-six years before the campus came into existence. Professor Wilson attended two different primary schools; San Juan Government and Nelson Street Boys Roman Catholic Schools ("Lawrence Wilson; Trinidad and Tobago Icons" 2018). He later married Desiree Wilson and had four sons; Anthony, Dion, Evan and Gareth Wilson. In terms of higher education, he obtained his B. Sc. Degree in 1957 and an M. Sc. Degree in Botany in 1960 from the University of College of the West Indies. At the UCWI, Professor Wilson was a well-rounded student representing his faculty in cricket and was a leader amongst the university's Steelband team (Ragbir et al. 2001, 20). He obtained his Ph. D. in Plant Physiology from the University of Bristol (Doughty 2013).

Professor Wilson began his ground-breaking career at the Ministry of Agriculture with a focus on “pre- and post-harvest physiology of root crops with particular reference to the tuberization in sweet potato, cassava and yam” (Ragbir et al. 2001, 20). He joined the staff of the University of the West Indies in 1967 and taught plant physiology and biochemistry under the Faculty of Food and Agriculture, later becoming a Senior Lecturer. He successfully published over seventy articles on root crops and by 1975, he was made a Professor of crop science until 1980. He served as Faculty Dean from 1981-1984 and 1988-1994 (“Lawrence Wilson; Trinidad and Tobago Icons” 2018). He was heavily involved in the development of his faculty and the university as a whole which made him an exemplary member of staff and an asset to the campus. As dean, he introduced several programs to widen the educational opportunities for agriculture students attempting to get graduate degrees, postgraduate degrees and even certificates (“Lawrence Wilson; Trinidad and Tobago Icons” 2018). From time to time, Professor Wilson also took up the task of serving as a temporary Campus Principal. He was not only in support of the advancements of his faculty but the university as a whole. He was willing to do more than his job required of him. Although Professor Wilson retired on 16th, September 2000, his service to the university continued. For instance, in July 2005, he took the position of Editor in Chief of the University of the West Indies *Journal of Tropical Agriculture*. The department of Food Production and the Dean’s office held a farewell function for Professor Wilson which was attended by University staff and family members of the Professor (Ragbir et al. 2001, 20).

Professor Wilson also made a name for himself globally because many trusted his expertise. He was a consultant on behalf of the Food and Agriculture Organization for countries like Thailand, India, Indonesia and the Philippines. He served on the board of Trustees of the International Institute of Tropical Agriculture, was the chairman of CGIAR, advisor of the International Foundation for Science and member and later Honorary Life Member of the

International Society for Tropical Root Crops (Marketing and Communications Department 2013). His extensive membership included local boards such as the Central Marketing Agency, the Sugarcane Feeds Centre, Cardi and Caroni 1975 (“Lawrence Wilson; Trinidad and Tobago Icons” 2018). Local Farmers also benefitted from Professor Wilson’s developments in terms of crop production due to his fertilizer management system. His expertise and leadership were able to help a lot of organizations and countries so much so that his achievements and contributions landed him several awards and accolades.

His contributions to the field of agriculture, specifically to tropical root crop composition and harvest biology was one of his most outstanding achievements (Marketing and Communications Department 2013). Professor Wilson also made a name for himself through the many publications he produced. Some of these included *Overcoming challenges to developing sustainable agri-food systems in the tropics: proceedings of the International Congress on Tropical Agriculture 30th November - 5th December 2008, Hyatt Regency Trinidad* (2008) and *The Interface between Food Availability, Food Conservation and Human Nutrition in the CARICOM Region: Proceedings of a Workshop on a UWI post-graduate training programme in Food and Nutrition Studies, held at the University of the West Indies, Faculty of Agriculture, St. Augustine, Trinidad* (1981). His work for the Association of Professional Agricultural Scientists of Trinidad and Tobago was so appreciated that he was honoured with a lifetime membership. In July 2013, a few months before Professor Wilson’s passing, he was honoured with the Commitment to Excellence Award from the International Society for Horticultural Science and the NIHERST Lifetime Achievement Award for his work on root crop and post-harvest biology (Marketing and Communications Department 2013). The Lawrence Wilson Food Biology Laboratory in the Department of Food Production at the Faculty of Food and Agriculture at the University of the West Indies was dedicated to Professor

Wilson in 2012. The value of Professor Wilson's work was appreciated by many organizations and by the university hence his campus burial.

On December 2nd, 2013, Professor Wilson passed away at home surrounded by loved ones. This was due to a short battle with cancer just eighteen days after his seventy-ninth birthday (Doughty 2013). The funeral service on Friday 6th, December 2013 reflected his spiritual beliefs. (Marketing and Communications Department 2013). Funeral arrangements were handled by Belgrove Memorial Centre and Crematorium although he was interred at the UWI cemetery. His service was well attended by family, friends, colleagues and prominent political figures. The Deputy Principal at the time, Professor Rhoda Reddock, delivered a touching speech highlighting his accomplishments, contributions to agriculture, his devotion to God, his discipline, humour, ego and tolerant nature (Doughty 2013). Professor Wilson was loved and appreciated by many both locally and internationally. His work was very valuable and this was reflected in his honorary burial, his accolades and the glowing speeches made by many about his life and hard work. This also proves that burial at UWI cemetery is a prestigious experience. Professor Wilson was seen as a revolutionary and an icon when it came to his work with agriculture and was an asset to the world.

The university's cemetery is also the final resting place of Professor Emeritus Nazeer A. Ahmad. Professor Ahmad was originally from Dundee, Mahaicony, British Guiana. He came to Trinidad on 27th, January 27, 1932. ("Nazeer Ahmad: Trinidad and Tobago Icons" 2018). From an early age, he showed an interest in agriculture helping out on his family's subsistence farm ("Nazeer Ahmad: Trinidad and Tobago Icons" 2018) Professor Ahmad was a student at the Novar Canadian Mission School and the Berbice High School where he displayed his academic brilliance. He spent only three years in secondary school before he wrote the Cambridge exam and was accepted to the Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture in Trinidad on scholarship ("Nazeer Ahmad: Trinidad and Tobago Icons" 2018). He came to the Imperial

College of Tropical Agriculture as an undergraduate student in 1949 and completed a three-year undergraduate diploma (DICTA) by 1952 (Ahmad 2010). His post-graduate studies (AICTA) were completed in 1952-1953 at the same institution. Professor Ahmad was one of the top students at the college as demonstrated by his successful completion of the AICTA; an exclusive qualification that many found very challenging (Ahmad 2010). Professor Ahmad successfully obtained his Master's degree in Canada at Mc Gill University and the University of British Columbia. (“Nazeer Ahmad: Trinidad and Tobago Icons” 2018). He gained his Ph. D at Nottingham University in 1957.

Soon after he obtained his Ph. D., he worked as the Head of the Division of Soil Sciences at the Ministry of Agriculture in Guyana and was one of the leading agricultural experts in the Caribbean (Ahmad 2010). In 1961, Professor Ahmad joined the lecturing staff at the University of the West Indies St Augustine Campus and he was soon promoted from lecturer to Professor of Soil Science in 1969 (Marketing and Communications Department 2013). Similarly, to Professor Wilson, Professor Ahmad lent his expertise to aspects of the university that did not directly pertain to his field of research. For instance, he is known as the first and longest-standing Warden of Canada Hall. He served for thirty years from 1963- 1993 (“Karim Dedicates Canada Hall to Late Professor Ahmad” 2013). Since Professor Ahmed joined the campus in its formative years, he was very instrumental in a lot of its developments and was consulted whenever agricultural decisions were to be made. In terms of the development of the university, during his time (thirty-five years) he formulated new courses and built science laboratories. He also had a successful record of undergraduate and post-graduate mentees (Marketing and Communications Department 2013) which helped to validate his status as Professor Emeritus of the Department of Food Production in the Faculty of Food and Agriculture, a title he achieved in 1996.

His contributions to the field of agriculture benefitted the university, the Caribbean and the world and gained significant international recognition. Similar to Professor Wilson, he was a consultant to issues that pertained to soil and land development. Regionally, he made significant strides with his research on soil science for the Caribbean and Latin America (Marketing and Communications Department 2013). One of his many accomplishments would be the vast number of publications he was able to write during his time at the university which proves that he was constantly investigating new ways to develop the lives of those in the agricultural sector and by extension, everyone who benefitted from agriculture. For instance, his last book titled *Soil Science* was released soon after his passing. Other works included: *The Effect of Evolution of Gases and reducing conditions in a Submerged Soil on its Subsequent Physical Status* (1963), *Soils of the Caribbean* (2011), *Land and Water Resources Management in the Caribbean* (2001) and *A Preliminary Investigation into some chemical, physical and microbiological aspects of St Augustine Rice Soils* (1953). What his extensive research has shown was that he conducted research on soil conditions in Trinidad and many other Caribbean countries.

He also improved agricultural productivity of the Commonwealth countries and gained international fame for his work on clay (“Nazeer Ahmad: Trinidad and Tobago Icons” 2018). Several contributions to Professor Ahmad’s home country of Guyana has been recognized. For instance, “he was director of the National Agricultural Research Institute Guyana from 1995-2000 and served on the International Board for Soil Research and Management and the International Society of Soil Science” (“Nazeer Ahmad: Trinidad and Tobago Icons” 2018). He saw the importance of aligning himself with several boards and organizations to advance agricultural discoveries. Much like Professor Wilson, after his retirement he still offered his services to the world, advising countries on what decisions they should make with regard to agriculture.

Professor Ahmad was certainly a man of many firsts and this reflected not only in his work but in his accomplishments. He was one of the associates of the Imperial College for Tropical Agriculture (Marketing and Communications Department 2013). He was honoured as one of the first Caribbean scientists to receive the American Institute for Co-operation in Agriculture Gold Medal for his soil sciences research in the Caribbean. Pioneer is a word that best describes Professor Ahmad. He paved the way for several agriculturalists and indirectly improved the lives of many through his work on farming techniques. The South Block of Canada Hall was renovated for its fiftieth anniversary and at the opening ceremony his wife, Mrs. Zalina Ahmad witnessed the dedication of a plaque in her late husband's honour ("Karim Dedicates Canada Hall to Late Professor Ahmad" 2013). This took place on November 15th, 2013. The University of Illinois in the United States of America also honoured Professor Ahmad as Fulbright Professor of Tropical Soil Science in 1982 ("Nazeer Ahmad: Trinidad and Tobago Icons" 2018).

On June 6th, 2013, the university and the world experienced a great loss. At the age of eighty-one Professor Ahmed passed away. He was interred at the university's cemetery on June 8th, 2013. The ceremony took place at one in the afternoon with the reading of the Salat-al-Janazah which is an Islamic funeral prayer asking Allah for forgiveness on behalf of the deceased. This was in keeping with his religious beliefs. Professor Ahamed's achievements in the field of agriculture were well-deserving of an honorary farewell.

Both Professor Lawrence Wilson and Professor Nazeer Ahmad exemplified what it meant to be tirelessly dedicated to their fields of study. Their contributions to the region and the world were rewarded with the multiple titles and accolades they held within their lifetime. They both added significant development to the University of the West Indies through their contribution of research, advisory services, student mentorships, infrastructural developments, and student curriculum improvements. They not only wanted a better university for themselves but for the

future generations of students and staff that would benefit from their hard work. They certainly proved themselves to be worthy candidates for such a prestigious interment.

CONCLUSION

The research proves that there is an unintentional bias based on hierarchy and socio-economic status that stemmed from the cemetery's imperial history that has been modified to UWI. The cemetery originated out of an imperial desire for supremacy and prestige. Since the cemetery's imperial beginnings, it practiced two forms of exclusivity: one against the general public of Trinidad and the other against the creole, non-white university staff. When the cemetery began being used by the university, traces of prestige remained, but instead of being based on nationality and race, it was based on socio-economic and academic standing. However, the cemetery remains religiously inclusive. It was also found that although burial is reserved for staff of the UWI and their close relatives, there seem to be some unwritten but necessary restrictions. It would be impractical (due to small size) to allow each staff member and their close relatives a burial plot. Therefore, there must be some unspoken understanding that only certain (academic staff and staff holding major leadership positions) UWI staff members can have their family members interred there. The criteria for burial (UWI staff and relatives) can also be scrutinized since it seems to exclude a significant number of staff such as janitorial staff, maintenance staff, clerical staff, students and teaching assistants. This makes it seem that socio-economics plays a bigger role than the university openly admits. However, there is the fact to consider that lower-ranking staff members never requested a burial perhaps due to their awareness of the cemetery's long history of predominance by higher-ranking staff burials. The cemetery of the University of the West Indies, St Augustine from its inception to the present time has maintained its reputation as a private, final resting place for those who have been exceptional in advancing the academic agenda of the institution.

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APPENDIX

TABLE ONE- List of UWI Staff Members Interred at the Cemetery

The Imperial College of Tropical Agriculture			
Name of Deceased	Affiliation to College	Time Served at College	Death
1. Mrs. Shepherd (Br.)	Wife of Professor Cecil Yaxley Shepherd	-	1926
2. Hugo Durnford (Br)	Son of Sydney and Sybil Dash	-	1927
3. O.L. Thomas (Br)	X	X	1927
4. Dr. H.R. Briton Jones (Br)	X	X	1936
5. Christopher Davies (Br)	X	X	1941
6. Clifford Ralph Shephard (Br)	Brother of Cecil Shephard	-	1948
7. Guy Lees (Br)	X	X	1948
8. S.A. Adepegba (Br)	X	X	1952
9. Elizabeth Beatrice Robinson	X	X	1953
10. De Lisle H.A. Corbin	X	X	1954
11. Richard Eric Defoe Baker	X	X	1954
12. Gladys Charlotte (Br.)	Wife of George Fraser	-	1955
13. Mercie Adelaide Bell	X	X	1956
14. Mary Victoria Gianetti	X	X	1958
15. Cecil Yaxley Shephard (Br)	ICTA Professor	X	1959
16. Thomas Goodfrey Mason (Br)	ScD R.R.S	X	1959
17. Elizabeth Jane Robson	X	X	1959
18. Sharon Moss	X	X	1959
19. Betty Murray	X	X	1960
The University of the West Indies			
20. Albinia Grosset	X	X	X
21. Andrew G.J. Camacho	Lecturer in Caribbean Studies	X	1969
22. Stephen John Goodband	X	X	1972
23. Daya Mutunnu	X	X	1974
24. Malachi Henderson	X	X	1975
25. Zygmunt M. Konasiewicz	Senior Lecturer	X	1975
26. M.E. Rowena George-iton	Senior Research Fellow Cocoa Research	X	1975
27. Fred Hardy	Professor of Chemistry and Soil Science Head of the Department of Chemistry and Soil Science at ICTA 1924-1954	X	1977
28. David Lloyde Millette	Son of Dr. James Millette, Professor of History	X	1978

29. Irvin Joseph Cook	Works Superintendent	X	1979
30. Guido Giovanni Gianetti	X	X	1980
31. Kemlin Marina Laurence	UWI Lecturer in English	1960- 1982	1982
32. Claire Margurite Parris	UWI Nurse	X	1988
33. Dr. Marivinton Sweeney	Lecturer in Chemistry	X	1988
34. Samuel Dickson Selvon M	Visiting Lecturer Literature	X	1994
35. Lloyd E.S. Braithwaite	Principal UWI	X	1995
36. E. Eugene	X	X	1995
37. Roger Francis Barnes M	Life Sciences Lecturer		2000
38. Dr. Thomas H. Henderson	X	X	2001
39. Jesse Williams Davisiton	X	X	2001
40. Claude A. Mc Eachrane	Works Superintendent	X	2002
41. Prof. Frank A. Gumbs	Professor UWI, Soils	X	2004
42. Byron Arthur William	Campus Burser	X	2005
43. Kenneth A Cazabon	Senior Lecturer - UWI, Computer Centre	X	2006
44. Dr. Lloyd B. Rankine M	Agricultural Economics Lecturer	1968-2006	2006
45. Dr. Adeniy Davidiward	X	X	2007
46. Irma Marie Cook	X	X	X
47. Dennis A Pantin	Professor UWI, Economics	X	2010
48. Prof. I.D.C. Imbert	Dean - UWI - Engineering	X	2010
49. Sooknath B. Lacknan	Deputy Bursar, UWI	X	2009
50. Carol Keller	Education Lecturer UWI	X	2012
51. Nazeer Ahmad	Professor UWI, Soils	1961- 1996	2013
52. Lawrence Aldridge Wilson	Professor UWI Agriculture		2013
53. Keith Ormiston Laurence	UWI Lecturer in History	1959- 1995	2014
54. Paula Elaine Joy Braithwaite	Daughter of Lloyd Braithwaite	-	2015
55. Ursula Maud Braithwaite	Wife of Lloyd Braithwaite	-	2016
56. Marianne Diana Soares Ramesar	X	X	2016
57. George Maxwell Richards M	Campus Principal	1985- 1996	2018
58. Compton Eustace Seaforth	Lecturer in Chemistry	1963- 1999	2018

KEY

- Was not a member of staff

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