

ABSTRACT

The Jamaican Sugar Planting Interest: An Examination into Agrarian
Entrepreneurship and Business Culture, 1655-1807

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Within the context of sugar and slavery, this thesis explores the development of a Jamaican business culture, 1655-1807. It argues that the early English settlers, who arrived shortly after 1655 and built on the activities of the Tainos and the Spanish who came previously, established the framework of what would become the Jamaican business culture. Guided by opportunities for wealth creation and development as they took advantage of the island's location and resources, the study argues that sugar planters were entrepreneurs who took advantage of forward and backward linkages within the limited scope provided by the Navigation Laws. As the business culture matured, the study discusses innovation and the development of the 'art' of plantership as well as the expedient managerial system that had evolved by 1775. The reactions and adjustments of the island's business culture to the changing geopolitical, physical and economic environments between 1776 and 1807 are examined. By 1807, this thesis argues that the business culture that emerged and developed in Jamaica possessed various elements, not limited to but including: independence, ingenuity, adaptability and conservatism. The island's business culture was a blend of criminal/crooked, entrepreneurial and gentlemanly capitalism.

Keywords: Nicole Antoinette Plummer; business culture; entrepreneurship; sugar plantation; business enterprises; slavery; economic development; criminal; crooked; gentlemanly capitalism.