William S. Cormack, *Patriots, Royalists, and Terrorists in the West Indies: The French Revolution in Martinique and Guadeloupe, 1789–1802*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2018. x + 390 pp. (Cloth US\$70.00)

Patriots, Royalists, and Terrorists in the West Indies, a detailed account of the French Revolution in Martinique and Guadeloupe, joins the growing scholarship on eighteenth- and nineteenth-century French Atlantic history. While most of that scholarship has explored how the region's enslaved and free African-descended populations negotiated the plantation system, and the ways their actions influenced events and ideas more broadly around the Atlantic basin, William Cormack seeks to understand how the "metropolitan revolutionary dynamic" (p. 6) shaped the way white populations in the Windward Islands experienced and understood the Revolution. Drawing on communications theory's focus on the way people gather, interpret, and disseminate information, he examines the varied responses different groups of white inhabitants had to the influx of metropolitan political culture (language, symbols, and practices). He is particularly interested in how these groups mobilized new ideas about legitimacy, the nation's will, and popular sovereignty to renegotiate long-standing disputes over questions of metropolitan control, racial inequality, and slavery itself. He contends that although the content of the "revolutionary script," per Keith Michael Baker and Dan Edelstein's *Scripting Revolution* (2015), did inform white colonists' understandings and actions throughout the era, such groups also drew on island-specific economic, social, and political dynamics in their fights for authority and legitimacy.

Throughout the book, Cormack draws extensively on official correspondence held in France's departmental and colonial archives to give a thorough accounting of political events in Martinique and Guadeloupe between 1789 and 1802. These documents provide important evidence for his study of the region's white population. And they offer compelling examples of the language that French metropolitan administrators and Creole planters used to talk about rivalries among *grands blancs*, as well as those among *grands blancs* and *petits blancs*, and inhabitants of large commercial ports such as Saint-Pierre, Martinique and Basse-Terre, Guadeloupe on the one hand and metropolitan French soldiers and sailors on the other. They also shed light on the extensive transnational connections among the eighteenth-century Windward Islands. As Cormack notes, such connections made it especially difficult for elite Whites to control the dissemination and interpretation of metropolitan revolutionary political culture throughout the period. The movement of people around the British, Danish, Dutch, Spanish, and Swedish Windward Islands, as well as the arrival of individuals from the United States, likewise challenged demographic

and economic stability and further destabilized traditional modes of elite white authority. Many of these same issues would divide the islands' white populations during the Napoleonic Empire and the Bourbon Restoration.

As Cormack notes, the circulation of ideas and people affected not only the white communities of Martinique and Guadeloupe, but also the enslaved and free African-descended populations in the Windward Islands. His discussion of the 1789 revolt of enslaved Martinicans and the 1790 and 1791 *petits blancs* "patriot" attacks against Martinique's *gens de couleur* militiamen who had aligned with elite planter "royalists" demonstrates as much. Other events, such as the 1792 mass migration of *gens de couleur* from Guadeloupe and Martinique to Dominica, St. Vincent, and Grenada and their decision to don the tricolor, or the 1793 actions of enslaved individuals against "royalist" planters in Trois-Rivières, Guadeloupe, likewise illustrate the complex actions the majority population took during this tumultuous period. However, because of Cormack's primary focus on white responses to those events, readers are left with the impression that Whites were the primary actors in the revolutionary drama—that enslaved and free African-descended people played at best supporting roles, and then only because of the white populations' various actions or inactions.

Cormack persuasively demonstrates that divisions in the Windward Islands' white communities are an important part of the history of the revolutionary French Atlantic. His evidence further suggests that we can deepen our understanding of the period by searching official correspondence for the ways enslaved and free African-descended people understood metropolitan revolutionary political culture and how they perceived their roles as "patriots," "royalists," or "terrorists." Other sources, in particular those from the war and colonial series at the National Archives in Kew, might also enrich the existing scholarship. British officials generated a multitude of documents during their 1794–1802 occupation of Martinique. Documents from Britain's occupation of the island during the Napoleonic empire suggest the way British officials viewed shifting revolutionary scripts and also how the broader Martinican community presented their competing claims to equality, legitimacy, and authority to a foreign occupier. Cormack's book sheds important light on the revolutionary era in the Windward Islands and serves as a foundation for future studies examining the complicated, shifting alliances that transcended race, class, and even legal status during this tumultuous period.

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