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ISLAND CARIB ORIGINS: EVIDENCE AND NONEVIDENCE

Dave D. Davis and R. Christopher Goodwin

Origin stories collected among the indigenous peoples in the Windward Islands during the early colonial period have been interpreted as indicating a mainland Carib affiliation for the islanders. This interpretation gave rise to efforts in the present century to identify the archaeological correlate of the presumed late prehistoric or protohistoric migration of Cariban speakers into the Lesser Antilles. Recent debate centers around two models. One of these associates the supposed migration of mainland Caribs into the Lesser Antilles with the advent of the Suazey ceramic complex in the twelfth century; the other implies either a protohistoric migration or an episode of rapid acculturation of island populations to South American mainland Carib culture in the fifteenth or sixteenth centuries. A review of relevant archaeological, historical, and linguistic evidence provides little support for either of these models. Instead, the so-called "Island Caribs" were Arawakan speakers, probably longtime residents of the Windward Islands whose cultural and linguistic connections with the mainland Caribs probably were the products of contacts related to trade and alliance.

Cuentos de origen de la gente indígena en las Islas de Barlovento durante la época colonial habían interpretado de indicar una afiliación entre los isleños y los Caribes continentales. Esta interpretación era la fundación durante el siglo vigésimo de rebuscas sobre la representación arqueológica de una migración protohistórica de una gente de lengua Caribano dentro de las Antillas Menores. Debate reciente envuelve a dos modelos. Se supone que la presumido migración es identificado con el complejo cerámico Suazey durante el siglo duodécimo; el otro implica una migración protohistórico, o un episodio de aculturación rápido de poblaciones isleños a la cultura Caribana continental durante los siglos quince o dieciséis. Una revista de los datos arqueológicos, históricos, y lingüísticos no se ofrece evidencia que sostiene el uno ni el otro de estos modelos. Mas bien, los dichos "Caribes Isleños" eran habladores de una lengua Arawaqueño, habitantes de las Islas de Barlovento hace muchos años antes del llegado europeo. Sus relaciones culturales y lingüísticas con los Caribes de tierra firme probablemente estaban productos de comercio y alianza.

In 1492, Indians on Española informed Columbus that certain islands to the east were inhabited by "Caniba" or "Canima," who the explorer's informants characterized as a warlike people who ate human flesh (Navarrete 1825–1837). This term, soon corrupted to *Caribes*, has served throughout the historic period to identify the final aboriginal occupants of the Lesser Antilles. European settlement of those islands in the seventeenth century brought reports of local origin myths suggesting a late prehistoric or protohistoric migration into the islands by Carib-speaking men from a homeland on the northeastern coast of South America. This myth corresponds to the anthropological view of longest standing concerning Island Carib origins (Durbin 1977; Rouse 1948, 1986; Taylor 1954, 1977).

Following publication of the first potentially relevant archaeological data in the 1960s, two major hypotheses have held center stage in discussions of the cultural and geographic origins of Island Caribs. One, deriving from research by Bullen and Bullen in the Windward Islands, associates the Carib migration into the islands with the Suazey ceramic complex, which first appeared in the Lesser Antilles around A.D. 1100 (Bullen 1964; Bullen and Bullen 1970, 1972, 1976). The second model, proposed by Allaire (1977, 1980), requires either a protohistoric migration postdating A.D. 1500 or an episode of very rapid acculturation of Lesser Antillean populations to mainland Carib culture during the same period.

Both of those models, like virtually all other published archaeological discussion of the "Carib problem," primarily focus on the reconciliation of archaeological evidence with Island Carib oral traditions that were recorded during the seventeenth century. However, neither of the migration models is supported by the linguistic evidence, which actually contradicts the hypothesis that Cariban speakers migrated into the Lesser Antilles. Allaire's second alternative, that of late prehistoric or protohistoric acculturation of the islanders to the culture of the mainland Cariban-speaking Kalina, may be more compatible with the available archaeological and linguistic data. However, the claim that acculturation was so pervasive as to warrant regarding Island Caribs as insular Kalina cannot be supported on archaeological, ethnographic, or linguistic grounds. Instead, the evidence

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now available to us suggests that (1) although they interacted regularly with Carib-speaking groups on the South American mainland, there is no compelling evidence that the Island Caribs ethnically identified themselves with the mainland Kalina; (2) there was no significant migration of mainland Caribs into the Lesser Antilles; (3) the Island Caribs are best regarded as a cultural entity distinct from any mainland populations; and (4) the ancestors of the historic Island Caribs probably were Arawakan speakers who had been in the Windward Islands since at least A.D. 1100.

ETHNIC IDENTITY AND THE NAME "ISLAND CARIB"

The indigenous occupants of the Lesser Antilles at the time of European contact conventionally are referred to as "Island Caribs." Many writers have considered the Island Caribs to be related historically to the Caribs of the northeastern part of the mainland. However, when applied to the South American mainland, the terms "Carib" or "Cariban" refer to speakers of various dialects belonging to the language group of the same name. Yet the inhabitants of the Lesser Antilles in the early colonial period did *not* speak a Cariban language.

European identification of the Lesser Antillean Indians as Caribs was a legacy of Columbus's original hearsay evidence from Española, reinforced by the exigencies of sixteenth-century Spanish slave policy. By the end of the first decade of that century, disease, coupled with harsh Indian labor and tribute practices, had taken a harsh toll on the aboriginal population of Española, the first of the Antilles to suffer the impact of Spanish colonization (Cook and Borah 1971; Davis 1974; Sauer 1966). Despite modifications of the Spanish *demora* system of Indian servitude, similar consequences appeared to be on the horizon on the more recently colonized island of Cuba. The problems were aggravated by small-scale but indiscriminate slave raids that were made on Indian settlements with some regularity (but without official Crown sanction) by colonial governments. Priests charged with managing Spain's missionary effort in the Greater Antilles (especially Bartóleme de las Casas) increasingly agitated against slave taking. In an effort to satisfy both economic and clerical interests, the Crown turned to the Caribs—or, more accurately, to the myths and fears evoked by the term. In essence, the Crown agreed to forbid slave taking among Indians provided that they were friendly to the Spanish. All others were to be regarded as Caribs, who were defined legally as "barbaric people, enemies of the Christians, those who refuse conversion, and those who eat human flesh" (CDI 1864:380; Myers 1984). The ascription "Carib," when found in Spanish and other colonial sources postdating about 1520, thus is more often than not a reflection of political expediency. When the first real European settlement of the Lesser Antilles commenced in the seventeenth century, French and English chroniclers adopted the Spanish appellation, which had by that time been extended to all the aboriginal occupants of the islands south of Puerto Rico (Dreyfus 1976:37–38; Rochefort 1658:204). In the present century, archaeologists have continued this usage, adding the modifier "Island" to distinguish these people from the mainland Caribs (Rouse 1948).

Taylor (1977:25) suggested that the terms *Caniba* and *Canima*, recorded by Columbus on Española as the Taino Arawakan name for Lesser Antillean natives, represent the explorer's transcription of a Taino word **kanibna*. In 1665, Raymond Breton, author of the only dictionary of a native American language of the Lesser Antilles (that of Dominica), reported that the inhabitants of that island called themselves *Callinago* (or *Kalinago*). This term of self-ascribed identity is comprised of *Kalina* (the name of the historic Cariban speakers of the Guianas) coupled with an honorific suffix (Taylor 1954:30). With this fact in view, Allaire (1980:243) concluded that the aboriginal occupants of the Lesser Antilles should be called "island Kalinas," since "the term 'Island Carib' . . . cannot claim to apply to cultural or ethnic realities."

Allaire's effort to apply Barth's (1969) criterion of self-ascription as a basis for ethnic identification overlooks two basic but important linguistic facts. First, the Taino Arawakan *n* in Columbus's "Caniba o Canima" corresponds to *l* and *ll* in Island Carib (Taylor 1977:25). Thus, the words *Carib* and *Kalina* almost certainly are cognate, the former being a Spanish derivation of Columbus's transcription of the Taino Arawakan cognate of the Island Carib word, which also happens to be a loanword from mainland Carib (Taylor 1977:25). In other words, Columbus simply recorded the Taino version of the word *Kalina*. Moreover, like many self-ascribed ethnic terms, *Kalina* (/kari'na/ among the modern group of that name) is defined strictly as "person," and thus is a possible term of ethnic self-identity among any speakers of *Kalina*, or of a language influenced by it. Indeed, the

name *Callinago* (*Calliponam* in women's speech), recorded by Breton on Dominica, also is a close cognate of *Caripuna*, who are *Arawakan speakers* in the Guianas! (Incidentally, the words *Kalina*, *Carib*, *Callinago*, *Calliponam*, and *Caripuna* all mean, or are derived from, words that also can be translated as "bitter manioc people" or "people of the bitter manioc clan.") In any case, the fact that Dominican natives called themselves *Callinago* tells us little about their historical relationships with or contemporary cultural similarities to the mainland group of that name. Allaire's (1980) proposed renaming of the Island Carib is not justified and creates a misleading suggestion that they shared the cultural heritage of the mainland *Kalina*.

ISLAND CARIB ORIGIN STORIES AND THE GENERAL MIGRATION MODEL

It was in fact the Island Caribs themselves who first reported the belief that they were the product of a *Kalina* migration into the Lesser Antilles. The earliest reported origin story, and that most widely repeated in archaeological literature, was recorded by Father Breton on Dominica in 1635–1636:

They are descended from the people of the mainland closest to the island. That much is certain. The friendship they maintain with them and their commerce with them are signs of it. . . . If you ask [them] why they separated from the mainlanders and moved to the islands, they can give no reason [Breton and la Paix 1926: 45–46].

However, in the introduction to his famous *Dictionnaire Caraïbe-Français*, Breton (1665:229) does relate a reason for the migration reported in Island Carib oral tradition. "The island Caribs were *Galibis* [= *Kalinas*] from South America who branched off in order to conquer the islands. . . . Caribs who come from other islands are also members of this nation." Yet Breton and la Paix (1926:45) also stated that "in the other islands they have other notions."

Jean-Baptiste DuTertre, a priest who lived on Guadeloupe for a total of seven years in the mid-seventeenth century, published an extensive discussion of Island Carib origins (DuTertre 1667), but his information almost entirely is drawn from Breton. Du Puis's (1652) monograph on Guadeloupe is a rephrasing of Breton and DuTertre. Rochefort (1658) also drew upon these two sources, along with reports of Governor Aubert of Guadeloupe, an English sea captain, and the unpublished memoirs of the *Sieur de Montel*. Much of his work was rejected by Breton and DuTertre, both of whom complained that Rochefort had selected and reinterpreted their information for his own ends. Yet, interestingly, Rochefort concluded that the tradition related by Breton occurred only on Dominica, and related another story (this time from St. Vincent), which held that the Island Caribs were confederates of the *Calibites* (= *Kalina*), with whom they were allied by marriage: "And thence it comes that a greater part of the Caribbeans, having forgot their first origins, would have it believed that they are descended from the *Calibites*" (Rochefort 1658:29). In 1674, La Borde suggested that the influence of mainland Carib languages on the Island Carib simply might have been a product of regular contact between the two. A similar argument was put forward by Labat in 1742.

A final origin story, recorded on St. Vincent by Sir William Young (1971) in the late eighteenth century, maintains that the Island Caribs originated in the Orinoco valley, and that their migration into the islands displaced the *Galibis* (*Kalina*)!

It thus is clear, but hardly surprising, that the Island Caribs traced their origins to the nearest continent. However, the only other consistent element in the three primary stories is the thematic importance of their alliance or interaction with the *Kalina*; and with this said, it also must be noted that consistency does not imply historical reality. There is no reason to give primacy to the Dominica version recorded by Breton. That the Island Caribs were the biological products of one or more migrations into the Lesser Antilles from the South American mainland is of course true. It also is clear that the notion that the Island Caribs were the product of a very late prehistoric migration of Cariban speakers, while often reiterated in archaeological literature since the publication of Rouse's (1948) *Handbook* article, largely is based on the Dominican origin story recorded by Breton. (Interestingly, Rouse [1976a, 1976b] himself has suggested in recent years that archaeological evidence points to the development of Island Carib "culture" within the Windward Islands.) Yet the origin stories taken together contribute little toward resolution of the major question that makes up the

"Carib problem": Was the migration carried out in late prehistoric times by Cariban speakers who encountered and displaced the previous Arawakan speakers (or at least the males of those groups)? It was in the 1960s that the first possible archaeological correlate of the presumed migration was documented.

THE SUAZEY MIGRATION MODEL

The archaeological data relevant to the Carib problem have not changed much since they were reviewed by Allaire (1977, 1980). However, Allaire's interpretation of those data largely is based on nonarchaeological evidence and requires scrutiny.

Bullen and Bullen (1970, 1972) and Bullen (1964) proposed that the Carib migration into the islands was marked by the Suazey ceramic complex, which first appears in the twelfth century A.D., and which is found as late as the sixteenth century in association with European trade goods. The complex, known thus far only from the Windward Islands (Figure 1), rather closely corresponds to the documented distribution of aboriginal groups in the Lesser Antilles during the early colonial period (some of the Leewards were uninhabited at the time of European Contact, while others were given too little notice by chroniclers to assess the identity of their occupants). Moreover, the Suazey complex appeared to the Bullens to mark a rather abrupt break with the longstanding Saladoid (and related) ceramic series that preceded it. The rather crudely made ceramic wares of the Suazey complex, mainly represented by bowls with little decoration other than some simple punctations, finger-indented rims, and "scratched" exteriors, are for the most part quite different from pottery of earlier complexes. Bullen and Bullen (1972:166) did note limited continuity from the preceding Caliviny series, which they attributed to the influence of Arawakan women who were subjugated by the Suazey-bearing (male) Cariban invaders.

As Allaire (1977, 1980) has noted, the Bullens's hypothesis suffers from the absence (at least thus far) of any ceramics comparable to Suazey on the South American coast and on Trinidad, the island closest to the mainland (also see Rouse and Allaire 1978). There also is some evidence that a chronologically intermediate unit, the Troumassoid series, may represent a fuller transition from the Saladoid to Suazey ceramic styles within the Lesser Antilles (Allaire 1977; Rouse and Allaire 1978; also see McKusick 1960). Boomert (1987:24) noted that Caliviny pottery co-occurs in assemblages with Suazey ceramics, concluding that the two ceramic "series" in fact represent ceremonial and utilitarian pottery, respectively, of a single late prehistoric complex that grew out of the Troumassoid series. Boomert (1985, 1987) also has argued that the Cayo ceramic complex found on some of the Windward Islands exhibits stronger continuity with seventeenth-century Island Carib ceramics as described in historical-period literature (see Allaire 1977), and that Cayo shares a common origin with the Koraibo complex of northeastern South America. The latter is believed by Boomert to represent the mainland Kalina.

It also is of note that ceramics from sites on St. Kitts that were occupied by people designated as "Caribs" by the English in the seventeenth century—including the site at which over 2,500 of those "Caribs" were massacred by English colonists—comfortably can be assigned to Terminal and early post-Saladoid contexts within Goodwin's whole-island seriation of ceramic assemblages from St. Kitts (Goodwin 1979, 1988). Clearly, not all indigenous groups who were called Caribs in the Lesser Antilles produced Suazey pottery.

Despite these problems, the Suazey complex remains the only archaeological entity with an even remotely plausible claim to represent a migration of Cariban speakers into the islands. Yet, even if continued research reinforces the Bullens's belief that Suazey pottery represents site-unit intrusion in the Windward Islands, the linguistic and ethnic affiliations of the migrants would have to be inferred from other evidence.

THE PROTOHISTORIC MIGRATION/ACCULTURATION MODEL

Allaire (1977, 1980, 1981, 1984) has pursued another line of evidence that points toward either a post-Suazey (i.e., protohistoric) migration or an episode of rapid acculturation of the islanders to mainland Kalina culture after about A.D. 1500.



Figure 1. The eastern Caribbean.

Allaire (1977) undertook a rather complete appraisal of documentary information concerning seventeenth-century Island Carib pottery. Drawing upon Breton and other chroniclers, he concluded that Island Carib ceramics of that period were very similar to Guianese Carib pottery of the early twentieth century, and thus that "The culture of the island Kalinas in the seventeenth century was similar to that of the mainland Kalinas" (Allaire 1980:243). The last statement is, to be sure, a non sequitur, but the evidence cited is more interesting. A careful review of Allaire's (1977) extensive discussion of historical-period references to pottery in the islands and northeastern South America yields only a handful of circumstantial evidence that might be considered to link the two areas.

First, Allaire (1977:39) notes the use in the seventeenth century of smudging by Island Caribs, who produced a black coating on vessels with soot produced by burning a certain gum, and that the same substance was used to make a black pottery "varnish" by Galibis in the late eighteenth century. The two processes described in the historical literature are in fact quite dissimilar, although Allaire must be allowed his point that smudging is not characteristic of Suazey pottery. Yet Bullen and Bullen (1972:166) do state that Suazey pottery in St. Vincent and the Grenadines includes "an occasional application of black paint," a point overlooked by Allaire. Moreover, although Allaire (1977:344) states that historic Island Carib pottery was "black [or] grey" while his Suazoid pottery from Martinique was "mostly reddish or buff," this is not universally true of that series. In St. Vincent and the Grenadines, the surface color of Suazey pottery "varies from a dull red-brown or dark gray-brown to a light gray or gray-black" (Bullen and Bullen 1972:144). In a random sample of 100 sherds of Suazey Plain from Bullen's excavations at the Savanne Suazey site on Grenada, the senior author found the following distribution of exterior colors: dark gray or brown-gray 32 percent, brown 8 percent, buff or brown-buff 30 percent, orange-buff 18 percent, and orange 10

percent. It also is of note that black painting is present in ceramic assemblages excavated by the junior author on St. Kitts from earliest Saladoid times onward (Goodwin 1979, 1980). Further, the only documentary source indicating the use of smudged pottery by Island Caribs is Breton's (1665: 13ff.) dictionary, which mentions the practice only with reference to one of six recorded functional types of vessels. Overall, the evidence cited by Allaire concerning vessel color hardly points to historical connections between the Island Caribs and Kalinas.

A second comparison suggested by Allaire focuses on the fact that vessels with conical bases were (along with other forms) made by the historic Kalina. In this connection, Allaire (1977:44) cites a statement from La Borde (1674) that some seventeenth-century Island Carib pots had "bottoms ending in a point." Such forms are not common in the Suazey complex. Also, Allaire notes that some of the vessels made by the early twentieth-century Kalina and (according to documentary sources) by the seventeenth-century Island Caribs were quite large: Allaire's interpretation of French colonial sources holds that vessels with capacities up to about 152 l (40 gallons) were known in the islands and among the historic Kalina. Vessels of this size have not been documented from Suazey contexts, though in summarizing the characteristics of that series Bullen and Bullen (1972:10) stated that "some vessels are extremely large and thick-walled." It also should be noted that only minimal reconstruction of complete or nearly complete vessels has been attempted with Suazey complex pottery, and the results of a serious effort in that direction could well change our understanding of vessel-size ranges.

Finally, Allaire (1977:42-57) shows that several recorded Island Carib terms for ceramic vessels have cognates in mainland Cariban languages. However, of the five Island Carib terms for which Allaire found mainland cognates, one (*taoloua*) has cognates in several South American languages; another (*toma-hieme*) refers among the Barama Caribs to at least three different forms and sizes of vessels (Ahlbrinck 1931:472); a third (*iali-iali*) has no reported historical function on the mainland; and another (*balabi*) is used by the Barama Caribs to refer to a vessel that holds liquid, but by the Karina as a name for a plate.

Allaire's (1977) model thus primarily relies on the following reasonable points: (1) some Island Carib pottery in the seventeenth century was smudged, a practice not reflected in the Suazey complex; (2) the apparent use of some vessels with conical bases by Island Caribs and mainland Kalina, a base form absent in Suazey pottery; and (3) the use by historic Island Caribs and Kalina of some vessels that appear to have been much larger than anything known from Suazey contexts. The linguistic "evidence" for ceramic similarities is, in our view, worth ignoring, given the fact that Island Caribs probably reinterpreted or reapplied many of their Cariban loanwords.

Allaire concluded that Lesser Antillean ceramics must have undergone significant change between the late prehistoric period and the seventeenth century. This, coupled with his belief that the Island Caribs regarded themselves as ethnic Kalina, led him to conclude that the islands witnessed either "a very late migration, not represented archaeologically, or . . . a very rapid acculturation to mainland Carib culture" (Allaire 1980:243). Indeed, the changes that he postulates necessarily would have occurred well after the time of European contact. The Bullens found sherds of Spanish olive jars and other European items in Suazey contexts at the Savanne Suazey site on Grenada (Bullen 1964) and the Banana Bay site on Baliceaux in the Grenadines (Bullen and Bullen 1972), and also obtained a sixteenth-century radiocarbon date for a Suazey component at Indian Bay, St. Vincent (Bullen and Bullen 1972). Allaire's overall case is further weakened by the fact that his points of comparison among Suazey, seventeenth-century Island Carib, and historic Kalina (and other Cariban speakers) are drawn from a period of well over 400 years. It also is of note that the kind of pottery hypothesized for the historic Island Carib by Allaire has been found nowhere in the Lesser Antilles.

The best conclusions that can be drawn from currently available archaeological evidence (and from the historic references to Indian ceramics) are that (1) the Suazey complex may represent a migration into the Windward Islands around A.D. 1100, although there are some indications that Suazey is linked historically to the earlier Saladoid tradition by the Troumassoid series; (2) there is no *archaeological* evidence for a protohistoric or late prehistoric (e.g., post-A.D. 1200) migration into the Lesser Antilles; (3) some of the seventeenth-century ceramics of the Island Caribs may have been similar in form and/or size to some of the ceramics of mainland Cariban speakers two

centuries later; and (4) those same ceramics do not seem to be represented in the Suazey complex over 200 years earlier.

In the end, therefore, the suggestion that Island Caribs were in some important sense insular Kalina is based on a misinterpretation of historic terms of ethnic identity, and certainly is not supported by available archaeological evidence. At the same time, there are some documentary indications of protohistoric contact between the Lesser Antilles and the northeastern reaches of South America. The final major line of relevant evidence is provided by the Island Carib language. It is, in our view, the linguistic data that provide the strongest refutation of the "migration theory," and that also inform on the probable nature of mainland Cariban influence on Lesser Antillean populations.

LINGUISTIC EVIDENCE

Breton's research on Dominica provides the only significant source of linguistic data on Island Carib prior to this century. Breton and other seventeenth-century writers reported that the Island Carib in fact had three "languages": that of the women, that of the men, and a third tongue that seems to have been used by warriors and other important persons on certain special occasions. The latter never was recorded, but the first two were documented in some detail in Breton's (1665) dictionary.

During the present century, the most significant research on Island Carib was done by Taylor (1954), based on detailed study of Breton's 1665 dictionary combined with his own research on modern Black Carib. That research culminated in two enlightening synthetic works on Island Carib published in the years immediately preceding Taylor's death. The first of these includes Chapters 2–6 from Taylor's (1977:28–96) book *Languages of the West Indies*, which present discussions of Island Carib phonology, grammar, and borrowing from Kalina. The second was an article coauthored with Hoff that focused on the "men's language" (Taylor and Hoff 1980). The following paragraphs are based largely on information contained in these two works.

It has long been known that the Island Carib "women's language" was Arawakan; it often has been assigned to the Maipuran branch of that family (Lathrap 1970; Noble 1962). However, historical linguistic evidence indicates a common origin with Taino and certain Arawakan languages of Venezuela, with Island Carib having split from the ancestral tongue around 1000 B.C. (Granberry 1980). This is consonant with Rouse's (1986) conclusion that the divergence of Taino and Island Carib may have occurred in the West Indies. Breton's (1665) work showed that the men's language employed an Arawakan grammar of the women's language, with minor grammatical additions and a number of lexemes borrowed from mainland Carib (Goeje 1939; Taylor 1954). The women's language was in fact the speech of much of daily life, and was the only tongue spoken by children before puberty (Taylor and Hoff 1980:47–48).

Despite its Arawakan affiliation, the women's language itself employed a large number of loan-words from Kalina, comprising altogether about 22 percent of the basic vocabulary (Taylor 1977:38). The men's speech, learned by males during adolescence, used much of the vocabulary of the women's language and shared the same basic morphology, albeit with a simplified grammar.

What historical process gave rise to this diglossia? Taylor (1977:26) compared the situation to the maintenance of Mozarabic (a Romance language) in Spain during eight centuries of Arab rule. Taylor (1977:26) concluded that "There is neither reason to doubt that these islands had indeed been conquered by Galibi (i.e., Kalina or True Carib) warriors nor, as yet, any way of dating that event." This view was accepted by Rouse in his recent assessment of Precolumbian migrations in the West Indies (Rouse 1986). Similarly, most of Taylor's other writings on Island Carib reflected his belief that the Cariban elements of the men's language were "leftovers" from a Kalina migration into the Lesser Antilles.

Yet one may question whether Taylor's conclusion was grounded in sound principles of historical linguistics. The cases of Mozarabic, and of the Norman Conquest, which Taylor also has likened to Island Carib, do not seem appropriate models for the situation in the Lesser Antilles. The former two are instances of bilingualism, with some lexical borrowing resulting from long-term juxtapo-

sition. In contrast, as Taylor (1977:28) himself noted, Island Carib primarily was marked by "partial dilexicalism" or "diglossia." There is, to my knowledge, no linguistic evidence favoring the hypothesis that the diglossia originated in bilingualism, as the migration theory implies.

Indeed, there is evidence to the contrary. Taylor and Hoff (1980) showed that the "Karina" language recorded by Boyer (1654) and Biet (1664) for Cayenne Island (French Guiana) was in fact a Karina-influenced pidgin. Interestingly, Taylor and Hoff suggest that

The close similarity between [the Island Carib men's language] and mainland pidgin . . . is less surprising if we realize that the Island-Carib men and their Karina allies were dependent on pidgin for their communication However, the data do not permit us to conclude whether ICM [Island Carib men's language] and Karina pidgin *evolved together through regular contacts between the islands and the mainland*, or whether an early form of the same mainland pidgin perhaps antedated the Karina invasion [Taylor and Hoff 1980:309, 311; emphasis added].

This is an apparent departure from Taylor's earlier views (Taylor 1954), as neither of the processes of linguistic change suggested by Taylor and Hoff (1980) entails a "degeneration" in the islands of Kalina proper. And, excluding the assumption that the men's language implies a Kalina migration, there is no linguistic evidence favoring the migration theory. In fairness to Taylor, it must be said that, although he always accepted the notion of a late prehistoric Kalina migration into the Lesser Antilles, he never argued that a migration was implied by the linguistic evidence.

Taylor and Hoff (1980:312) concluded by characterizing the Island Carib men's language as "a Carib pidgin that had attained considerable prestige, because it was useful to the islanders in their dealings with the mainland and helped them to feel at ease with the Caribs there." Thus, in Taylor's last published work on the subject (Taylor and Hoff 1980), he pointed toward an alternative explanation of the origin and maintenance of the Island Carib men's language—an explanation that actually was anticipated by La Borde (1674) and Labat (1742).

Indeed, identification of Island Carib men's language as a pidgin strongly argues against the hypothesis of a major interisland migration of Kalina speakers in late prehistoric or protohistoric times. That a pidgin would develop among descendants of immigrants who had been speakers of the "donor" language seems very unlikely; we are not aware of any other example of this process. Instead, the kinds of island-mainland interaction that would have perpetuated a pidgin, such as ICM, also would have perpetuated the use of proper Kalina in the Lesser Antilles *if* that language had ever been brought to the islands in the first place. The Island Carib men's language may provide the strongest evidence against the hypothesis that mainland Cariban speakers settled the Lesser Antilles at any time in late prehistory or protohistory.

PROTOHISTORIC INTERACTION BETWEEN THE ISLANDS AND MAINLAND

If the Island Caribs were, at least linguistically, Arawaks who had accommodated to, or who had been influenced by, mainland Cariban speakers, what was the nature of their interaction with the Kalina and other mainland groups?

This question is exceedingly difficult to answer. Historical-period documents provide little reason to believe that Island Caribs regularly were in conflict with anyone on the mainland. Breton (1665: 2-3) observed that the Arawaks were their chief enemies, and stated that the Island Caribs ate Arawak men and enslaved the women and children. However, the basis for this statement is not clear, and it may be based solely on oral tradition on Dominica (see Myers [1984] for an excellent critical review of evidence for Island Carib cannibalism). Certainly, there is no documentary evidence of alliance between the Island Caribs and Kalina for purposes of warfare. Taylor and Hoff (1980: 317-319) suggested that the pidgin may have functioned to reinforce a sense of ethnic identity with Caribs on the mainland, but such an explanation is incomplete in the absence of a reason to maintain such corporate solidarity.

The other obvious possibility is exchange, but the direct evidence is limited to Bouton's (1640: 23) observation that "the tortoise is their principal item of trade." As Allaire (1980) has pointed out, Gomberville (1682) reported the use of Kalina as a trade language on the mainland. During

the first years of Spanish contact, Martyr (1670, Decade I, Book 8) reported that salt bricks, pearls, and dried fish were traded into the interior from the northeastern coast of Venezuela; it is possible that the Windward Islands were among the sources of these commodities.

In some ways, trade is the most intuitively satisfying mechanism for the Cariban “pidginization” that marks ICM, because it corresponds to numerous other historic cases of pidgin languages. Any trade that did occur between the islands and mainland has yet to be detected in the Suazey ceramics of the Lesser Antilles. Boomert (1985) has claimed recently that the insecurely dated Cayoid ceramic series on St. Vincent postulated by Kirby (1974, 1976) shares certain vessel forms and decorative motifs with Koraibo complex ceramics from Surinam, which is thought to date in the range A.D. 1000–1500. Further, Boomert reported the presence of tempering material in a few Vincentian Cayoid sherds that appears to indicate they were trade wares from the Guianas. However, Kirby (1974) has argued that the Cayoid material falls between the Simon and Caliviny series (i.e., approximately in the range A.D. 600–1000). Little more can be inferred about the cultural-historical significance of this supposed series until its contents and its geographic and temporal distributions are better documented.

SUMMARY AND SUGGESTIONS

At present, little can be said about the occupants of the Leeward Islands at the dawn of the historic period. Some of those islands (e.g., Antigua) may have been unoccupied; of those that were inhabited (e.g., St. Kitts), no firm conclusions can be drawn about the linguistic or cultural affiliations of their occupants. The “Carib problem” is and has been a phenomenon of the Windward Islands.

In the Windward Islands, the Bullens’s work leaves little doubt that the early sixteenth-century Island Caribs participated in a ceramic tradition whose origins dated at least as early as the twelfth century. That much is proven by the persistence of the Suazey complex in archaeological contexts that clearly postdate A.D. 1500. It is as yet unclear whether that tradition developed in the islands; a new migration into the Windwards from the South American mainland sometime around A.D. 1100–1200 remains a possibility.

The idea, raised by Allaire, of a protohistoric migration of bearers of a mainland Kalina ceramic tradition is, as Allaire (1980:243) himself realized, a weak hypothesis, gaining its only support from a few apparent similarities between Island Carib and Kalina ceramics during the seventeenth and later centuries. Certainly, those similarities are not sufficient to warrant Allaire’s (1980:243) conclusion that “the culture of [the Island Caribs] in the seventeenth century was similar to that of the mainland Kalinas.” By the seventeenth century, if not well before, the Island Caribs had regular contact with both Arawakan and Cariban groups from mainland South America (e.g., Dreyfus 1976). If the ceramics of the Windward Islands during the seventeenth century were in some ways more similar to those on the mainland than was true two centuries earlier, that would not be surprising. If for no other reason, two centuries of European slave raids in the islands would have promoted stronger alliances and interaction with mainland groups. Archaeological evidence from Venezuela and the Guianas is of little use to the Bullens’s interpretations: The Suazey complex has no documented counterpart in those areas. Although Boomert (1985, 1987) claims that the Koraibo complex of the Guianas is ancestral to historic Kalina pottery, and that the former also gave rise to the Cayo complex of the Windward Islands, detailed evidence of those historical relations remains to be presented.

Whether or not the Suazey complex represents the ceramics of the Island Caribs at Contact, the Bullens’s belief that Suazey pottery marks a migration of “True” (i.e., mainland) Caribs almost certainly is incorrect. The historic Island Caribs were Arawakan speakers, and it is very unlikely that any Cariban language was part of their direct linguistic ancestry. The Cariban elements, though significant, are mostly loanwords, and the Caribinization that marks the “men’s language” almost certainly reflects interaction with, rather than descent from, the Kalina or their linguistic kin.

Thus, the Island Caribs were an Arawakan group, probably resident in the Windward Islands for at least 400 or more years before Columbus. In the historic period, and perhaps earlier, they interacted at some regular level with both Cariban and Arawakan speakers on the mainland—interaction

which, in different instances, took the form of trade, raiding, alliance, intermarriage, and even of ceremonial gift exchange with enemies.

Future research in the Windward Islands will add to our understanding of the degree of continuity between the Suazey complex and its predecessors, and (along with additional work on the mainland) perhaps will demonstrate whether mainland influences on Island Carib material culture did in fact increase during the late sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. The definition and role of the poorly documented Cayo complex also will be clarified. However, we suspect that such research will not strikingly change the general picture outlined in the preceding paragraph.

Both the documentary sources and the existing archaeological evidence raise other interesting questions about the last centuries of aboriginal occupation of the Lesser Antilles. Primary among these is the question of the demographic or biogeographic stresses that may have contributed to the widely reported ferocity and frequent interisland raiding that characterized the inhabitants at Contact. This important aspect of indigenous cultural evolution in the Lesser Antilles has received little attention in previous research, bound as it has been to a cultural-historical perspective. The purported northward movement of the Island Caribs that was interrupted by the Europeans may be another dimension of this issue. And both of these questions are related closely to the largely unexplored topic of changing subsistence on the islands during later prehistory. Finally (and perhaps also related) is the question of the occupation of the Leeward Islands during this same period.

The "Carib problem" originated in efforts to reconcile archaeological evidence with aboriginal oral tradition. However, it has owed its persistence into the present decade as much to unhesitating acceptance of that tradition, and to naive interpretation of linguistic and ethnohistoric evidence, as it has to a paucity of relevant archaeological data. Details of the relationships between Lesser Antillean and mainland South American groups remain worthwhile topics for investigation. However, future work perhaps can most productively focus on the insular history of the Island Caribs, and on the exigencies of island biogeography that conditioned it.

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