8

'Three Nights'

Curating African, African Grenadian, and Indian Spaces

By the mid nineteenth century, Grenada had become more ethnically and culturally diverse than at any previous point in its history. The arrival and settlement of thousands of immigrants from India and Africa had permanently transformed the demographic and cultural landscape of the island. In 1772, the population of Grenada – excluding an undetermined number of Indigenous peoples – consisted of an African-descended majority (98.5 per cent) and a European minority of British and French descent (1.5 per cent).[1] One-hundred-and-sixty years later, the 1861 census reaffirmed the Black majority with a similar proportion of Europeans, but also identified several residents from Africa and India (4 and 3 per cent, respectively). The numbers of African and Indian-born residents were significant because they vastly outnumbered the European minority (British, Madeiran, and other European peoples).[2] Unfortunately, the ethnic origins of the African-born individuals were not specified in the census.

Following in the wake of those demographic transformations were shifts in the religious diversity of the island: Christianity remained the dominant majority, but over one thousand Hindus, Muslims, and other faiths also established their own religions.[3] From the late 1850s until the early twentieth century, Muslims and Hindus jointly observed Hosay, a festival also celebrated on Trinidad and Guyana, commemorating the

[1] TNA CO 101/5, 'Abstract of the State of the Island of Grenada, Taken April 1772' and 'Abstract of the State of the Island of Carriacou, Taken April 1772', 1772.
[2] Coke, *Census of the British Empire*, 234–5.
[3] Ibid.

deaths of Prophet Muhammad's two grandsons.[4] While Indian labourers were afforded holidays or special days for religious festivals, no such provisions were made for recaptured Africans.[5] Regrettably, their religious practices, such as African work, were derided by Europeans and went unrecorded because they were not recognised as legitimate religions. Undoubtedly, the small group of Muslims recorded by the census included some Africans, and it is probable that Africans were also among the ambiguously entitled 'other non-Christians'.[6] As this chapter will show, liberated Africans and their descendants often overtly professed Christianity, while practising, sometimes covertly, their sacred African religions. In a 2014 interview, Joseph Caesar of Carriacou metaphorically explained how African-descended peoples 'gave the church one face and gave the culture another. That's how the culture survived in Grenada and elsewhere.'[7]

Most African and Indian-born residents lived and laboured in St Andrew, the island's largest parish, where most indentured labourers began their contracts.[8] The abundance of available land in St Andrew attracted free Black people, who settled in and built Grenada's first independent villages in the mid nineteenth century. The parish remained a popular location for ex-indentured peoples throughout the century and into the twentieth century.[9] To the European inhabitants, these villages were spaces of grave moral concern: in 1846, a stipendiary magistrate of the parish expressed anxiety about the 'superstitious influence' of obeah, which they attributed to the immorality and laziness of the Black people.[10] Oral accounts are

[4] Ron Sookram, 'Immigrants to Citizens: The Indian Community in Grenada, 1857 to the Present', *EnterText* 6, no. 3 (2006–2007): 38–9. Sookram noted that the last Hosay festival held in the 1930s was halted by the police and that later the festival disappeared as missionary proselytisation increased (ibid.).

[5] PP 1857 Session 2 (2249) XVI.33, *CLEC Seventeenth General Report of the Emigration, 1857*, Appendix No. 45, No. CCLVL, An Act to Amend the Act intituled 'An Act to Alter the Law of Contracts with Regards to Immigrants and for the Encouragement of Immigration, and for the General Regulation of Immigrants', 24 September 1856.

[6] Coke, *Census of the British Empire*, 234; TNA CO 104/16, Remarks, Comparative Statement Between the Census of the Population of Grenada and its Dependencies, taken on 8 April 1861 and 3 October 1851, Samuel Mitchell, Colonial Secretary, 1861, in Minutes of the Honourable Board of Legislative Council and Assembly, 1851–1880.

[7] Joseph Ceasar, interview with author, Hillsborough, Carriacou, 24 June 2014.

[8] Paterson, *Grenada. Report and General Abstracts*, 39.

[9] TNA CO 106/13, Garraway, Half-Year SM Returns for St. Andrew, 30 June 1846; Brizan, *Grenada*, 129, 224.

[10] PP 1846 (691–1) XXVIII.1, Returns Relating to Labouring Population in British Colonies, Parish of St. Andrew, Staunton, SM, 17 December 1844, encl. 3, in Grey to Stanley, 24 October 1845.

FIGURE 8.1 Mother Annie (d. 2010).
Mother Annie is wearing a beaded necklace, typically worn by African work practitioners. From the Obituary of Catherine Vincent. *Grenada Connection*, https://tinyurl.com/24umrfrp.

specific in their descriptions of Grenadian cultural practices and also indicate the integral role of women in organising culturally affirming spaces in St Andrew.

According to one such account related by Grenadian-based researchers Angela Gomez and Livingston Krumah Nelson, Mother Annie (1912–2010), an African work leader who baptised scores of devotees, hosted spaces where people of diverse ethnicities could freely congregate in the village of Tivoli, St Andrew (Figure 8.1). It was remembered that one of these ceremonious gatherings went on for three long nights: the first night was dedicated to the Nation Dance, the second was specifically for Indian-descended peoples who brought their traditional musical instruments, while the final night was for 'Shango' or African work. Emphasising the Yoruba influence as the cornerstone of her work, on another occasion, Mother Annie dedicated a three-night feast to Olodumare, the Yoruba Supreme Being and Creator of heaven and earth, and his orisas.[11]

These multi-ethnic gatherings are instrumental for understanding the impact of recaptured Africans, the making of African work, and the array of influences that inspired its followers. The intercultural exchanges at

[11] Angela Gomez and Livingston Krumah Nelson, 'Drum Culture: Capturing, Connecting and Transmitting an African Legacy in Grenada', *Latin American and Caribbean Ethnic Studies* 7, no. 3 (2012): 329.

Tivoli are reflective of the broader processes that were similarly enacted on the emigrant ships, across Grenada's plantations, within village settlements, and around the Eastern Caribbean islands: Yoruba recaptives shared orisas, songs, dances, and stories among themselves; they also mingled with other Africans, the formerly enslaved peoples, and with Indian people with whom they shared a comparable experience of displacement and exploitative plantation labour. When the transplanted people met, their cultures were transformed and reimagined, creating complexly interwoven cultural accretions.[12] These intricate exchanges unsettle and complicate a long-accepted view within liberated African scholarship that nineteenth-century Africans renewed or displaced pre-existing African Caribbean cultures. Rather, this chapter shows that African Caribbean cultures reshaped African work by foregrounding exchange within Grenada and the Eastern Caribbean. The cultures of nineteenth-century Africans were in frequent interaction with the Nation Dance, Roman Catholicism, saraka, obeah, and Indian cultures, including the larger Orisa community in Trinidad – thus contributing to the making of African work by the late nineteenth century.

THE NATION DANCE AND THE 'SHANGO' SPECIALISTS OF GRENADA

By the mid to late eighteenth century, the enslaved peoples of Grenada performed dances and songs of nine nations corresponding to their ethno-linguistic pasts and the cultural dynamics of their present locales. Before the turn of the twentieth century, the multi-ethnic cycle of dances, known as the Nation Dance, was popular on mainland Grenada, although today it is practised almost exclusively on Carriacou. The decline of the Nation Dance on Grenada can be explained by the social, demographic, and economic changes engendered in the post-emancipation period. Following emancipation, the plantocracy sought to revive the collapsing sugar industry by importing large numbers of people from Africa and India to labour on the sugar plantations of Grenada.[13] Migrant workers who arrived in the nineteenth century were also indentured on cocoa plantations, and with sugar's decline, their labour, along with that of formerly enslaved workers, was critical for regenerating the ailing

[12] Édouard Glissant and J. Michael Dash, *Caribbean Discourse*: *Selected Essays* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1989), 18, 142.
[13] Smith, *Plural Society*, 34–5.

economy; by the 1870s, cocoa had successfully outplaced sugar as the main export, enabling the elite to continue to profit from agricultural exports.[14]

The anthropologist M. G. Smith argued that the regional clustering of liberated Yoruba in Grenada facilitated some continuity in Yoruba-derived practices, which, by the turn of the twentieth century, were able to compete successfully with and displace the Nation Dance, as 'Shango' became the pre-eminent form of African religious practice on Grenada.[15] Besides Smith's extensive fieldwork, there is little other historical documentation evidencing this shift. However, in the 1970s, a comment by judge Elvin St Bernard (whose racial background was not specified) suggested that, at least among the colonial elite, Yoruba religious traditions were more recognisable than the Nation Dance. During a 1971 assault trial in St George's, Francis Charles, a fisherman, was insistent that there was a 'nation dance on – not a shango'; however, judge St Bernard seemed to recognise 'Shango' but not the Nation Dance.[16]

Former sugar plantations on Carriacou were affected by the decline of that industry but unlike mainland Grenada, its climate was not favourable to the cultivation of crops such as cocoa and coffee that had replaced sugar. In addition, the revenue from the island's cotton industry, which had been a profitable business until the 1820s, had plummeted.[17] Moreover, cultivation on Carriacou was less economically viable than on the mainland because its land mass is nine times smaller than Grenada. The demand for indentured workers in the post-slavery period, therefore, was not as acute as on the mainland. As a result of the different economic contexts, former enslavers began to leave Carriacou, and by the early 1950s, only one recognised member of the elite remained on that island. With most of the Europeans gone, and, as Smith noted, no new African arrivals on post-emancipation Carriacou, the Nation Dance continued without European intervention or competing Yoruba influences.[18] In fact, Smith surmised that 'Shango' was unknown on Carriacou until 1953, the year that he began his fieldwork there.[19] The African work leader Miss Clive, who was interviewed by Smith on that fieldwork visit, was adamant that she had 'never heard of African people go up

[14] Higman, *Slave Populations*, 650–2.
[15] Smith, *Plural Society*, 34–5.
[16] *West Indian*, 2 June 1971, as cited in Hill, 'Impact of Migration', 360.
[17] Higman, *Slave Populations*, 56.
[18] Smith, *Kinship and Community*, 3, 32–4, 9; Smith, *Plural Society*, 34.
[19] Smith, *Framework for Caribbean Studies*, 22.

to Carriacou and make no dance. This very year this very Paul [African work leader Norman Paul] I think he is the first person to go up there and make the dance.'[20] Smith's arrival coincided with Paul's return to Grenada from Trinidad and his African work activities on the mainland and in Carriacou.

Noting that Yoruba people were neither enslaved nor indentured on Carriacou, McDaniel observed that the Yoruba were not represented in the multi-nation tradition of the Nation Dance when she conducted fieldwork in the 1990s. Certainly, Yoruba were not enslaved in significant numbers during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. While a relatively small number of Grenada's captives were enslaved through the Bight of Benin at that time, there were few Yoruba speakers among them. McDaniel instead attributed Yoruba and Fon elements, such as Legba's invocation, to the influence of the enslaved Arada (representing Gbe speakers [Ewe, Fon, Aja, etc.] from the Bight of Benin interior).[21] Contrary to both Smith and McDaniel's assertions, however, a small number of recaptives settled on Carriacou. Yoruba and Fon peoples could have been among them, carrying Orisa worship to the island. Colonial Office correspondence shows that four Africans were indentured on Carriacou in 1836 from the vessel the *Phoenix*, which had departed from Little Popo.[22] As examined in Chapter 3, those Africans were likely a mixture of Akan, Ga-Adangme, and Gbe speakers (the latter language group may have included the Fon). They were joined in 1850 by fifteen more Africans from the *Atlantic* who were indentured on Carriacouan plantations; among those emigrants, the Yoruba were likely to be prominent. As Carriacou's population was six times smaller than that of the mainland, it is probable that the Orisa devotion of the small number of Yoruba and Fon recaptives altered the island's religious landscape.[23]

The Nation Dance is characterised by inclusivity, and a new, nineteenth-century Yoruba nation may have found acceptance within its multi-ethnic cycle of dances. In 1850, magistrates' reports described the *Atlantic* Africans as a linguistically heterogeneous group who did not understand the different languages spoken by their shipmates.[24] That year, an interpreter was requested by the local stipendiary magistrate

[20] Smith, Field Notes, 'Miss Clive/MGS', La Tante, September 1953, 45.
[21] McDaniel, *Big Drum Ritual*, 121.
[22] TNA CO 101/81, 'Return of Captured Africans per *Phoenix*', 2 November 1836.
[23] TNA CO 106/45, Appendix to the Census of the Island of Grenada, 1851.
[24] OGG, 1850–1852 Demographic Statistics of the Colony of Grenada, Report for the District of Carriacou, June 1850.

to assist recaptives in understanding their contractual obligations, but for reasons unstated, none was forthcoming.[25] Three years after their arrival, it was reported that the incomers had become 'completely associated with the native labourers in every respect'.[26] Perhaps, over time, the traditions of those new Africans were embraced and incorporated into the practices of the formerly enslaved folk.

Examining inter-island migration between Carriacou, Grenada, and Trinidad yields more concrete evidence of the magnitude of influence of post-emancipation African arrivals on nineteenth- and twentieth-century Carriacou (see Figure 8.2 for close proximity of these islands). Such an examination complicates the view that nineteenth-century Africans renewed or displaced cultures deriving from enslavement. I suggest that, contrary to Smith's belief, the Nation Dance continued *with* post-emancipation Yoruba influence because its devotees – rural, non-elite, and mostly agricultural workers – moved around the Eastern Caribbean Sea, intervening in and transforming religious practices in their new locales; in turn, they rejuvenated the practices at home. Lacking formal group organisation, a priesthood, and permanent worship of a particular deity, Black Grenadians were receptive to Orisa veneration which offered them many of these qualities.[27]

One example can be seen in Nation Dance songs in which can be heard Yoruba cultural references, possibly threads woven from the Yoruba language, that are used in the Orisa rituals of Trinidad and Grenada.[28] Carriacou was, and still is, in frequent interaction with Trinidad and Grenada, where Yoruba traditions are continued with vibrancy.[29] The Yoruba agricultural orisa, Oko, has been adopted in the Koromanti song and is part of the wider Carriacou pantheon. Oko is one of the hundreds – some estimate thousands – of deities who act as intermediaries between human beings and Olodumare, the Creator and Supreme Being.[30] Oko is said to be an orisa borrowed from Trinidad, where after emancipation, numerous Carriacouans sought waged labour on the sugar estates. In the early twentieth century, their numbers were

[25] TNA CO 101/103, Grey to Colebrooke, 20 November 1850.
[26] TNA CO 101/106, Gurley, SM, District of Carriacou, 'Distribution Return of African Immigrants for the six months ending the 30th June 1853', 28 September 1853.
[27] Smith, *Plural Society*, 34–5; Smith, *Dark Puritan*, 35.
[28] McDaniel, *Big Drum Ritual*, 44, 69.
[29] Andrew Pearse, 'Aspects of Change in Caribbean Folk Music', *Journal of the International Folk Music Council* 7 (1955): 30.
[30] Awolalu, *Yoruba* Beliefs, 20.

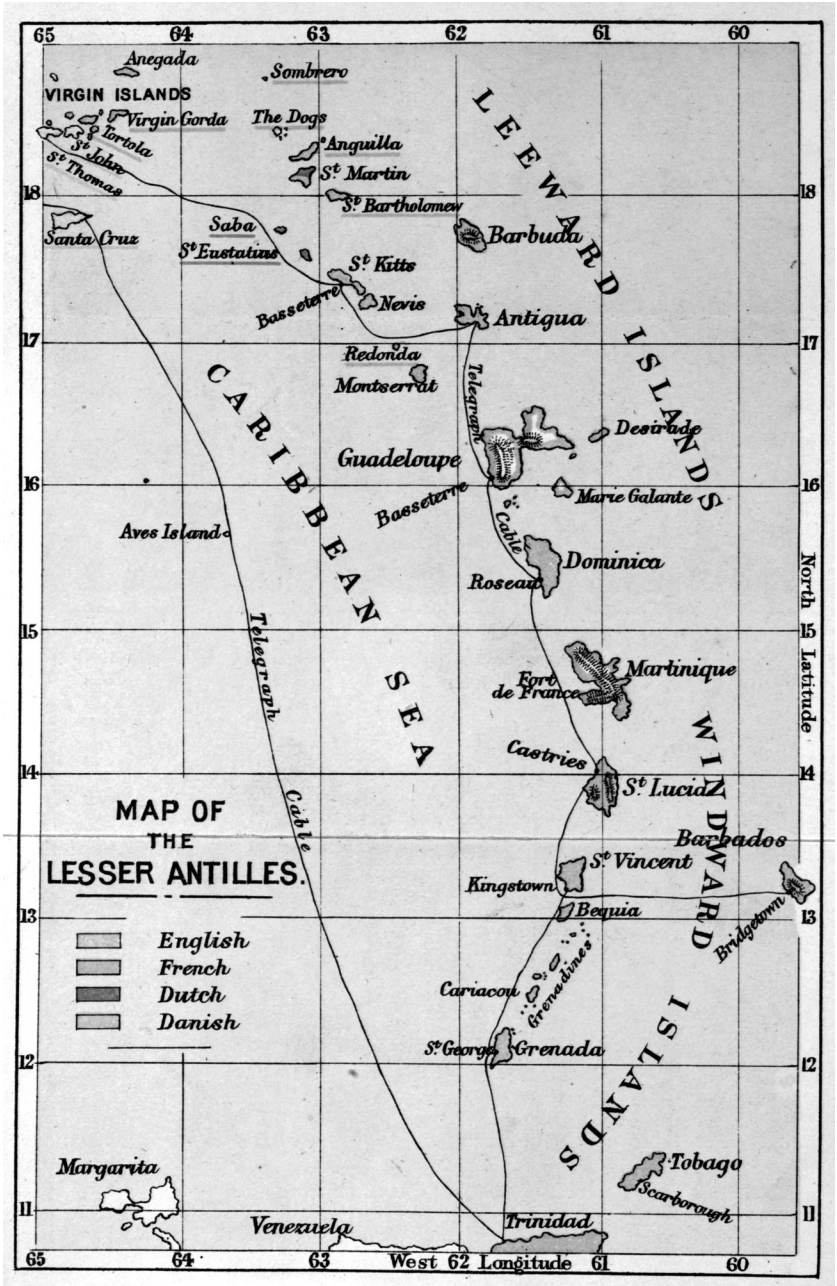

FIGURE 8.2 Map of the Lesser Antilles (1889).
New York Public Library Digital Collections, Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, Jean Blackwell Hutson Research and Reference Division, The New York Public Library, https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47dd-e6a1-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99.

augmented by other Carriacouans seeking new opportunities in the booming oil fields.[31] Because Oko is also venerated in the Grenada pantheon, the orisa could equally have been borrowed from Grenada, where many Carriacouans headed during the dry season, when it was possible to find work on the few remaining sugar estates.[32] Carriacouans were lured to Grenada and Trinidad by the greater financial rewards that waged labour offered on both islands; in the mid nineteenth century and towards the end of that century, wages in Carriacou were half of those on Trinidad and in some parts of Grenada.[33] It is also the case that the Trinidadian Yoruba influenced Grenadians, who also migrated to Trinidad for work, and they, in turn, inspired the Carriacouans.[34]

During the dry months, Carriacouans also emigrated to Trinidad, where they sold foodstuffs (ground provisions, fish, and poultry).[35] Those essential foods circulated throughout the Eastern Caribbean, underscoring the importance of that network to people's everyday lives. The anthropologist Donald Hill noted that in the 1970s, foodstuffs and mail regularly travelled between the south-eastern Caribbean islands of Carriacou, Grenada, St Vincent, Trinidad, and further afield to Cuba to the north and Guyana to the south. Smith observed during the 1950s that, as well as bringing supplies to Carriacou, and transporting emigrants cheaply, small ships delivered news of absent family and friends.[36]

The interaction between Grenada and Trinidad was extensive: in 1873, more people travelled on small open boats from Grenada to Trinidad than from any other place in the Caribbean: fifty-two per cent of the peoples arriving on boats in Trinidad were from Grenada and Carriacou. More may have landed in Trinidad because there were also several hundred migrants whose origin went unrecorded. Grenada was also a popular destination for people leaving Trinidad that year: forty per cent of those departing from Trinidad headed to Grenada.[37] Indeed, migration

[31] McDaniel, *Big Drum Ritual*, 48–9; Hill, 'Impact of Migration', 221, 244.

[32] Benedict Andrew, interview with author, Munich, 16 March 2013; *St. George's Chronicle and Grenada Gazette*, 30 June 1877. Hill noted that Yoruba traditions on Carriacou, such as the veneration of Oko, originated on Grenada (Hill, email message to author, 1 December 2013).

[33] Hill, 'Impact of Migration', 220; Smith, *Kinship and Community*, 29.

[34] *St. George's Chronicle and Grenada Gazette*, 23 May 1874.

[35] TNA CO 106/45, Appendix to the Census of the Island of Grenada, 1851.

[36] Hill, 'Impact of Migration', 247–8; Smith, *Kinship and Community*, 55–6.

[37] TNA CO 321/1/14, 'Abstract of arrivals of deckers in Trinidad from the neighbouring countries and from Trinidad to the neighbouring countries in 1873', in 'Caribbean History Revealed', https://tinyurl.com/4ha9y3y4.

sustained Carriacou's economy, as reflected in the songs of the Big Drum that reference Grenada and Trinidad. McDaniel did not indicate a specific era, but her work stressed the cultural contacts and communication and musical exchanges between the three islands.[38] It seems likely, then, that the cultures of Grenada and Trinidad, notably those associated with liberated Africans, did influence the Nation Dance on Carriacou.

As part of that vibrant exchange, Carriacouan workers also shaped Trinidadian cultures. The Trinidadian and Tobagonian anthropologist J. D. Elder observed that in the 1950s, the Nation Dance was held in four locations on Trinidad. Celebrants, mainly from across the Grenadines – Grenada, St Vincent, Bequia, and Canouan – and from further afield on Martinique, gathered to celebrate their respective islands. This Carriacouan ritual was transformed into a pan-Caribbean archipelagic ceremony for Trinidad's multi-national migrants. One night in 1953, Elder and the British sociologist Andrew Pearse attended a Nation Dance ceremony held by Grenadians in Port of Spain, Trinidad's capital, in memory of deceased relatives. At the ceremony, they overheard a woman named Faithy Rogers crying and singing. Rogers informed the observers that the song was a nation chant from her country of Carriacou. Intrigued, both scholars journeyed to Carriacou that year to study the Nation Dance, eventually producing one of the earliest studies of the tradition.[39]

Yoruba religiosity functioned as a form of spiritual power and was highly compatible with the Nation Dance. The following real-life tale of Solomon Joseph, a successful seine fisher, illuminates the relationship between the Nation Dance and Yoruba belief, and the central role of Grenada's African work practitioners in Carriacou. The story was related to Hill by an elderly sailor in the 1970s, who said he had first heard the story as a child. McDaniel described the tale as a parabolic narrative used to illustrate how greed or an overabundance of wealth or success, if not shared with the less fortunate, may result in premature death. The tragic tale was captured in the repertoire of Nation Dance songs, and

[38] Lorna McDaniel, 'The Concept of Nation in the Big Drum of Carriacou, Grenada', in Carol E. Robertson (ed.), *Musical Repercussions of 1492: Encounters in Text and Performance* (Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press, 1992), 404–5. Twenty-five of the 129 Big Drum songs allude to other countries: ten of twenty-five mention mainland Grenada and seven songs refer to Trinidad: see McDaniel, *Big Drum Ritual*, 149, 151.

[39] J. D. Elder, 'Nation Dance in 1953', in Frederick I. Case and Patrick Taylor (eds.), *The Encyclopedia of Caribbean Religions: Volume 1: A – L; Volume 2: M – Z* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2013), 630.

although the song is now obsolete, the event was remembered as late as the 1990s.[40] Around the year 1914, Solomon Joseph of L'Esterre, Carriacou, had the great fortune to net a very large catch. So enormous was Joseph's catch that it was considered more than his rightful share. As an act of appeasement, it was decided that he would pay a debt to the sea in order to prevent certain death. Joseph, a regular participant in the Nation Dance and African work, sent for the 'Shango people' of Grenada, who arrived and agreed to offer up food and an animal sacrifice to the sea. They made their way about Carriacou, and nearby Sandy Island and Mabouya Island. As they went, they danced and played the *boli*, and held sarakas, offering food sacrifices to 'pay the sea' in order to stave off Joseph's untimely death. Crucially, the 'Shango' visitors also sang at Nation Dance ceremonies, indicating the compatibility of African work and Nation Dance. Yet Joseph's health continued to decline, and the 'Shango people' decided to take the weakened man to the mainland town of Munich, the center of 'Shango' expertise on Grenada. Failing to restore him, they set out for Carriacou with Joseph, but he died at sea, much to the dismay of the 'Shango' specialists. Hill lamented that Joseph's death was a payment for an unknown debt to the sea.[41]

That Joseph appealed to Munich's 'Shango people' for help with restoration is significant. Joseph, an active participant of 'Shango' ceremonies himself, recognised that 'Shango' was a potent tradition that offered expertise in healing, music, animal sacrifice, and feast-giving. He also knew that in the village of Munich lived the descendants of recaptured Africans, and that the village was known as the center of Yoruba cultural practices. Unfortunately, for Joseph and his loved ones, his life could not be saved despite the strenuous interventions of Munich's 'Shango' specialists. Nevertheless his story, recalled and retold many years later by an old sailor, testifies to the potent and dialogical relationship between African work of the mainland and the Nation Dance of Carriacou, and urges a reconsideration of the renewal–reinforcement theory.

Today, residents of Carriacou still speak of the presence of Grenadian African work practitioners there. Clemencia Alexander, who in 2014, was the manager of the Carriacou Museum and Historical Society, recalled that her great-grandmother was a 'Shango woman' named Ms Safey who always wore red, one of the preferred colours of the orisa Sango. Crucially, although it is uncertain when and

[40] McDaniel, *Big Drum Ritual*, 78.
[41] Ibid.; Hill, 'Impact of Migration', 332–3.

FIGURE 8.3 De Couteau's *dada* hair.
The hair is preserved in a glass tumbler along with nutmegs sealed in wax.
Photo by author, Belmont, Carriacou, 2014.

why, Ms Safey had come from the fabled village of Munich to settle on Carriacou.[42] Elias De Couteau, another resident I spoke with, proudly identified himself as 'Shango', meaning 'someone born with *dada* hair'.[43] As discussed in Chapter 3, *dada* hair is rare, curled, and soft, and children born with this hair in Yorubaland are regarded as blessings from the orisas. *Dada* hair requires ritual removal to dissociate children from the spirit world, affirming their belonging in the earthly domain. Similar to *dada* hair removal practices in Yorubaland, De Couteau's hair was shaven in his childhood and ritually preserved by using medicinal plants, a practice believed to secure the hair or individual against evil. De Couteau's hair had been preserved with nutmeg, the modern-day national spice of Grenada (Figure 8.3).[44] De Couteau went on to speak of the role of Grenada's African work devotees in training practitioners on Carriacou. His mother, Miss Vida, was a 'Shango leader' who had been born in Carriacou but aged seven had been sent to the mainland to learn African work from Miss Vanji, a 'Shango woman'.[45] After her induction, his mother travelled regularly between Grenada and Carriacou. She too decorated her yard with red

[42] Clemencia Alexander, interview with author, Hillsborough, Carriacou, 24 June 2014.
[43] Elias De Couteau, interview with author, Belmont, Carriacou, 21 June 2014.
[44] Agwuele, *Symbolism and Communicative Contents*, 81; Mr Elias De Couteau, interview with author, Belmont, Carriacou, 21 June 2014.
[45] Ibid.

flags. Along with the sealed *dada* hair, De Couteau pointed out a red, green, and gold reef and a red goblet used in African work ceremonies, and chalk marks on a door – resembling Haitian *veve*.

Like his mother, the Carriacou-born De Couteau was also inducted into African work on Grenada. De Couteau spoke of the combination of Christianity and African work in his practice: he wore a red robe, symbolic of the orisa Sango. Wrapped in a red and black turban – a head covering and colour combination that connoted African work – De Couteau carried a copy of the New Testament atop his head. His account further underscores the role of Grenadians in African work on Carriacou: he recounted that at the last 'big Shango' on Carriacou held several years earlier, African work practitioners had travelled from Grenada and Trinidad and Tobago to participate.[46] Similar exchanges undoubtedly began as early as the mid nineteenth century as people moved between the two islands.

Grenada's African work followers contributed new elements to ceremonies on Carriacou. Although not exclusive to African work, animal sacrifices were performed by Grenada's African work practitioners there. Their ritual sacrifices of sheep noted by Hill in the early 1970s were rare and demonstrate Grenadian influences.[47] Moreover, Hill's fieldwork revealed similar sacrifices throughout Carriacou organised by a group called 'Shango Baptists', also known as 'Norman Paul's Children', named after founder Norman Paul.[48] His distinctive blend of Yoruba customs, European book magic, the Spiritual Baptist Faith, and other forms of Christianity will be explored in greater depth in the next chapter.

African work practitioners in Grenada also performed exorcisms on Carriacou. Unlike African work, the Nation Dance does not usually feature spirit possession.[49] In the late 1970s, David noted that Arada dances were performed to cast out spells.[50] However, because the Arada nation is not dominant in the cycle of dances, and since the Yoruba did not arrive in large numbers, by the early 1980s it was observed that exorcism had not survived as a feature of Big Drum.[51] In order to fill demand for

[46] Ibid.
[47] Hill, 'Impact of Migration', 269n2. As in Trinidad, Brazil, and Yorubaland, a sheep is commonly sacrificed to Sango: see Bascom, *Shango in the New World*, 7, 10, and Awolalu, *Yoruba Beliefs*, 35.
[48] Hill, 'Impact of Migration', 269 n2.
[49] Smith, *Kinship and Community*, 4.
[50] Christine David, *Folklore of Carriacou* (Bridgetown: Coles Printery, 1985), 26.
[51] McDaniel, *Big Drum Ritual*, 101.

that service, 'Shango' specialists were brought to the island from Grenada to perform exorcisms during ceremonies.[52]

In addition to performing animal sacrifices and exorcisms (discussed in Chapter 3), Grenada's African work practitioners took a lead role in 'Shango' hair-cutting on Carriacou. McDaniel referred to the 'Shango' hair-cutting ceremony as a Yoruba-based ritual borrowed from Grenada.[53] Although by the 1970s these events were rare, Hill wrote that 'Shango people' from the mainland were often called to lead the ceremony.[54] In 1953, Smith observed 'Shango' hair-cutting in the village of L'Esterre for a child born with *dada* hair. The hair required ritual removal for the protection of the child. It was commonplace for Grenadian 'Shango' practitioners to be invited to assist, adding their 'nation' to the ceremony, which was typically unrepresented in Carriacou's Nation Dance. At 10 a.m., a goat was sacrificed by the maternal uncle of the child. The uncle sprinkled white rum on the goat before carrying the animal around the house, and then going inside it, he continued to sprinkle the four corners with rum.[55] This observation of the four cardinal points (east, west, north, and south) is common in Nation Dance, African work, and African cosmologies of the Yoruba and Kongo.[56] As a method of divination, several fowls were also sacrificed, and their auguries read. This is likely a Caribbean creation because typically in Yorubaland divination occurs with cowry shells, kola nuts, or palm nuts.[57]

As is customary in the Nation Dance, the sacrificial meat is traditionally prepared without salt, a spiritually deadening mineral believed to block flight (discussed at length in Chapter 10). The meal, known as the 'Parents' Plate', was placed on a table in the main bedroom of the house. Positioned next to it were two glasses, one containing rum and the other water, a bunch of flowers, and a lit candle. The Big Drum, consisting of three different drums, was placed opposite the child who was seated on a stool. After requesting the child's permission and pardon, the child's hair was cut, and the drums began to play. The hair was collected on a saucer and placed on the Parents' Plate.[58] More drumming commenced, and a large crowd formed. A libation sprinkle of rum and water was

[52] Hill, 'Impact of Migration', 339, 384; Smith, *Kinship and Community*, 149.
[53] McDaniel, *Big Drum Ritual*, 182.
[54] Hill, 'Impact of Migration', 277.
[55] Smith, *Kinship and Community*, 96.
[56] Awolalu, *Yoruba Beliefs*, 138, 171; Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit*, 108.
[57] Awolalu, *Yoruba Beliefs*, 122–4.
[58] Smith, *Kinship and Community*, 97.

poured on the dancing area, within the house, and over the drums. Two overlapped towels were placed in the dancing ring, symbolising the entry way for the ancestors.[59] As usual in Nation Dance ceremonies, the towels were placed according to the four cardinal points of the universe that represent the water boundary between the living and the dead in Kongo cosmology.[60]

Because the maternal grandfather of the child traced the family's patrilineal descent to the enslaved Kongo, songs of that nation were played before the obligatory Koromanti Beg Pardon.[61] Following this, another Kongo dance was performed by the child's grandparents, after which other Nation Dances were played: 'and the old people present each danced their own Nation before dancing others. Apart from the Kongo and Kromanti, the Nations played were Manding (Mandinka), Ibo, Chamba, Temne, Arada (Dahomey), Moko, and Yarraba (Yoruba).'[62] Smith did not detail how often the Yoruba nation was included, but Hill observed that it was customary for Carriacouans to add their Nation Dances to that Yoruba-based ceremony.[63]

Dancing and drumming continued throughout the night along with the traditional midnight intercession and further propitiatory Beg Pardon and Kongo songs. Later, the rum, water, candle, and salt-free food were relocated to a saraka table in the yard.[64] Carriacouans welcomed the opportunity to celebrate their cultural traditions by holding a saraka feast alongside the 'Shango hair-cutting' ritual brought from Grenada.[65] Smith and McDaniel highlighted the complete absence of any Yoruba-based traditions or Yoruba nation on Carriacou; but as adherents comingled, sharing ideas and cultures, a Yoruba nation was added to the nations performed in the Nation Dances. By joining the Carriacouan Nation Dances, the Yoruba-identified mainlanders displayed, as the religious scholar Dianne Stewart compellingly described for Trinidad, their

[59] David, *Folk Traditions*, 81–2.
[60] Ashie-Nikoi, 'Beating the Pen', 107; Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit*, 108.
[61] MacDonald, 'Big Drum Dance', 291; Hill, 'Impact of Migration', 306; Smith, *Kinship and Community*, 97. In most cases, the nation of an individual is inherited through the father's line, but because the child resided with his mother and maternal grandmother and they were both unmarried, the nation of the maternal grandfather opened the ceremony. The father of the child could not attend the ceremony in person, but he provided a sum of money and provisions for the ceremony (ibid., 96).
[62] Ibid., 98.
[63] Hill, 'Impact of Migration', 277.
[64] Smith, *Kinship and Community*, 98.
[65] McDaniel, *Big Drum Ritual*, 19.

'polycultural inter-nation-al ethos'.[66] The Nation Dance bears similarities with the Afro-Trinidadian palais (palace) structure in that it too offered a space for the celebration of 'Africana nationscapes'.[67] At the Nation Dance ceremony in L'Esterre, Yoruba peoples of biological or spiritual inheritance were welcomed and honoured. Such interactions between recaptive (Yoruba) and enslaved nations were commonplace: in 2014, Ruffin George, a local resident, recollected that historically, African work ceremonies and Nation Dances were often practised together.[68] The parallel arrangement of African work and Nation Dance traditions illustrates that the cultural impact of recaptives is best understood as something besides renewal. Recaptive cultures were interwoven with long-established local practices, persisting even in those areas where the Yoruba were presumed either absent or numerically insignificant.

On the mainland, the interweaving of the Nation Dance and African work shows that, contrary to Smith's assertion, recaptured Africans did not displace the Nation Dance. Instead, Yoruba cultures blended into the Nation Dance. In 1990, at a Nation Dance ceremony held in Mother Annie's yard, multiple traditions of Grenadian folk were once again represented: the nine nations (Koromanti, Igbo, Manding, Banda, Arada, Kongo, Temne, Moko, and Chamba) of their enslaved ancestors were celebrated, and in the same space, the arrival and astonishment of the nineteenth-century Yoruba were commemorated as singers chanted, 'The Yoruba people are on an island, mama. The Yoruba people are on a rock.'[69] That ceremony was no different to other Nation Dance observances; it was a porous space, absorbing new immigrants and their respective nations into the multi-ethnic congregation. Likewise, Yoruba practitioners were highly receptive to local influences, as in, for instance, their adoption of the three-day Nation Dance tradition, as led by African work leaders Christine McQueen and Norman Paul.[70]

As indicated in the opening of this chapter, the Nation Dance was also infused with non-African cultural practices. Two years before her passing, African work leader Mother Medalin (c.1930–2011) spoke

[66] Stewart, *Orisa*, 47.
[67] Ibid., 23, 27–8.
[68] Ruffin George, interview with author, Belmont, Carriacou, 24 June 2014.
[69] Franklyn, 'Experience of the Slave Trade'. For a further discussion on the shared spaces of dancing nations, see Patrick Taylor, 'Dancing the Nation: An Introduction', in Patrick Taylor (ed.), *Nation Dance: Religion, Identity, and Cultural Difference in the Caribbean* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 11–12.
[70] Smith, *Kinship and Community*, 33.

of ceremonies she had held for Grenadians at a mineral spring in the north of the island. Alongside Nation Dances, Mother Medalin organised dances said to represent both African and Indian post-abolition arrivals: 'I … have the Indian, the Nation and the African. Indian dance is a *different thing*, the Nation is a *different dance*, the African is a *different dance*'.[71] As Stewart has convincingly shown for Trinidad, women leaders critically contributed towards nation building, fostering communal spaces for the celebration of several faiths.[72] Over a hundred years earlier, the colonial administrator Hesketh Bell had learned of a similar arrangement from his Black guide in the 1880s. Bell, who did not witness the ceremony, was told by his guide that at a mineral spring, 'Africans, old Creoles and sometimes coolies' prayed and danced.[73] The involvement of African work practitioners in the Nation Dance and Indian dances illustrates that multiple expressions could simultaneously exist. Indian-descended peoples in late nineteenth-century Grenada and African work practitioners on twentieth-century Carriacou both participated in the well-established and more creolised Nation Dance.[74] Mother Medalin and Bell's accounts speak once again to the idea that customary dances emanating from African Grenadians, Africans, and Indians were practised in parallel with each other, complicating the notion that nineteenth-century African traditions displaced or renewed island cultures. Such interweaving can also be seen in the practice of obeah.

'OSEYIN … IS THE BIGGEST OBEAH-MAN'

Throughout the era of recaptive immigration, white bureaucrats, missionaries, and anti-slavery groups feared the arrival of new Africans, ostensibly 'pagans' and 'idolaters' who would revive obeah and other undesirable African cultural practices.[75] While the majority of recaptives undoubtedly arrived with their own African beliefs (sometimes combined with Islam or Christianity), they had in fact first encountered obeah – a

[71] Mother Medalin, interview with author, Plains, 20 November 2009.
[72] Stewart, *Orisa*, 193.
[73] Bell, *Obeah*, 39–40.
[74] Schuler et al., 'Afro-American Slave Culture', 152.
[75] Copy of a Memorial by missionaries to Sir. E. Bulwer Lytton, Secretary of State for the Colonies, in Appendix II, 'Slave-Trade and Immigration' by L. A. Chamerovzow, Secretary of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, January 1859, *Wilson Anti-Slavery Collection* (1859), www.jstor.org/stable/60238732; Green, *Slave Emancipation*, 267.

creolised spiritual practice – in the Americas. During enslavement, Black people drew on their respective African cultures and American influences to create a spiritual system which could be used to resolve a multitude of personal difficulties. Troubles with an adulterous spouse, a debilitating illness, a quarrelsome neighbour, conceiving a child, or a common thief could all be dealt with by an obeah man or woman who could summon supernatural beings, recite spells, read signs or events, heal through prayer, medicinal herbs, and ointments, or bring good fortune and protection from harm, and redress wrongs.

Liberated African scholarship has shown how recaptured Africans renewed or reinforced obeah-related practices. Using archival and oral evidence, Adderley concluded that liberated Africans in Trinidad developed a 'particular niche' in obeah work. In fact, their closer connection with Africa fostered the widespread belief that Africans were more powerful than other spiritual workers. Adderley suggested that the emergence of renowned obeah practitioners from areas of significant liberated African settlement indicates that recaptives 'sustained and perhaps strengthened' obeah in both Trinidad and the Bahamas.[76] Similarly, the Grenadian historian Beverley Steele stressed the relationship between liberated Africans and obeah work: in the liberated African villages of Munich, Concord, and La Mode, there were 'more "knowledgeable" obeahmen'.[77] On Trinidad, court witnesses appeared to be more conversant with obeah practice by claiming an African birth or identity. Religious scholar Tracey E. Hucks has shown that in cases of obeah prosecution, testifying witnesses who claimed an African identity and those of African birth were considered more credible than those born in the region.[78]

While the nexus between liberated Africans and obeah practice is clear, thinking beyond the renewal and reinforcement paradigm prompts consideration of the complex ways in which obeah was conceptualised by African work practitioners, and how anti-obeah legislation impacted devotees. The historian of obeah Diana Paton stated that neo-African religious workers in the Caribbean interacted with obeah in several ways: they expressed hostility and fear towards obeah, were cognisant of the tradition as a dangerous spiritual force, and constructed ways to protect themselves from obeah, sometimes even integrating elements of obeah traditions. Paton highlighted the prosecution of Trinidadian Orisa

[76] Adderley, *'New Negroes'*, 197, 202.
[77] Steele, 'Grenada', 24.
[78] Hucks, *Obeah*, 189.

devotees for alleged obeah practice although the evidence suggested they were engaged in Orisa work. In the case of one African, Francis Caradose, such prosecutions could enhance the reputations of spiritual workers.[79]

Hucks, also examining Trinidad, identified that the term obeah was alien to recaptured Africans; nonetheless, they were considered obeah workers, sharing a 'common history of obeah persecution' with the formerly enslaved.[80] Moreover, Hucks illustrated how the healing expertise of Orisa devotees disrupted colonial medical restrictions and that they challenged, sometimes successfully, prosecutions under obeah and Spiritual Baptist legislation.[81] Yet little is known about how Grenada's liberated Africans and African work devotees conceptualised obeah and the way anti-obeah laws impacted their practice. In the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, most African work adherents in Grenada emphatically deny identification of themselves or their practices with obeah. Their accounts reveal the ways in which obeah was understood and counteracted by practitioners, and the disruptive effects of the criminalising acts of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries.

In his interview with Smith, African work diviner Norman Paul recollected that he was often admonished for his spiritual work and was regularly accused of being an 'obeah-man'.[82] Paul defined obeah as witchcraft involving the use of 'evil books' – European occult books such as *The Sixth and Seventh Book of Moses* that 'teach you both good and evil'.[83] Paul was adamant that his work in fact counteracted obeah through calling up deities known for their remarkable curative abilities. Shakpana (the Fon deity of healing, especially for diseases such as smallpox) and Oseyin (Osanyin: an orisa of plants and healing), Paul explained, 'cleaned' up obeah. He went on to say that Oseyin was more powerful than obeah forces: 'Oseyin is telling them he is the biggest obeah-man, he [is] not afraid of that.'[84] African work practitioners also denied association with obeah: in the 1960s, anthropologist Pollak-Eltz observed that 'Shango queens' were accused of practising obeah, but they refuted this claim stating that they 'work "white magic" to benefit people'.[85]

[79] Paton, *Cultural Politics*, 151–4.
[80] Hucks, *Obeah*, 2, 50.
[81] Ibid., 141, 175.
[82] Smith, *Dark Puritan*, 113.
[83] Ibid., 88–9.
[84] Ibid., 113.
[85] Pollak-Eltz, 'Shango Cult', 21. For a similar claim for Trinidad, see Henry, *Reclaiming African Religions*, 209.

Notwithstanding the widespread beliefs in the curative properties of African work, charges of obeah continue to be levelled against African work practitioners today; the Spiritual Baptist and African work leader, Bishop Peters, is described as an obeah man by other Christian religious leaders. Indeed, regular conflicts erupt between Pentecostal and African work practitioners in Grenada. For instance, Bishop Peters claimed that the pastor of a Pentecostal church in St Patrick is said to perform exorcisms of individuals possessed by demonic beings, allegedly summoned by Peters and other practitioners. The pastor then uses his own spiritual power to despatch these demons back to the leader who had summoned them. Peters rationalised: 'If someone throws a stone at you, and you throw one back at them, who is worse?'[86] The African work leader perceived himself and the Pentecostal minister as fellow spiritual workers all doing the 'same work'.[87]

Grenadian evidence suggests that African work practitioners in the mid twentieth century did not perceive their craft and spiritual work as obeah; rather, they believed their works to be powerful healing that counteracted the malevolent forces unleashed by obeah practitioners. Archival evidence in Grenada offers no insights as to how adherents of earlier periods conceived of their work, but it is clear that by the turn of the twentieth century, liberated Africans, their descendants, and the followers of their traditions reckoned powerfully with obeah practice.

There was no act banning African work on Grenada. Yet the reach of legislation banning obeah was wide, and followers of African work were enmeshed in the legal ramifications of the criminalisation of African-derived practices. African work practitioners responded in several ways to the restrictions of obeah-related legislation of the twentieth century, which was, in effect, reworked obeah acts from the era of slavery. Obeah was perceived differently in the post-slavery era; during slavery, obeah laws concerned human and cattle poisoning, and potential slave insurrection. After slavery, obeah laws were reworked to focus on superstitions, extortion, and fraudulent financial and medical practices.[88] For instance, customary elements integral to African work practice, such as drumming at night, healing, divination, fortune telling, the use of blood for sacrifice, and keeping and reading occult books and materials, were prohibited.[89] Following emancipation, obeah laws and other legal

[86] Bishop Peters, interview with author, Moyah, 3 June 2013.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Hucks, *Obeah*, 142.
[89] Herskovits and Herskovits, *Trinidad Village*, 340–8.

prohibitions against drumming and playing loud instruments were nullified. It would seem, however, that recourse to obeah and other related practices increased after the legal prohibitions were removed; at any rate, by 1874, a resurgence of the white fear of obeah led to the re-introduction of several prohibitions.[90] In that same year, an act was also passed to consolidate laws prohibiting dancing and 'noisy and disorderly diversion' between midnight Saturday and Monday morning.[91]

African work ceremonies commonly held at night were affected by those attempts to eradicate African heritage practices. African work practitioners found their activities subjected to restrictions as authorities attempted to enforce laws, especially near towns. In 1953, shortly after Norman Paul returned to Grenada from Trinidad, a follower was inspired by a dream to approach the African work healer to request that he hold an African feast for her. Paul duly fulfilled the woman's request, and paid a visit to her home in Soubise, St Andrew, where he performed the requested service. During the feast, a Roman Catholic minister allegedly reported Paul to the police for loud noise at night, and the event was interrupted by three police officers who came to halt the evening's activities. Intriguingly, Paul told the police that on Trinidad, he had freely carried out his drumming work without legal restriction or interference, for there he was recognised as a 'healer who does spiritual work with drumbeating'.[92] Nevertheless, Paul accompanied the officers to the police station, where he discovered that, in fact, it was a young woman who had made the complaint after hearing about him from a disgruntled visitor to Paul's residence. Challenging the station sergeant, Paul demanded to know whether any actual law existed that made it illegal to hold an African feast. The sergeant admitted that no such law existed, and informed Paul that he was free to continue his activities as 'everybody is supposed to do as they like in their place'. However, the sergeant cautioned Paul that had he been drumming near the town, the police would not have allowed drumming at night.[93] The drumming restrictions were legacies of legislative acts introduced during enslavement. As Chapter 1 has shown, drums were considered a method of communication among

[90] Handler and Bilby, *Enacting Power*, xi.

[91] 'An Act to Consolidate the Laws relative to Offences punishable on Summary Convictions, and to define the Duties of Constables in certain Cases', 25 September 1874, in Sanford Freeling, comp., *The Laws of Grenada, and the Grenadines: From the Year 1766 to the Year 1875* (London: George Phipps, 1875), 586.

[92] Smith, *Dark Puritan*, 120.

[93] Ibid., 120–1.

enslaved peoples during revolts, and assemblies were known to be sites of incendiary conduct.

Under the Consolidated Act of 1874, persons professing skills in palmistry, cards, and the occult sciences to reveal fortunes, recover goods, harm or heal were punishable by a fine and imprisonment, and males convicted of any of these 'crimes' also received a whipping.[94] From 1895, imports of 'indecent or obscene' articles (such as books, cards, and paintings) were prohibited by several ordinances. Grenadian import laws fail to mention obeah or provide more detail on the nature of the prohibited articles.[95] Nevertheless, African heritage religions were often characterised as indecent and immoral, as seen in the 1927 Public Meetings ('Shakerism') Prohibition Ordinance banning 'obscene or immoral' practices.[96] Banned imported articles likely included European magic books used by obeah workers, such as *The Sixth and Seventh Book of Moses* and associated paraphernalia published and circulated by the Chicago-based DeLaurence Company – the major source of Western occult books to the Caribbean in the early twentieth century.[97] In Jamaica, such books, primarily those published by DeLaurence, influenced the development of obeah. Considered 'instruments' of obeah by Jamaican authorities, in 1940, imports of DeLaurence publications were prohibited.[98]

Other Grenadian legislation of that era was clear on the use and possession of 'instruments' associated with the practice of obeah and other occult arts, including the use of such 'to restore any person to health', which was prohibited under an 1897 ordinance. Persons found guilty could be imprisoned for three months.[99] The anti-obeah provisions of 1897 were amended in 1908 and prohibited the importation, publishing, or sale of written materials which could 'encourage a belief in the efficacy

[94] 'An Act to Consolidate the Laws relative to Offences punishable on Summary Convictions…', in Freeling, *Laws of Grenada*, 25 September 1874, 586–7. It is unclear what types of cards were prohibited; however, both regular playing cards and tarot cards were employed within spiritual work in the Caribbean, see Paton, *Cultural Politics*, 220–1.

[95] TNA CO 103/21, 'An Ordinance to consolidate the Laws relating to Import Duties', no. 16, 30 December 1895; TNA CO 103/24, 'An Ordinance to amend the Laws relating to Import Duties', no. 1, 3 January 1912; TNA CO 103/25, 'An Ordinance relating to Customs Duties', no. 15, 23 November 1920.

[96] TNA CO 103/26, The Public Meetings ('Shakerism') Prohibition Ordinance no. 11 of 1927.

[97] Palmié, *Wizards and Scientists*, 207.

[98] W. F. Elkins, 'William Lauron DeLaurence and Jamaican Folk Religion', *Folkore* 97, no. 2 (1986): 215; Paton, *Cultural Politics*, 234.

[99] TNA CO 103/22, 'An Ordinance to establish a Code of Offences Punishable on Summary Conviction and on Indictment', no. 158, 29 January 1897.

of obeah'. The penalty for anyone found guilty was imprisonment for a period of up to three months in jail.[100] Perhaps the introduction of that law was a response to the increased circulation of occult books on Grenada. Such books were known to be used and interpreted by obeah practitioners. According to Smith's informant in 1953, 'Obeah is men that read bad books … and they translate [it] themselves.'[101] 'Self-translation' may refer to the act of interpreting texts without guidance from a spiritual leader. Paul himself admitted the efficaciousness of European magic books, whether employed with good or malevolent intentions.[102] The ban on occult materials was repeated in the Act of 1958, which affirmed both 'witchcraft' and the 'art of telling fortunes' to be illegal activities.[103]

A similar provision was made again in the Criminal Code of 1987, which reinforced the legal strictures against obeah, describing it as a 'pretended assumption of supernatural power or knowledge' for the purposes of committing fraudulent and other illicit activities, achieving wrongful personal gain, or maliciously causing injury to a person – though it was acknowledged that obeah was also put to more benevolent ends, such as restoring a sick person to health. Regardless, those found guilty of practising obeah could serve up to three months in jail.[104] 'Instruments' of obeah were specifically listed, these being 'any philtre, vial, blood, bone, image or other article or thing' employed or intended to be used for the practice of obeah. The penalty for anyone found guilty of possession of any of the banned articles was a fine of EC$24 (Eastern Caribbean dollars).[105] Although the law is now rarely enforced, it nevertheless remains on the statute books; in 2003, a woman was arrested for practising obeah, and the Criminal Code was last amended as recently as 2013, keeping its anti-obeah provisions intact.[106]

Records of the religious lives of nineteenth-century Africans on Grenada are few and often lack sufficient detail, and unlike those on Trinidad, leave no evidence that African work practitioners on Grenada

[100] Handler and Bilby, *Enacting Power*, 87.
[101] Smith, Field Notes, 'MGS/Mr St John, Record I Grenville', June 1953, 17.
[102] Smith, *Dark Puritan*, 88–9.
[103] Handler and Bilby, *Enacting Power*, 87.
[104] World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), WIPO Lex, Grenada Laws, www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/en/gd/gd011en.pdf.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Diana Paton, 'Obeah Acts: Producing and Policing the Boundaries of Religion in the Caribbean', *Small Axe* 13, no. 1 (2009): 16n89. For the amended obeah act, see *Grenada: Consolidated Index of Statutes and Subsidiary Legislation to 1st January 2016* (Cave Hill: Faculty of Law Library, University of West Indies, Barbados, 2016).

were ever prosecuted for practising obeah. Although there were no specific laws for either Trinidad or Grenada prohibiting 'Shango' or African work, such customs were not tolerated. Arguably, there was no need for a separate law, as white officials reworked existing obeah legislation directing it against recaptured Africans and their religious practices.[107]

Universal Empress Iya Ifatokie, a Spiritual Baptist, Orisa practitioner, and founder of Grenada's first Ifa Festival, embraces comparisons with obeah. In a 2019 interview with Curlan Campbell of *Now Grenada*, Universal Empress Ifatokie explained that Ifa is shunned by most Grenadians who consider it to be obeah. But she insisted: 'The word Obeah means blessing, so when people say you are an obeah woman, I say to them thank you.'[108] This affirmative reclamation of obeah signals the interconnection between obeah and Yoruba-heritage faiths despite negative societal perceptions. Obeah and African work are closely interwoven, as is evident by the complex ways in which African work practitioners respond to obeah, and how anti-obeah legislation impinges on the religious freedoms of African work adherents. Understanding the symbiotic relationship disrupts extant narratives about the extent of liberated Africans reshaping the traditions they encountered on Grenada, and instead requires us to consider the myriad conceptions of obeah and the legacy of stigmatisation.

THE ROUGH WOODEN CROSS: THE LEGACIES OF ROMAN CATHOLICISM

In the 1880s, the colonial officer Hesketh Bell observed what he thought to be an incongruous wooden cross on an Ogun altar, alongside a cutlass (symbolic of Ogun) and some kola nuts (used in divination in Yoruba cultures).[109] The inclusion of the cross among Yoruba paraphernalia signified the adoption by and the significance of Christianity to African work devotees. Indeed, as discussed in the previous chapter, the creolised Africans of La Mode and Munich were followers of Roman Catholicism yet maintained and practised Yoruba traditions. This was not unique to the Americas: the historian Michael Gomez has shown that borrowing from and observing multiple religious beliefs was common in Africa.[110] On the Slave Coast, for example, Yoruba cosmology influenced the

[107] Hucks, *Obeah*, 50.
[108] Curlan Campbell, 'Ifa African Spiritual System Takes Root in Grenada', *Now Grenada*, https://tinyurl.com/2ndp7etc.
[109] Bell, *Obeah*, 39–40.
[110] Gomez, 'African Religion', 79.

beliefs of Fon and other Gbe-speaking peoples. Islam, which had spread to Africa in the early eighth century CE, had fused with African religiosity. African religions also inflected Christianity: as early as 1658, Italian Capuchins created a catechism for Allada, using 'vodu' as a term for God and 'Lisa' (one-half of a dual-divinity Godhead) as a term for Jesus.[111] In West Central Africa, some Africans were exposed to Roman Catholicism from the late fifteenth century in the Kingdom of Kongo and near the urban coastal areas of Luanda.[112] However, geographically confined, these early Christian encounters did not lead to widespread conversion.

Grenada's recaptives were also exposed to Christianity following their traumatic middle passage and recapture. A significant number of recaptives on the island of St Helena, off the south-west coast of Africa, were forcibly baptised by the Anglican bishop stationed there in the late 1850s and early 1860s.[113] On the West African mainland, a youth from the *Negrinha* had spent several months under the care of a missionary in Africa, most likely Liberia, before being recaptured and sent to Grenada.[114] Recaptive Africans also encountered missionaries and Christian liberated Africans from whom they received some religious teaching following recapture and embarkation at Sierra Leone.[115] Several Africans on the *Negrinha* had contact with Christians, as evidenced by their names.[116] However, because Grenada's liberated Africans were confined to the Queen's Yard and kept in isolation from largely anti-emigration resident Sierra Leoneans and missionaries, it is unlikely that they had much acquaintance with the Christianity community living there.

For Grenada's recaptives, the Americas represent the main site of the encounter between African-based traditions and Christianity. Adherents

[111] John Thornton, 'On the Trail of Voodoo: African Christianity in Africa and the Americas', *The Americas* 44, no. 3 (1988): 267; Robin Law, 'Religion, Trade and Politics on the "Slave Coast": Roman Catholic Missions in Allada and Whydah in the Seventeenth Century', *Journal of Religion in Africa* 21, no. 1 (1999): 42–77.

[112] John Thornton, 'The Development of an African Catholic Church in the Kingdom of Kongo, 1491–1750', *Journal of African History* 25, no. 2 (1984): 147–67; Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 194.

[113] PP 1861 (2841–I) XL.133, *Reports to Secretary of State*, Hay to Newcastle, 26 April 1860.

[114] SOAS, MMS FBN West Indies Correspondence 12, no. 254, Wood, 25 October 1836.

[115] TNA CO 267/214, MacDonald to Grey, 22 April 1850.

[116] TNA CO 101/82, 'Return of the Africans landed at this Port from the Schooner Negrinha', Clarke and Challenor, 14 October 1836, encl. B in Doyle to Glenelg, 7 October 1836.

of Yoruba-based practices eventually incorporated Roman Catholicism and other Christian denominations into their religious world view. As discussed in Chapter 4, during the 1850s officials were discouraged by the slow rate of progress of religious and moral instruction. They found that when Africans attended church or received baptism, they showed a clear preference for the Roman Catholic denomination. It could be the case that for some liberated Africans, embracing Christianity was the continuity of a cultural borrowing which began in Western Africa. If so, it could be argued that with or without the persuasion of African Grenadians, liberated Africans appropriated Christianity, its paraphernalia, and aesthetics, deeming it compatible with their experience.

Roman Catholicism also appealed to recaptured Africans because in it they witnessed a Christian practice that absorbed African influences.[117] Most Grenadians were affiliated with Roman Catholicism, and it became an integral part of Afro-Creole religious expression. So ingrained was Roman Catholicism, that the Anglicans went to great lengths to root out all elements of 'Popery' during enslavement, including replicating in the 1820s what the Roman Catholic clergy had been doing for centuries: preaching in French Creole.[118] In the late nineteenth century, Roman Catholic clergy continued to conduct lessons in French Creole.[119]

Besides language, African-descended Grenadians continued other aspects of their cultures while identifying as 'Roman Catholic'. In the 1930s, a Roman Catholic priest, Father Davis, although not concerned with African-inspired traditions in his book, derogatorily described the parallel practices of Grenadians:

> the reader may be surprised that nothing is said in this book about Obeah, Saracars [sarakas], Shango, or African dances. But why should there be? Would a History of the Church, say in the Isle of Man, devote any space to spiritualism, necromancy or any other form of superstition? Hardly. There is, however, this difference, I suppose, that unlike the Isle of Man (I hope so!), so-called Catholics in Grenada still, alas, often relapse into one or other or all of the above named pagan practices handed down by their forefathers.[120]

Despite Davis's effort to de-emphasise African-inspired practices and write them out of the religious histories of the island, Black folk continued to embrace their traditions, even as they publicly affiliated with

[117] Stewart, 'Orisa House', 151.
[118] SOAS, WMMS Report, Vol. II, 1821–1824; Parker, *Church in the Sun*, 49.
[119] Bell, *Obeah*, 46.
[120] Devas, *Conception Island*, 255.

Roman Catholicism. Rather than haphazardly and retrogressively relapsing into their pagan ancestral practices, these African-derived cultures remained fundamental to the lives of Black Grenadians well into the first half of the twentieth century and beyond.

Oral accounts insist that Roman Catholicism was meaningful to Black Grenadians. In particular, it appealed to Yoruba religious practitioners and their descendants because, as the historian David Trotman explained, Roman Catholicism was an 'agent for retention and survival' rather than a 'competing and threatening religious ideology'.[121] African work devotees combined elements of their culture with Roman Catholicism, blending Yoruba deities with Roman Catholic saints based on their correspondences, which is often known as syncretism.[122] Generally speaking, as elsewhere in the Americas, the saintly intermediaries in Roman Catholicism are perceived as similar to the orisas: Sango, for example, is equated with St John the Baptist; Ogun with St Michael; and Yemanja, goddess of water, with St Anne.[123] Benedict Andrew of Munich stressed that African work practitioners in his village were Roman Catholic, and went on to explain that Oya, orisa of tornado and storms and wife of Sango, was associated with 'a *different* saint'.[124] To Andrew, orisas were synonymous with Roman Catholic saints. The term 'syncretism' has largely been discredited by scholars of African American religion who maintain that Africans practised Christianity alongside African traditions, without blending or altering the ethics of African beliefs. James Sweet maintained that Central Africans in Brazil were slow to embrace Christianity, and their distinct religious cultures in the Portuguese world did not give way to immediate creolisation but remained intact for some time, practised in parallel to Roman Catholicism.[125] In the case of Haiti, it has also been argued that Vodun was practised alongside Roman Catholicism, 'juxtaposed' but not assimilated.[126] For example, saints and

[121] Trotman, 'Yoruba and Orisha Worship', 9.

[122] Margarite Fernández Olmos and Lizabeth Paravisini-Gebert, *Creole Religions of the Caribbean: An Introduction from Vodou and Santería to Obeah and Espiritismo* (New York: New York University Press, 2003), 7, 9.

[123] Smith, Field Notes, 'Miss Clive/MGS', La Tante, September 1953, 21; Mother Beatrice, interview with author, Waltham, 22 March 2013; BL, 'Grenada Folklore', C438/14, 'Unaccompanied Shango Songs and Explanations', unrecorded location, 1953; Smith, *Dark Puritan*, 95, 101.

[124] Benedict Andrew, interview with author, Munich, 25 November 2009.

[125] Sweet, *Recreating Africa*, 6–8.

[126] Sidney Mintz and Michel-Rolph Trouillot, 'The Social History of Haitian Vodou', in Donald Cosentino (ed.), *Sacred Arts of Haitian Vodou* (Los Angeles: UCLA Museum

the *loas* co-existed without merging, and Roman Catholicism was seen as a parallel and complementary religion.[127]

Scholars favouring American creativity argue that the notion of syncretism relies on an oversimplified binary of 'African' and 'European' cultural sources, undermines individual creativity and agency, and ignores how practitioners understand the 'syncretic nature' of their practice.[128] Cautioning against syncretism, the anthropologist Lorand Matory argued that by focusing on resemblances with African and Roman Catholic gods, the 'radically different theologies and ritual complexes that buoy them' may be overlooked.[129] Dianne Stewart extended this concern further, suggesting that when Yoruba recaptives encompassed Roman Catholic and Hindu deities, it signified Yoruba theological principles of kinship and relationality. Considered as family members, the new gods were incorporated to expand the family, representing how devotees positioned themselves within the divine Orisa community.[130] Christianity coexisted alongside Yoruba-derived religious cultures in multiple ways, reflecting the varied religious affiliations, experiences, and theological understandings of African work devotees.

Both the orisas and the Roman Catholic saints are supernatural beings with earthly attributes and responsibilities, and these attributes often corresponded.[131] For instance, Norman Paul equated Sango with St John, and explained that they both displayed the attributes of a 'gospel man', 'fierce preacher', and 'hunter man'.[132] The Roman Catholic Church was

of Cultural History, 1995), 128; Leslie Desmangles, *Faces of the Gods: Vodou and Roman Catholicism in Haiti* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2002), 8; Luc de Heusch, 'Kongo in Haiti: A New Approach to Religious Syncretism', *Man* 24, no. 2 (1989): 293.

[127] Ibid., 292–3.

[128] See Andrew Apter, 'Herskovits's Heritage: Rethinking Syncretism in the African Diaspora', *Diaspora* 1, no. 3 (1991): 235–60; Matory, *Black Atlantic Religion*, 279; Joseph M. Murphy, 'Santa Barbara Africana: Beyond Syncretism in Cuba', in David Lindenfield and Miles Richardson (eds.), *Beyond Conversion and Syncretism: Indigenous Encounters with Missionary Christianity, 1800–2000* (New York: Berghahn Books, 2012), 137–66; Palmié, *Cooking of History*, 130–2; Parés, '"Nagoization" Process'; Parés, *Formation of Candomblé*; Stephan Palmié, 'Against Syncretism: "Africanizing" and "Cubanizing" Discourses in North American *Òrìsà* Worship', in Richard Fardon (ed.), *Counterworks: Managing the Diversity of Knowledge* (London: Routledge, 1995), 73–104; Yai, 'Yoruba Religion'; and Capone, *Searching for Africa*, 258.

[129] Matory, *Black Atlantic Religion*, 278.

[130] Stewart, *Orisa*, 76–7, 143, 58.

[131] Herskovits, 'African Gods', 636; Michel, 'African Powers', 45.

[132] Smith, *Dark Puritan*, 93, 137. The associations between *orisas* and saints vary across the African diaspora: see Glazier, 'Wither Sango?', 233, 243.

generally tolerant of African work; Protestant churches adopted a more dismissive approach. In the 1940s, Miss Clive was refused communion by an Anglican priest unless she would agree to leave the 'African dance', that is, relinquish her African work. An aggrieved Miss Clive decided that she would rather not return to the Anglican Church.[133] Roman Catholic saints extended spiritually enhancing benefits to African work practitioners that Protestant faiths could not offer. In Protestantism such intermediaries were not important as the focus was on direct communication with God.[134] Raised as a Seventh-day Adventist, Paul explained that since Adventists did not acknowledge saints, their teachings were not 'so powerful'; Paul believed that although the Adventists valued education, they focused on spiritual education. Paul went on to elucidate the complementarity of African and Christian theologies: 'There are many forms of the Holy Spirit, like Emanja [Yemanja] and Osun, Oya – these are all spirits, Powers, saints: they are all one.'[135] Describing those spiritual forces as 'all one' may not necessarily reflect the view that they merged but may indicate the ways they corresponded. That Paul envisioned the orisas as a form of the Holy Spirit indicates their similarities and reveals his high regard for the Yoruba deities. Similarly, Miss Clive asserted that 'Christ alone is Sango'.[136] In that case, Sango was not compared to subordinate beings, but to the Supreme Being, indicating Miss Clive's reification of Sango.

In Miss Clive's practice, Roman Catholic gods and African deities were not blended but were juxtaposed alongside Anglican influences. In 1953, Smith observed a 'Calling of Death' ceremony led by Clive. Ms Cleft, a woman who had been healed by Clive, hosted the ceremony. Prayers were offered and names of the dead called out. Ms Cleft recited Anglican prayers, while Miss Clive, a lapsed Anglican, offered up her own prayers to Roman Catholic deities. On that occasion, adherents of two Christian denominations were united under the collective umbrella of African work, defying sectarian differences. Smith, who observed that family members kneeled and signed themselves with a cross, identified that the ceremony had a 'strong Christian element linked with Catholic conception of purgatory with ancestor cult'.[137]

[133] BL, 'Grenada Folklore', C 438/19, 'Interview with Ma (Miss Clive)', St Patrick, 1953.
[134] Trotman, 'Yoruba and Orisha Worship', 13.
[135] Smith, *Dark Puritan*, 61, 93.
[136] Smith, Field Notes, 'Miss Clive/MGS', La Tante, September 1953, 21.
[137] BL, 'Grenada Folklore', C438/11, 'Explanation of Calling of Death Prayer', Syracuse, 1953.

FIGURE 8.4 Ms Little with Saint Mary.
The African work healer, Miss Clive, held African work ceremonies in Ms Little's yard. (Ms Little, interview with author, Rose Hill, 1 November 2009.) Photo by author, Rose Hill, 2009.

During the ceremony, Miss Clive sat at the head of the table, which was covered with a white tablecloth laid over a red cloth (colours associated with Ogun and Sango). The description of the items on the table was not dissimilar to the contents of the Ogun altar described by Bell in the late 1880s: it featured African work and Roman Catholic paraphernalia, such as a piece of chalk, a chalk mark of a cross, a rosary strung in two circles at the arms of the drawn cross, a knife, a bell, a bouquet of flowers, four kola nuts spread in front of the chalked sign, and a bowl of holy water.[138] Chalk is commonly used in Yoruba and Kongo traditions to make ritual marks, similar to Haitian Vodun's *veve*. These markings are spiritual signs drawn to invoke deities or as protection against malevolent spirits.[139] Roman Catholic paraphernalia was also used within Miss Clive's African work initiation in 1913. Clive recounted to Smith that an altar had been erected and covered with thunderstones (likely representing Sango, the deity of thunder), a goblet, flowers, white beads, and a picture of Saint Mary and Saint Michael, indicating not syncretism, but a juxtaposition of Roman Catholicism and African work items (Figure 8.4).[140]

[138] Ibid.
[139] Awolalu, *Yoruba Beliefs*, 169; Thomson, *Flash of the Spirit*, 229, xvi; Crosson, *Experiments with Power*, 261n24; Smith, *Dark Puritan*, 110.
[140] Smith, Field Notes, 'Miss Clive/MGS', La Tante, September 1953, 28.

During the Grenada revolution (1979–83), Lucky Bernard, a Roman Catholic lay deacon and second chief of police was interviewed by a member of the Communist Party of Cuba about the religious climate of the island. In the 1982 interview, Bernard decried the 'presence of syncretic elements' in the religious lives of Grenadian Roman Catholics. The deacon identified the following 'superstitions' that were 'inserted' into the Roman Catholic faith: first, saraka, described as an 'African cult in the process of extinction'; second 'obeah' – defined as 'fortune-telling through a glass of water'; and lastly, 'African dance' – a 'dancing ritual' – 'revitalised among young people because it brings a recreational motivation'.[141] Relegating African beliefs as superstitious and solely as a practice 'inserted' into Roman Catholicism conceals a more complex arrangement of African-derived beliefs and European Christianity. While the Roman Catholic deacon delineated three separate practices, as established, these traditions could be practised alongside each other. Indeed, today, saraka, and some African work ceremonies, proceed with prayers by Roman Catholic priests, which suggests a parallel rather than a syncretic understanding.

Bell's narrative offers another of his observations of an unnamed ceremony, which in form appears not too dissimilar to present-day African work and bears evidence of parallel practices. Bell watched as the procession wound its way to the 36-acre crater forming Grand Etang Lake. As they walked along, men could be seen and heard shaking the *boli*, a typical instrument in African work. Dressed in clothes of various colours, the devotees were a sight to behold, although particularly striking among them was a group of elderly women, each dressed in red, a colour associated with the orisa, Sango. At the lake, the congregants addressed their prayers to Mamadjo (French: mother of water);[142] the anthropologist Polk explained that Mamadjo was known as a mermaid said to be associated with Yemanja, the orisa.[143] Prayers over, there followed an animal sacrifice, and an 'African dance' lasting long into the night.[144] According

[141] Annex 2: Summaries of Interviews Held and of Observation Carried out in the Churches of St George's, in Report of the Religious Situation in Grenada, 13–14 August 1982. *Grenada Documents: An Overview and Selection* (Washington, DC: US G. P. O., 1984), www.latinamericanstudies.org/grenada/Grenada-Documents.pdf.

[142] Bell, *Obeah*, 27–8.

[143] Polk, 'African Religion and Christianity', 75. In several parts of the Americas and Africa, mermaids or water deities are referred to as Mami Wata: see Henry John Drewal (ed.), *Sacred Waters: Arts for Mami Wata and Other Divinities in Africa and the Diaspora* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2008).

[144] Bell, *Obeah*, 27–8.

to Bell, most were 'old Africans, who although nominally Christians, and perhaps communicants, still clung to the old superstitions of the land of their birth'. Bell was of the view that despite their Christian teachings, these aged Africans 'evidently reposed more trust in the power of their old Congo divinities than in the God of the "Buckars", or white people'.[145] After night-long ceremonies, Bell was astonished they would 'be seen next Sunday hurrying to their church, dressed out in their best toggery'.[146]

Bell's description should be treated with some caution – he wrote contemptuously about Black Grenadian cultural practices, dismissing them as witchcraft or obeah – yet there are several references in his account that illuminate African work customs. First, the group of women dressed in red signals the role of women in African work, namely as followers of Sango. Second, it is interesting that there is a reference to West Central African deities in what appears to be a Yoruba-inspired tradition. Bell might well have been describing his observation of the invocation of Kongo at the beginning of African work ceremonies mentioned in oral accounts by present-day adherents. In any case, Bell's description provides possible further evidence of the incorporation of West Central African traditions within a Yoruba-derived religious practice, revealing yet another way in which such ceremonies were multi-ethnic and multi-religious spaces.

Oral narratives have proven to be far more revealing about the existence and nature of African–Roman Catholic parallelisms. Christine McQueen (c.1923–2016), like most Grenadians, was Roman Catholic.[147] Raised by African work and Roman Catholic adherents, McQueen recalled visiting the Roman Catholic Church the morning before she held a three-day African feast in 2013. Usually, the Roman Catholic minister would attend the feast to bless the food. McQueen's memory undermines Father Davis's comments on the practice of African-derived traditions

[145] Ibid., 28.

[146] Ibid.

[147] In 1851, 63 per cent of Grenadians were recorded as Roman Catholic; 31 per cent Anglican; 0.8 per cent Presbyterian; and 5 per cent Wesleyan: see TNA CO 106/45, 'Appendix to the Census of the Island of Grenada and its Dependencies, taken on the 3rd day of October 1851'. Although Roman Catholicism is still the dominant religion, the numbers of Roman Catholics have dwindled over the decades due to the rise of Pentecostal and Seventh-day Adventism from the turn of twentieth century: in 2021, the main Christian denominations were as follows: 32 per cent Roman Catholic; 20 per cent Pentecostal; 12 per cent Seventh-day Adventists; 7 per cent Anglican; 3.6 per cent Church of God; 2.4 per cent Evangelical; 1.7 Spiritual Baptist; and 1.3 per cent Methodist. See 'Preliminary 2021 Grenada, Carriacou and Petite Martinique National Housing and Population Census Results', *Central Statistical Office Grenada*, https://stats.gov.gd/census.

among the Roman Catholic population, for the Roman Catholic Church was generally accepting of African work. McQueen stressed: 'it's not a church they throw you out … If you is a Catholic and you get manifest with the African [possession by an orisa], and you baptise you can still go back in you church. Because the Wednesday before I do the little thing here [African work – three days dance], I was there, went there [Roman Catholic Church] Wednesday morning.'[148] According to McQueen, Roman Catholics took the step of initiation into African work without fear of ostracism from the Church. It is thus important to distinguish between denominational affiliation and lived religion.[149] The latter emphasises participation and experience rather than a denominational association, allowing a generous understanding of the multiple traditions practised and recognised by peoples formally affiliated with Christianity but unrepresented in the island's censuses.

Nineteenth-century African cultures certainly transformed the cultural and religious landscape of Grenada. On the mainland, African arrivals and their descendants introduced mainly West Central African and Yoruba cultures, with the latter dominating African expressions. Their cultures, however, did not displace the Nation Dance, but instead, liberated African cultures interacted in tangible ways with the Nation Dance and other pre-existing cultures such as obeah and Roman Catholicism. In some cases, African work was the umbrella under which Grenadians of various religious, cultural, and ethnic affiliations communed. In celebrating their varied traditions at springs or in their yards, marginalised Grenadians offered critiques of Euro–Christian spaces, such as the Roman Catholic and Protestant churches and their ideologies, even as they engaged with them.[150] Yoruba cultures added their own flair to these practices, conceptualising them according to their theological understandings and practical concerns. On Carriacou, while the Nation Dance continued to thrive, specialist services such as exorcism and 'Shango hair-cutting' ceremonies were provided by Grenada's African work practitioners. Although this was documented by Smith in the 1950s, it is likely these cultural exchanges predated his ethnographic observations.

From the late nineteenth century, practitioners of African work were to embrace another form of Christianity, one which had already been heavily

[148] Christine McQueen, interview with author, Levera, 25 April 2013.

[149] For a discussion on the importance of individual practices in understanding religious beliefs, see Meredith B. McGuire, *Lived Religion: Faith and Practice in Everyday Life* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[150] McKittrick, *Demonic Grounds*, 146, 12.

adapted but which they overlaid with their own ideas, meanings, and practices. Bishop Peters, a prominent leader of African work, recalled that in the past, most practitioners were practising Roman Catholics but insisted that modern-day African work devotees are no longer needful of Roman Catholicism.[151] Indeed, longstanding African work practitioner Mrs McQueen, affiliate of the Roman Catholic Church, embraced the Spiritual Baptist Faith in 2013.[152] Followers of this new form of Christianity were known by others as 'Shango Baptists', but they preserve the memory of Norman Paul by calling themselves 'Norman Paul's Children'.

[151] Bishop Peters, interview with author, Moyah, 4 June 2013. Similarly, in Trinidad, Glazier recognised that some Sango devotees expressed that they had no connections with Roman Catholicism, while others emphasised their ties: see Glazier, 'Wither Sango?', 235.

[152] Christine McQueen, interview with author, Levera, 25 April 2013.