Pan-Caribbeanism — whether as a policy aspiration, as a scientific conjecture, or as sentimental indulgence — is an increasingly familiar by-product of the Caribbean crucible of new and self-renewing nations. Any politician who pursues the goal of Caribbean federation, however, or any social scientist who generalizes about Caribbean societies is forced to recognize that hitherto the only focused and authoritative regional perspectives have been geopolitical and externally imposed. Ironically, the persons and powers who adopt them are precisely those responsible for the region’s fragmentation, for it is neutralization of internal schemes of integration.

This essay will pass in review some representative geopolitical views of the past. One purpose is to remind those who search for new schemes of unity what the only persuasive ones have been till now. The burden of nearly half a millennium of history does not evaporate before a few revolutionary gestures or generalizations about sibling patterns or sentimental apostrophes to la bel’èneguesse. As we summon up the ghost of Caribbean past they may today appear rather more corporeal than a first hunch would suggest.

A second purpose will be to apply to the Caribbean a distinction made by an eminent French scholar between geopolitics and geohistory, and to propose that a primary task for historians at this stage of a Caribbean prise de conscience is to identify the enduring substrates of Caribbean regionalism which will outlast the imperialisms and strident nationalisms of the moment, or of the century.

(*) — Trabalho apresentado para o número Jubilar da Revista (n° 100), infelizmente entregue quando o mesmo já estava em prelo. (Nota da Redação).

(**) — This paper, originally presented at the Third Caribbean Scholars’ Conference, Georgetown, Guyana, April 1-4-9, 1966, has since been revised for publication in a book of essays.
Before immersing ourselves in history we should recall that legendary, transhistorical vision of "the Caribbean" as a single land, shaped and contoured, rather than an amorphous fringe of islands about the sea swept by natural and human hurricanes. I refer to the serene pre-Columbian Island of Antilia, appearing on Toscanelli's map of 1474 and Behaim's globe of 1492 as a single land mass lying southwest of the Azores, north of the large St. Brendan, and on the route from the Canaries to Cipango. Mythical Antilia was a "thing in itself", not the embroidered hem of two continents. Historical "Antilia" was pulverized in the name of clamorous units quite external to it—producing, nonetheless, the raw material which may someday interact to imbue the legend with the pulse of reality.

* *

Two Admirals Serving Spain.

The settlement of Caribbean lands by Europeans was, as everyone knows, the result of a miscalculation. To avoid the turbulent North Atlantic, Columbus sailed south to the Canaries, then west along latitude 28°N. Toscanelli had said Antilia to be a convenient port on a route to the fabulous wealth of Cipango, and Columbus assumed that he would pass close to it. On September 19, 1492, he began searching for it, but his deep-sea lead gave no soundings at two hundred fathoms. He rejecto'd Martín Alonso Pinzón's suggestion to reconnoiter a bit, saying that "his object was to reach the Indies, and if he delayed, it would not have made sense" (1). In short, Columbus bypassed Antilia in searching for something else, and discovered "Antilia" by finding what he thought was something else.

In his letter from Lisbon of March 14, 1493, Columbus described the new lands in a somewhat promotional vein. The island boasted secure harbors, handsome scenery and mountains, luxuriant trees filled with warbling nightingales, and fertile plains suited for cultivation and settlement. The natives were timid and unaccustomed with weapons. Once their fears of intruders were allayed, however, the people proved to be "simple and honest, and exceedingly liberal to all the others..." They exhibited great love toward all others in preference to themselves. Nor are they slow or stupid, but of very clear understanding" (2).

Here, then, was a peaceful, idyllic kingdom of nature. Columbus' response to it was no less ungracious. In forbidding his men to

trade worthless trinkets for large sums of gold he showed a moral delicacy rarely imitated by later Europeans.

Indeed by contrast to his successors the figure of Columbus takes on some of the mythological aura which invests legendary Antilia. The effect is heightened by his account of the third voyage, during which he set off from the Orinoco delta, received water from which he supposed resembled the setting of the Terrestrial Paradise. During his westward crossing he had observed that during his eastward crossing the North Star seemed to elevate and the sun became less fierce; that the people of Trinidad were less scorched than the Africans, that they were intelligent and graceful, and that their island was as “beautiful as the gardens of Valencia in April”.

Columbus concluded that he had reached the environs of the Earthly Paradise, to be found on the summit of a “rugged mountain” from which he supposed resembled the setting of the Terrestrial Paradise. The world, therefore, was not wholly spherical:

but of the form of a pear, which his very round did except where the stalk grows, a part which had the most prominent; or like a round ball, upon one part of which his a prominance like a woman’s nipple, this protrusion being high and nearer the sky, situated due to the equinoctial line, and a due to the eastern extremity of this sea.

In refusing to vouch that this Paradise might be accessible to man Columbus displayed a humility unshared by our contemporary merchants of Eden and pirates of Fomento.

The Columbian vision would be incomplete without mention of Fray Ramón Pane, the anchorite of the Order of St. Jerome, who accompanied Columbus on the second voyage and is known to history as the first Caribbean ethnographer. His Relation catches a distorted and dream-like reflection of what the Caribbean world was to its aboriginal inhabitants — the intra-Caribbean vision which is the basis for our understanding of the indigenous American peoples. In the summary of Edward G. Bourne, Pane’s account gives us:

a cosmogony, a creation legend, an Amazon legend, a legend which offers interesting evidence of the syphilis which was an indigenous and ancient disease in the Americas at the time the island was inhabited — the intra-Caribbean vision which is the basis for our understanding of the indigenous American peoples.

(3). — Ibid., pp. 117-38.
The Columbus n visio n o f th e Caribbea n i s extraordinaril y com-
plex. I t hover s betw ee n th e regiona l an d th e Europocentric, betw een
 cultural innocenc e an d geopolitics, betw een repertoria l detail an d th e
 mythology o f tw o cultures. I t s wonde r an d d e n o r s y st ig -
veness coul d onl y b e atten uat ed b y th e subsequen t t cours e o f history.

For th e generatio n afte r th e discovery, th e Caribbea n isl an ds
and selecte d coasts a nd region s r emaine d th e mai n theate r o f Spanish h
activity in the New World (5). Th e search fo r a passage to India took
priority ove r appropriatio n o f th e continent a l mainland. I n th i s "An-
tillean phase " o f th e conqu e st th e Caribbea n sere ve d a s a stagi ng g a r e
where European s becam e accustomed t o th e cli mate an d d eter g o of
th e Ne w World, f amiliariz e d the mse lve s wit h it s g eog raphy, ma d e
 grievous socia l experiment s wit h th e Amerindia ns, an d p repare d d lo-
gistic bas e s f or mainla nd expeditio n s an d s ettlement. I t w as a tem p le of
trial an d erro r in p olicy formulatio n, w he n th e crow n waver ed b etw een
a "com mer cia l m odel " (establishe m ent o f fortified o utposts t o b a r t e r
with o r e xact tribut e fro m th e Indians) an d "settlemen t m odel "
(exemplifica te d in Colum b us'se cond expeditio n, whic h b rought t h e
artisan s an d f armers, h orse s an d shee p, g rapevine e cuttin g s an d w he a t
see d d t o Espanola).

With th e exploit s o f Cortés an d Pizarro i n th e 1520 s an d 1530 s
Spain was plun ged in to a vast d esig n o f continental conqu e st an d in to
the secon d pol icy a lternati ve. Th e Antille s w ere draine d o f manpow er
and enterprisin g leadership, an d th e Caribbea n becam e a great Span ish
lake servin g g a s a n acces s rout e t o th e farflung viceroyalties o f th e
mainland.

A synop tic vie w o f th e Caribbe a n n in th is n e w perio d co me s fr o m
another admiral, Pedr o Menénde z d e Avilés. Contrastin g sharpl y i n
its precisio n an d pr actical it y t o th a t o f Columbus, thi s vie w rest e d o n
a propheti c geopolitica l desig n whic h w a s t o b e r eimbod i e d i n

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(4). — Quote d i n The Life o f th e Admiral Christopher Columbus b y
his Son Ferdin a nd, tr ans. Benjamin Kee n (Ne w Brunswick, 1959), p. 299.
Pane's Relation appear s i n ibid., pp. 153-69.

(5). — Thi s paragrap h follow s Manue l Giméne z Fernández, Hernán
Cortés y su revolución comunera en l a Nueva España (Sevilla, 1948), pp. 8-64.
different national version down to Mahan, down to our own day, and undoubtedly beyond.

French and English incursions in the Antilles during the 1550s and 1560s made evident to the Spanish crown the need for a unified Caribbean military command to keep seas clear, to coordinate seashore defenses, and thus to protect the lifeline of the new empire. This command was entrusted to Menéndez de Avilés, who was appointed adelantado of Florida (1565) and governor of Cuba (1567), a dual command which would today warm the cockles of any Pentagon heart. The ingredients of Menéndez’s master plan were: establishment of a convoy system for Spanish commerce with the Indies, assignment of permanent cruiser squadrons to the Antilles; fortification and garrisoning of a boldly conceived network of harbors (Cartagena, Santo Domingo, Santiago, San Juan, Havana).

Menéndez shared with Drake and Nelson the strategic genius that treats all seas as one. His West Indian dispositions were only part of an overall plan, in which the long-term remedy for the menace of Caribbean privateering was a Spanish base in the Scilly Isles—a bold and brilliant anticipation of eighteenth-century strategic ideas (6).

The fact that Spain lost no major ocean shipment until 1627 is adduced as evidence of Menéndez’s military genius.

From the Antillean point of view the brilliance of the admiral’s strategy was tarnished by the secondary status to which he relegated the internal needs of the islands. He refused to allow island colonists to leave for the mainland, yet did little to help them locally. His highhandedness caused governors and town councils to obstruct him whenever possible. The financial subsidy from New Spain upon which the Antilles had come to depend was allocated largely at his personal discretion.

By the 1560s the whole Caribbean theater had lapsed to a plane of secondary importance, a fact which official policy not only recognized but also helped to perpetuate. The unifying vision of Menéndez was utilitarian, highly selective, and inspired by extra-Caribbean considerations. The islands were isolated from each other, and insular leaders were forced to deal independently with Spanish officialdom. One might therefore argue that the fragmentation of the Antilles is not exclusively a result of British, French, and Dutch conquests, that the

process was well under way before Spanish hegemony was seriously contested.

Like many a later admiral or bureaucrat, Menéndez was concerned less with Caribbean "development" than with diminishing the nuisance value of the region. He warned his king that a foreign power might seize Florida and lay the Antilles under threat of attack and consequent subversion. For in Santo Domingo, Cuba, and in Puerto Rico:

> there is a very great quantity of Negroes and mulattoes, people of bad disposition. On each island there are more than thirty of them for each Christian . Under the French or English all these slaves become free, and therefore, in order to gain their freedom, the Negroes will help them usurp the land from their own lord and master — which, with the Negroes' help, would be very easy to do (7).

Within seventy-five years of the discovery Columbus and Menéndez had adumbrated the main perspectives on the Caribbean which have guided its destiny ever since. These were:

— the Caribbean as a Garden of Eden;
— the Caribbean as a protectorate whose "natives" deserve sympathetic attention;
— the Caribbean as a trading zone to be exploited by fortified commercial enclaves;
— the Caribbean as a theater for settlement and imperial expansion;
— the Caribbean as a natural "mediterranean", a "danger zone" exposed to foreign attack and posing large strategical problems to the military mind;
— the Caribbean as a compound to be carefully patrolled lest it flare up in random insurrections.

Today, four centuries later, not one of these viewpoints is obsolete. And not one ceases to work its mischief on those who are born in the Caribbean and seek to insert themselves into the community of nations.

I repeat the suggestion that the Spanish grand design of empire rather than territorial seizures by other powers was originally responsible for the fragmentation of the Caribbean. The Spanish empire was a land empire, not an oceanic one. The Caribbean could serve only as a staging area for conquest and a zone of military defense. The region

was inevitably subordinated to the viceroyalty of New Spain. Although there came to exist considerable commercial integration between Mexico and component parts of the Caribbean (8), the units were weakly interrelated and fell apart like a broken necklace when Spain's power collapsed and the they were detached from New Spain.

Perhaps the most intriguing might-have-been of Caribbean history is not what would have happened had England or France taken full possession of the region—but what if Portugal had? The overseas Portuguese, it has been said, were pilots and farmers; the Spaniards, soldiers and jurists. Unlike Spain's land empire, Portugal's was a thalassic one, insular and coastal-based. It was characterized by pragmatic commercialism, by local institutional inventiveness, and an organicism or interaction among the parts. It was oriente d to sugar production as a source of prosperity. It developed successful resistance to Dutch designs on northeastern Brazil. Finally, the Portuguese empire reached its commercial apogee in the seventeenth century, precisely the century of Spain's decline (9). Under such auspices the Caribbean region might have received a measure of that well-nigh miraculous unity which the continental archipelago of Portuguese settlements in Brazil came to enjoy.

Two Britons.

For the next Caribbean Design we leap two centuries to the Candid and Impartial Considerations of John Campbell, a Scotsman (10). By the then English, French, and Dutch were well ensconced on Caribbean territory and the sea had long since ceased to be a Spanish lake. By then also the career of sugar from the Lesser into the Greater Antilles had caused European nations, excepting Spain herself, to regard the islands as an independent source of wealth and power.

With the Antilles fully occupied, England's outlook was quite purged of the adventurousness and obstreperousness so few her early ye. "There is not now an island small or great, indeed scarce a rock in the West-Indies", Campbell admonished, "the right to as well as the

(8). — Se e Jul i o L e River en d Brusone, "Relacione s entre Nuev a Espan a y Cub a (1518-1820)", Revista d e Historia d e America, 37-3 8 (1954) : 45-108 ; Eduardo Arcila Farias, Comercio entre Venezuela y Mexico en los siglos XVII y XVIII (Mexico City, 1950).


(10). — Joh n Campbell, Candid and Impartial Considerations on the Nature of the Sugar Trade; the Comparative Importance of the British and French Islands i n the West-Indies (London, 1763).
possession of which, is not clearly ascertained, and this without introducing any new powers into that part of the world, which h must have been exceedingly prejudicial to our interests". Ther e was t o b e n o more rocki ng of th e boat. F ul l occupation by th e great power s ha d put an end "at l east a s huma n foresight reaches, t o a ll thei r ambi tiou s s views, t o th e self-intereste d project s o f privat e persons, an d t o th e schemes o f enterprizin g governo rs, whic h hav e bee n th e principa l sources o f . . . disputes".

The claims of the nations were now staked out. On e could expect no more dramatic power reversals or sudden land grabs yielding new El Dorados. Th e Caribbean region was perceived in terms of a calculus of comparative advantage. Thi s meant, a s i t ha d fo r Menéndez de Avilés, a reductio n t o utilitarian, extra-Caribbean considerations. Bu t the calculus s ha d shifte d fro m militar y t o economic. It s purpose, a s Campbell sa w it, w a s t o determin e ho w eac h o f th e island s migh t become:

- more o r less, immediatel y o r remotely, directl y o r indirectly, assisting t o th e interests, increas ing th e power, augmentin g th e commerce, extendin g th e navigation, an d th e ther eby promotin g th e welfare o f Great Britain; or, i n o th e r words, conducin g t o th e industry, th e independency, an d th e happiness, o f thei r fello w ci tizens an d th eir fello w subjects, wh o ar e th e inhabitant s o f thi s th eir MOTHER COUNTRY.

The new economic calculus was largely cleansed of random factors. Ther e were to be no more territorial seizures; "run-away Negroes will not be able to shelter themselves any more in uninhabited islands"; "illicit commerce will be lessened at least, i f no t entirely prevented"; piracy "will nev er mor e revive, a s al l th e port s an d places to which these lawles s people were wont to resort, will no longe r exist". (pp. 203-06).

Freed from such worries, th e rational mind could now contemplate th e inherent advantage s, f a n archipelagi c economy. Smal l Caribbean island s en jo y se a breezes an d pure air; thei r land s ar e more fertile an d more speedi l y cultivate d an d sette led; th e "facilit y o f fishing" help s th e inhabitant s t o acquire e staple foods; th e rati o o f coastline t o lan d are a favor s maritim e commerce an d facilitate s de fense; th ese island s i n particular, bein g well woode d an d well watered, favor erection of water mills, which are more efficient than those driven by wind o r animals. Afte r enumeratin g natura l resource s on e inject s the variables. Thes e include: cas h crop s whic h migh t b e profitabl y grown, notabl y sug a r bu t als o cacao, coffee, tea, pepper, rhubarb, senna, an d sarsaparilla; availability o f Negro slaves; possibilities for
expanding Caribbean markets in North America, Africa, and the East Indies.

The calculus was of course an empty exercise if the enterprise of the mother country were deficient. Comparative inspection revealed that the production of the large French islands, "however considerable, is not in proportion to the extent of the country".

The same thing is yet more visible, in regard to the Spaniards, who possess a vast one island, the largest and the least profitable in the West-Indies. The Dutch, on the other hand, have found means to renders the smallest, and in point of soil and climate, the worst islands in the West Indies, by dint of skill and industry wonderfully flourishing, exceedingly populous, and of course highly beneficial (p. 215).

In Campbell's treatise, to summarize, we discover that the Caribbean has become an independent zone as a source of prosperity, that its natural resources have received sympathetic evaluation, and that previous concerns with imperial expansion and military advantage have been partly eclipsed by peaceful economic rivalry.

Campbell's outlook reflected the vigor and optimism of a commercial empire in its heyday. Once the Caribbean realm engenders disenchantment and self-doubt, however, we predictably encounter a view with no hard center to it, a view tinctured by moralistic attitude and a pervasive note of decadence. Froude's The English in the West Indies (11) is neither monumental for its research nor richly philosophic in its level of perception. As soon as it appeared its author was attacked as a Don Quixote who "did" the British West Indies, Cuba, and Haiti in 81 days on the Rocinante of a Royal Mail Steamer. He was accused of purveying factual inaccuracies, of consorting only with island elites, and of describing the black man with a mixture of political fear and paternal condescension (12).

I cannot help but confess, however, that Froude's book — for all its "Froudacity" — retains for me a certain appeal, whether in contrast to the brisk utilitarianism of Campbell or to the regressive militarism propounded by Froude's contemporary, Captain Mahan.

Two aspects of Froude's presentation are particularly moving. One is his mythopeism. When he described the life of rural Negro families Froude resurrected the old Edenic view in finding that they effortlessly

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(11). — James Anthony Froude, The English in the West Indies, or, the Bow of Ulysses (New York, 1888).

(12). — N. Darnell Davis, Mr. Froude's Negrophobia or Don Quixote as a Cook's Tourist (Demerara, 1888). See also J. J. Thomas, Froudacity, West Indian Fables by James Anthony Froude (2nd ed.; London, 1889).
gathered oranges, plantains, breadfruit, coconuts, yams, and cassava — every fruit of "Adam’s paradise" except apples!

The curse is taken off from nature, and like Adam again they are under the covenant of innocence. Moral sense the y have none, but the y cannot be said to sin, because the y have no knowledge of a law. The y are not ashamed. They are married as the y call it, but not parsoned. Yet the y are licentious. They are not supposed to sin. The system is strange, but it answers.

They eat the forbidden fruit, but it brings with it no knowledge of the difference between good and evil. Meanwhile they are perfectly happy. They have no aspirations to make them restless. They have no guilt on their consciences (pp. 49-50).

Here, then, is an Eden without apples, the nineteenth-century version of a powerful myth which received richly evocative formulation by Columbus and is today perpetuated in its crassest form by Caribbean tourist bureaus and cynical pleasure merchants in the New York Times travel supplement. The Edenic myth is easy to ridicule but difficult to come to terms with. Caribbean radicals make it prospective by transposing their own versions of paradise a generation into the future.

Froude's reaction to this neo-Edenic spectacle was one of moral earnestness mingled with self-criticism and even self-doubt. Britain's only "genuine alternatives", he announced, were to leave her Caribbean possessions "to shape their own destinies, as we have Australia", or else "to govern them as we govern Bengal, Madras, and Bombay". That the second was the proper course he was certain. Yet Britain should choose it from moral obligation rather than material advantage. She was responsible for the islands, social condition. She had filled them with slaves when prompted by interest and emancipated them when prompted by conscience. It appeared to Froude that "England ought to bear the consequences of her own actions, and assume to herself the responsibilities of a state of things which she has herself created." (pp. 356-57).

Because the "sections of men on this globe are unequally gifted", Britons must assume the ancient Roman role as guardian of freedom and justice (p. 207). The present generation of Englishmen may be "just now in a moultmg state, and sick while the process is going on". But there was no question of degeneracy (p. 15). "The problem is to create a state of things under which Englishmen of vigour and character will make their homes" among the West Indian Negroes.
Annexation to the United States would lead probably to their extermination at no very distant time. The Antilles are small, and the fate of the negroes there might be worse than the fate of the Caribs. The American are not a people to be trifled with; no one knows it better than the negroes. They fear them. They prefer the infinitely mild rule of England, and under such a government a we might provide if we care to try, the whole of our islands might become like the Moravian settlement in Jamaica, and the black nature... might be put again in the way of regeneration (pp. 335-36) (13).

Finally, resorting to the priapic imagery which the Caribbean so abounds to observers, Froude explains to his readers that: "The bow of Ulysses is sound as ever; moths and worms have not injured either cord or horn; but it is unstrung, and the arrows which are shot from it drop feebly to the ground." (pp. 358-59).

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Two American Views.

At the very moment when Froude formulated his moralistic, even poignant appeal to Great Britain to reassume her imperial responsibilities, Captain Alfred Thayer Mahan was urging the United States, on the threshold of a New Manifest Destiny, to erect a calculus of Caribbean interest on more primitive foundations. In his article "The United States Looking Outward" (1890) (14), Mahan declares that the United States is woefully unready, not only in fact but in purpose, to assert in the Caribbean and Central America a weight of influence proportioned to the extent of her interests. "The piercing of the Isthmus" would signify "nothing but a disaster to the United States, in the present state of her military and naval preparation".

On a map showing the flows of Atlantic shipping Mahan found it "curious to note what deserted regions, comparatively, are the Gulf of Mexico, the Caribbean Sea, and the adjoining countries and islands". A mere "thread" of trade linked the Caribbean to Britain, although he once, during the Napoleonic wars, the region supplied one fourth of the trade of the Empire. "The significance is unmistakable: Europe has no such little mercantile interest as the Caribbean Sea". One of the

(13). — In the 1890’s Americans were to make similar reflections, mutatis mutandis, to justify their own intentions vis-à-vis Spain’s.

canal was built, however, the isolation would terminate and with it the indifference of foreign nations. " (15 ) .

In "Th e Strategi c Feature s o f th e Gul f o f Mexic o an d th e Ca - ribbean Sea " (1897 ) (16 ) Mahan develope d hi s versio n o f th e ever - intriguing analog y betwee n th e Caribbea n an d th e Mediterranean :

Both ar e land-gir t seas ; bot h ar e link s i n a chai n o f commun - ication between n a n East an d a West ; i n bot h th e chai n i s broke n by a n isthmus ; bot h har e o f contracte d extent whe n compare d with g r ea t oceans , and , i n consequene c e o f th e e commo n features , both presen t i n a n intensifie d f or m th e adva nt a ge s an d th e limita - tions, politica l an d military , whic h conditio n th e influenc e o f se a power.

Mahan too k pain s t o distinguis h b etter b etwee n th e Gul f o f Mexic o (wit h Hava na as i t s Gibralt ar ) an d th e Caribbea n (wit h a serie s o f littl e "straits o f Gibralt ar " stretchin g nearl y 40 0 miles) . H e scolde d a British periodica l whic h ha d accuse d hi m o f includin g th e Gul f i n th e Caribbea n "becaus e o f hi s unwillin gnes s t o admi t th e nam e o f an y o ther stat e i n connectio n wit h a bod y o f wate r ove r whic h hi s ow n countr y claime d predomina nce" .

Mahan's articl e elaborat el y analyze s th e comparativ e strategi c advantages o f th e Caribbea n isle s an d straits . A centra l proble m wa s to assess th e relativ e importanc e o f Jamaic a an d Cuba , which h e sett le d "greatly an d decisivel y i n favo r o f Cuba" . A t th e sa m e time h e pro - tested tha t "we ar e no t seekin g t o chec k an ybody , bu t simply examinin g i n th e larg e th e natura l strategi c features , an d inci - dentally theret o notin g th e politica l conditions , o f a maritim e regio n in which th e Unite d State s i s particularl y interesting" . When , however , he compare d th e Caribbea n an d th e Mediterranea n, an d whe n h e con - templated th e happenst an c e an d d uncertain y whic h attend e d th e Bri - tish conques ts an d retentio n i n th e latte r sea , h e could no t hel p bu t wonde r "whether r incident s s o widel y separate d in th e tim e an d place , al l tendin g toward s on e en d — th e maritim e predomi - nance o f Grea t Britai n — ca n he accidents , o r ar e simpl y th e exhibi - tion o f a Personal Will, actin g through a ll time , with purpos e deliberate and consecutive , t o end s no t ye t discerned" .

Although i n Mahan' s da y th e ter m "America n Mediterranea n " was purel y descriptiv e fo r geographer s suc h a s Reclu s — "America " referring t o th e hemispher e — i t inevitab l y becam e a geopolitica l

(15). — Mahan' s Roma n prototyp e wa s mor e martia l tha n Froude's . Foreign Atlanti c an d Caribbea n bases , h e wrote , wer e "biddin g u s stan d t o our arms , eve n a s Carthage e bad e Rome" .
handle in the United States. Stephen Bonsai's _The American Mediterranean_, a natural sequel to Mahan, shifted the accent from politico-strategic to politico-economic. Bonsai found Europe's Caribbean possessions to be in full decadence. The Hague and Copenhagen would probably foot their West Indian bills with "the best grace imaginable" until the next general colonial readjustment. John Bull was ready to "take ou r Philippine troubles off our hands" if we would shoulder "his West Indian burden" (17). Certain that commercial crops such as bananas and cacao would soon rescue the Caribbean from economic stagnation, Bonsai urged his country to seize these opportunities. "Undeniably a new era is dawning in that part of the world which lies just outside our gates and which is called, in decreasing frequency, the America n Indies, and the America n Mediterranean." (p. 399) (18).

Liberal opinion in the United States would of course not allow such rambunctious talk and the behavior which it endorsed to continue indefinitely without challenge. A generation after the muckrakers had stirred up the domestic scene, a kindred group fixed their sights on U.S. Latin American and Caribbean policy. Along with the spate of books in the 1920s which examined American intervention and exploitation in single countries, there was one, _Dollar Diplomacy_ by Nearing and Freeman (19), which attempted a generalized explanation for the symptoms and causes of the new "American imperialism". Although the book had the effect of a documented and persuasive counterstatement to the expansionism of Mahan-Bonsal, its analysis did not extend to matters beyond the relatively limited purview of the American liberal conscience. The fact that _Dollar Diplomacy_ is so frequently taken as being more transcendental than a rebuttal in a domestic dialogue makes it a source of more pernicious confusion than the Mahan thesis itself.

Nearing and Freeman identify a new and seemingly inevitable phase in American historical development which has become pronounced since World War: economic or financial imperialism. The growth of this imperialism — interpreted as interaction between foreign economic investment and diplomatic policy — could be marked off in stages: (1) migration of capital without political implications; (2) migration of capital with resultant demands upon receiving countries under concessions and bankers' contracts; (3) participation of the Maha in the Spanish-American War.
representatives of U.S. capital in internal politics of foreign countries (encouragement and subsidizing of revolutions); (4) appeal by U.S. investors for support from their government when local authorities treat them unsatisfactorily, sometimes provoking military intervention; (5) end of military occupation when U.S. control is accepted, or else: (6) completion of sequence by armed conquest (Philippines) or purchase (Virgin Islands). "The cycle is best illustrated in the relations between the United States and the Caribbean countries, since it has its freest expression where a strong country is dealing with a weak one." (pp. 17-18).

In the final paragraph of the book the authors listed the symptoms of dollar diplomacy in Latin America and the Caribbean: determination of boundaries; prevention of or assistance to filibustering as required by American financial interests; administration of customs houses; annexation of Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands; establishment of financial protectorates; armed intervention; overthrow of independent governments; fomenting of revolutions; building of the Panama Canal; interference with elections; controlled use of recognition policy; acquisition of naval bases; creation of local constabularies under American officers; economic interpretation of Monroe Doctrine; European invasion; solicitation of loans for New York banks; campaign in behalf of oil interests against nationalization of Mexican natural resources. (pp. 279-80).

So convincingly did Nearing and Freeman diagnose the dollar-diplomacy syndrome that no amount of subsequent, more exacting scholarship on the determinants and objectives of U.S. foreign policy in the early twentieth century has been able to modify the generally received connotations of the phrase. Furthermore, because it seems to deal with matters of equity, because it seems to be a prolegomenon to an agenda of reform, almost no one of liberal persuasion would think to inquire whether its analysis does in fact offer a point of intellectual purchase for the lever of therapeutic change. Two observations may help to elucidate this point.

First, although the analysis was apparently prompted by moral indignation, economic imperialism is clinically perceived as an "inexorable" stage of American history. The authors seem to be presenting a companionary survey of local Caribbean causes and conditions for dollar diplomacy; or from analyzing its complex effects (political and psychological, for example) in Caribbean countries; or from suggesting viable grounds for a Caribbean response. The only trait which the authors ascribe to Caribbean lands and peoples is massive penetrability by external forces. From this Caribbean viewpoint the authors are like the walrus and carpenter of Alice in Wonderland, brushing away their tears as they mix strategical calculus (Menéndez-
Mahan) with economic s (Campbell ) an d plac e the m withi n a Darwi-
nian framework o f historical inevitability .

Second, fro m th e United States viewpoint , th e boo k offer s onl y
narrow ground s for a reformist critique . No t o nly d o its author s per-
suasively identif y foreig n policy a s th e product o f unrestrainable dy na-
mism actin g upo n infinitel y permeabl e overseas environments . Th e y
also smuggl e tw o emotionall y freighte d implica tions int o a seemingl y
clinical exposition . On e i s tha t "W al l Street " an d it s accomplice 
"Washington" are the villains of the piece. Th e othe r is tha t the "Ame-
erican people " ar e a generous an d culturally tolerant breed o f citize ns
who ar e falsel y represente d b y thei r plutocrats an d d eputate s . Bot h
hypotheses ar e o f course erroneous. Th e i r net effect is to inhibit sober
reflection upon n th e condition s an d choice s o f lif e o f th ose w ho dw el I
in th e Caribbean n itsel f , an d upo n realisti c possibilite s fo r coexistenc e
of th e Caribbean n an d th e Colossus .

The Nearing-Freeman thesis i s a convenien t stoppin g plac e fo r
our excursion because i t st ill retain s extraordinary appeal an d vitality .
On e on e han d America n liberalis m ha s mad e fe w exploration s
beyond it s confine s durin g th e pas t fort y years ; o n th e othe r r i t s ke y
propo sitio ns hav e becom e th e permanen t doctrina l baggag e o f Ca -
ribbean an d L at i n America n intellectuals . On e migh t almos t sa y th at
contemporary publi c discussio n o f U . S.-Caribbea n relation s i s lar-
gely restricted t o the modest spectrum of possibility w hich th e Mahan-
-Bonsal an d th e Nearing-Freeman n theses o pene d fo r consid eration .

The questio n raise d her e ha s nothin g t o d o wit h th e historica l
accuracy o f th e dollar-diplomacy thesis . I merel y inquir e whethe r i t
serves th e complex needs of national conscience in th e Caribbean n even
as adequately as it has served the simpler ones of the liberal conscience
in th e United States . B y no w i t i s obvio us th at I inclin e t o plac e e
"dollar diplomacy " i n th at famil y o f historiographica l gambits whic h h
throw th e blame fo r Caribbean dilemmas and anxieties on the shoulder s
of relativel y unconcerne d extra-Caribbean n power s (20) .

Braudel and Geohistory.

The recent past ha s produc e d variou s alternative s to th e geopoli-
tical perspective on th e destin y o f th e Caribbean . Thes e include : (1 )
the historico-additiv e strategy (invento ry an d collatio n o f separat e
insular an d regio nal histories) ; (2 ) scientifi c generalizatio n (compara -
tive indexing of pan-Caribbean family patterns, interethnic relations, agricultural methods, forms of colonial rule, and the like (3) schemes for Caribbean political and economic integration; (4) the mystique of African origins. All of these orientations offer challenge and promise. Each, however, rests upon tentative assumptions; any of them might come to grief on the shoals of empirical truth, political reality, or emotional resistance — to leave us with the mournful conclusion that Mahan's is after all the only Caribbean.

Those who presume the existence of a historically and internally definable Caribbean must be willing to move from the general to the specific as well as from the specific to the general. Rather than face the formidable task of sketching the lineaments of that general view, however, let us take refuge in analogy. Let us examine the point of departure and some representative generalizations of a mature scholar who has written a broad, logically conceptualized study of a region much more complex and suffused with history than the Caribbean. I refer to Fernand Braudel's *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II* (21).

In the course of his research Braudel found there to be: "Nothing more clearly defined than the Mediterranean of the oceanographer or the geologist or the geographer: these are fields of study well delimited, ranked and labeled". But this is not so of the Mediterranean in history. "A hundred authoritative warnings alert us and place us on guard". Indeed, the Mediterranean is not even a sea but, as has been said, a 'complex of seas', and what is more, of seas sprinkled with islands, stabbed by peninsulas, rimmed by branching coastlines." (I: xii-xiv).

The historian who deals with his theme integrally must recognize three levels of analysis. The first is that of "a nearly immobile history, the history of man in his relations with his environment; a history slow to drift and change, and often composed of insistent reiterations and of cycles forever recommenced". Overlying this is another of slow rhythms, a "structural" history or — in the true sense — a social history of the group as an clustering of men. It requires the study of successive economies and dominant states, societies and civilizations. It places a premium on the study of war and conflict, seen not as random clashes of private wills but as the knotting together of deep-lying forces. Finally there is the conventional history, a history of "happenings" cut to the measure of not of man but of individuals. This one records the swift and nervous waves above the tidal currents. It is

the most stirring history, the richest in humanity, yet also hypersensitive, untrustworthy, perilous, and fenced by the rages and dreams and illusions of those who lived it. (I: xvii-xix).

In short, the complete historian must move in the registers of geographic time, social time, and the time of persons. I enlist Braudel’s assistance because I feel our image of the historical identity of the Caribbean to be vague and unsubstantial for lacking anchorage in his stratum of geographic time, that is, in a stratum which underlies the passions and foreshortened perspectives of moments or eras.

A theme which illustrates Braudel’s method while suggesting rich possibilities for a comparative Caribbean treatment is the role of islands in the Mediterranean (I: 126-43). These islands, he observes, are more numerous and important than generally thought. Some are even "continents in miniature", and no corner of that sea is without its cluster of islets and rocks. The viceroy of Sicily used the phrase "clean the islands" to mean sweeping out the corsairs who infested them in search of drinking water and hideouts. All the islands, great or small, whatever their diversity, provide:

"...a coherent human and historical environment insofar as they are subject to the generic limitations of islands, which make them both very retarded and very advanced with respect to the general history of the sea, which always locate them brutally between those two opposed poles of archaism and novelty."

Braudel cites the example of Sardinia, "lost in the sea" and removed from such fruitful contacts as Sicily maintained with Italy and Africa. Its a mountainous and fragmented island, a prisoner of poverty forced to live by its own resources. Its history, dialects, customs, pastoral life, and archaic economy make it "a world apart". Yet a casual change of ownership or fortune gives even such an island occasional brusque contact with the outside world. The "isolation of islands" is relative; the sea separates them but also links them to its routes.

Insular life is precarious. It suffers eternal pressures from narrow resources, hunger, threat of attack. Inhabitants must often abandon their exposed coastal towns and take refuge in the interior, precisely where there is greatest poverty, where there are no roads and bridges, where cattle are scrawniest. Yet the ostensible impoverishment of the island is vulnerable to sudden agricultural invasions that elevate it to paradoxical prosperity on world markets. Wheat swept Sicily to make it a sixteenth-century Canada or Argentina; the mastich tree came to Chios, cotton and sugar to Cyprus, the olive to Djerba. These economies were all alien to the islands, imposed from without, foreign to them and...
having often dire consequences for what the Germans call their Volkswirtschaft".

Islands also mix with the world through emigration. Like mountain areas they are exporter s of men (and many Mediterranean islands are mountainous). The prime example is sixteenth-century Corsica, too rich in men for its resources; "there is certainly not a single Mediterranean event in which a Corsican has not been involved". Corsicans left for Genoa, Venice, Tuscany, Rome, Sardinia, Algiers, Constantinople, Seville, Valencia, and above al l for the half-Corsican city of Marseilles.

Although islands stubbornly retain their identity, their historical legacy is rich and layered.

There is not one island whose physiognomy is simple, whose human stock or civilization is of one type, whose history is contained in one world. On the contrary, the successive ages of the Mediterranean remain marked on the body of all of them, like the age of trees on the layers of their trunks.

The definition of insularism must not be too narrow. The whole Mediterranean world is subdivided, discontinuous. Not all its islands are seafarers. Isolated by mountain walls, Greece and Naples turned out upon the sea. Marseilles is "the most incredible oasis of the Mediterranean world, encircled by a true desert". Lombardy, Portugal, Catalonia, Andalusia, or even Spain itself are walled off and insular; so too is Syria, a radiating center for civilization insulate d between sea and desert.

Indeed the Mediterranean land is a cluster of regions isolated from one another. Henc e the continua l exchange among the nations of the world is a continuous negot iation of Mediterranean tradition. But the contact s that establish are like electrica l discharges, violent t and discontinuous. Like magnified images, the complex history of the island is light. Above all, the history of the world enriches our understanding of the Mediterranean, as does the history of the island. It is s o strong a regional fragrance, amidst the most extraordinary mixture of races, religions, customs, and civilization that it is the world that has s e a r known.

As he moves to a synoptic view of the Mediterranean itself (I: 203-09), Braude l cautions us not to include under it a stubborn originality, s o strong a regional fragrance, amids t the most extraordinary mixture of races, religions, customs, and civilization that it is the world that has s e a r known.
the Sea "imbues with the aroma of its civilizations, or that its economy set in motion". At the same time the term should apply to the circumadjacent region which is its "sounding board". Too frequently the European sees the Mediterranean as a European sea between his lands and Africa. He forgets that Mediterranean life has found its sharpest impetus and dominant linkages along the East-West axis.

Braudel stresses the meaning of "mediterranean" — a sea amidst, and therefore incorporating, the lands about it. Sheer maritime history may provide a unifying theme with its account of routes, commerce, lines of economic force, and break-points. But us Mahan's sea-power calculus for the Mediterranean foreshortens the perspective, however useful it is on an oceanic or a global scale. Braudel does not propose, however, to substitute Land Power determinism (favoured by historians and geographers) for Sea Power (favoured by "essayists"). As the title of his book implies, he sees the two in shifting equilibrium. At times the great land powers impose their will in hegemony that Jacques Pirenne called "absolutist, patrimonial, and aristocratic". At others a sea empire arises directly from the sea to produce a thalassocracy (like the Cretan, Venetian, or even English) whose spirit is more "democratic, commercial, and individualist".

To describe his geographically anchored point of vantage Braudel looks for a more ample term than "geopolitics", one which will signify something more than a historical schema contrived to accommodate present and future interests of the great powers. (I: 317). For the enterprise he chooses the name "geohistory". This discipline obliges the geographer to pay more attention to time, to relinquish his near-exclusive concern with present realities, and to think out afresh those of the past. Also — a thornier proposition — it obliges the historian to concern himself with space, with "all that space sustains, engenders, develops, and obstructs", with the formidable persistence of space and the enduring shape it imparts to history.

Neither the moral which Braudel's study points for Caribbeanists nor the contrasts between his subject and theirs need be made more explicit here (22). It is enough to say that anyone who reads it becomes forcibly aware of how fragmentary, parochial, or thesis-ridden is most modern writing on the Caribbean, how lacking in architectonics, how pale beside the bygone chronicles of Oviedo, Du Tertre, Labat.

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The Sea and its lands await histories written from a more generous perspective, histories which will serve as a well deserved resting place for the ghosts of Caribbean Past, as a foundation for the mushrooming research of Caribbean Present, as inspiration for the integrative schemes of Caribbean Future.