

The Jamaica Reader: History, Culture, Politics. Edited by Diana Paton and Matthew J. Smith. Durham: Duke University Press, 2021. Pp. 536. Cloth \$124.95; \$24.95 paper. doi:10.1017/tam.2022.61

The latest addition to Duke University Press's highly regarded series of country readers shares with most of its companion volumes a disproportionate focus on twentieth-century history. In the case of Jamaica, this offers a useful counterweight to the overrepresentation of slavery, sugar, and early colonialism in Jamaican history as it appears in course syllabi. The editors, two leading historians of the island, present excerpts from the work of first-rate scholars and primary sources ranging across five centuries. But attention to recent decades, during which "the scars of the past" are plainly visible (3), does much to unsettle sedimented images of contemporary Jamaica's tourist paradise and poverty-fueled violence.

The first centuries that brought Europeans and Africans to the island certainly receive ample attention. Firsthand accounts of Spanish settlement before the English conquest of the island in 1655 are another strength of the anthology and likely of special value to scholars of Iberian America. Those interested in Jamaica's place in the African diaspora will appreciate a 1756 poem by Francis Williams, the earliest published Black Anglophone writer, and an 1833 description of a Jonkanoo festival.

The chapters treating postemancipation society and early twentieth-century popular protest set the stage for a wide-ranging exploration of Jamaican nationalism and independence in the second half of the volume. Here, religion and culture figure prominently. Accounts of activism rooted in radical religious traditions (Revivalism and Rastafarianism) contextualize political struggles for self-government. While acknowledging the conditions placed on Jamaican independence by global Cold War and neoliberal politics, the editors approach post-independence history by alternating the speeches and writings of national leaders (especially Michael Manley and Edward Seaga) with examples of dub poetry and reggae and dancehall lyrics.

The final section of the book centers migration, placing early twentieth-century laborers in the Canal Zone and Cuba alongside their post-World War II Windrush counterparts and later migrants to Canada and the United States. Like the commodities from the island that have circulated globally for centuries, these Jamaicans come into view as persuasive evidence that as much as the idea of Jamaica cannot be confined to a unified historical narrative or political identity, it can neither be confined to the island's territory alone.

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