THE CHRISTIAN AND THE TAXI-DRIVER; POVERTY AND ASPIRATION IN RURAL JAMAICA[i]

PRESSED: THE CHRISTIAN AND HIS MOBILE PHONE

There are creased trousers and there are Pentecostal creased trousers. There is the way individuals living in poverty somehow appear every day with their white shirts and their neat clothes, and then there is Sunday best. At a Jamaican Sunday Pentecostal service the clothing looks too perfect to be of this world. The creases are so sharp, the starch so crisp, the effect is radiant; speaking for the aspiration to heaven rather than of earth. The signs of the saved and of the saints that brings a person closer to the state of angels. Indeed the seven and eight year old children in their stunning frocks and suits and their immaculately braided hair with shining baubles seem about as angelic as human beings ever get to be in this life.

Yet one cannot separate out the creases of Pentecostalism and poverty in Damian's trousers or in any other part of his life. This neat and clean clothing exemplifies how other-worldly aspirations are constantly manifest in his world. Damian is five foot six or seven, with dark brown complexion, a winning smile. In his case the big ears help him look appealing rather than odd. His short hair is, of course, as neat as his clothes. Yet Damian's smile, which is pretty much a constant, has a Job like quality, because of the way it accompanies every new misfortune. It indicates the way he turns his problems into divine tests, each thereby providing a further step towards bliss. So too, his unfailing good manners, his courtesy, that seems so natural too him, and so contrived in others.

Whatever happens, he knows exactly what he is going to become and how he will reach that goal. Indeed he feels he **is** about to reach this goal anytime soon. He will be a Pentecostal Pastor just as his father is now. Which is why to describe him as a seventeen year old is so misleading. Where I live, seventeen year old boys are as shapeless as my trousers. Mostly, infuriatingly relaxed, playing computer games, playing at school, playing at being this or that personality. Uncertain of who they are, or who they want to be and fluctuating from caring too much to not caring much at all. Damian was never young in that way.

Damian's father is a pastor to a few small churches built by farmers that could never provide `a living' – this is a million miles from Trollope and Jane Austen. His mother is a market vendor. As a child Damian lived in about six different tenement buildings. His parents never wanted so many children, they just didn't have family planning. They left him and his brothers and sisters with a helper, who used to beat him regularly. Although he passed all his exams, he still had to learn to work the markets to pay for his school fees, together with a scheme he developed for re-selling sweets to other school children. He lived with an aunt and commuted thirty miles to school, but always helped her with her church duties. He insisted on being baptised (saved) before his elder siblings, since he knew he was ready. Today, quite apart from the regular Sunday prayers, Damian goes to a prayer meeting on Monday night, a bible

meeting on Wednesday night and on Friday night he organises the youth programme. Other matters were secondary. He had had a girl friend for six months but they had separated, partly from differences in their religious feelings and partly because she was unfaithful to him.

Damian's genuinely believed in his own aesthetic aura, that he was a beacon of light, literally radiant. He was nominated President for the inter-school Christian fellowship group, an executive member of this youth society and a leader for that one. Vice-president for peer counselling, and eventually, inevitably, head boy of the school. He had started a Christian club, a fellowship for students that mirrored the Pentecostal churches of the elders. Schoolchildren would come together for prayer which started to include speaking in tongues, healing and revelation. The club was a success; attracting twenty, sometimes even forty, schoolchildren.

But then, according to Damian, one young man received a revelation from God that they should all pray for the school, because some serious thing was going to happen in the school. He said they should pray for the Principal who was in danger, which put some of the children into a panic. There follows a long story, but the upshot was that as soon as the exams were over Damian left school, with the mutual feeling between himself and the Principal that his real vocation lay elsewhere. His economic affaires were even more complex. As with many people in poverty he juggled multiple debts and multiple potential sources of income, including a rotating credit scheme, with his market work making up the shortfalls. After completing school he began helping to serve two churches and consider schemes that would allow him to develop his own flock. Even now there was no real separation of church and living. The money that he earned was often intended for the constant needs of the church, while organising a youth event was as much an entrepreneurial as a spiritual venture.

Damian's first phone, a Panasonic was brought in spring 2003 for J$3,000 (£30). When at school he was trying to keep monthly phone bills to J$300. Later on, with all his church responsibilities this was creeping up sometimes to more like J$500 a week. As with most Jamaicans, even this cheap low level cell phone, is much more than just a communications device. This is his watch and his calculator. It's where he keeps his vital information, especially his diary. On his phone he can play games when he is bored, using a mouse like navigator key, and he plays most days. It can store some 200 numbers. When we first met in 2003 he had only sixty five, but by the summer of 2004 this had grown to one hundred and thirty six.

About seventy of these names are young men and women in approximately equal numbers. Many are fellow school children, especially those who formed his Christian club. Many others, especially young women, were people he met at periodic church camps. Fourteen of his contacts are people who could potentially provide music for his church activities. He also has eight relatives listed, but almost no-one that connects to him through his market activities, other than relatives. A major part of his phone address book then consists of those he works with in the church. Some are just called church sisters or

brothers, but there are also Pastors, youth camp leaders, and counsellors. Almost always when it comes to a younger person, the basic description he provides of them is in terms of the state of their religious relationship. So he will say `Oh that's Peter I witnessed to him in school' or `that's Nadine, she is saved', `That is Deneal he is a backsliding man', or simply `Kenaisha, she is a Christian. Commonly what he remarks upon is the interaction between his Christian relationship and the potential for other kinds of relationship. So there is `Jodie. I like her spirit in the sense of a young lady who loves God, so I took her number to call and encourage her' or Kelly `she had a big, big crush on me. Yes I phone her very often because I crave her vulnerability to minister Jesus Christ to her; being that she is so vulnerable to me I just use that to minister to her.' There is Dwain `He is very spiritual, someone I consider to have an anointing of the mind. He plays the drums'. He uses the categories feature in the phone to organise the names. There are `friends', `family' `witness' - those he will call or text about Jesus Christ, and the largest group which is called `church people' that he works with in the ministry.

Damian was quite clear on the benefits of the cell phone:

> `If I am feeling down, or when I feel depressed I can call a person, and hopefully they can cheer me up or change my mood. Often people call me when they are down and I encourage them. Or I might just randomly send a text, a scripture of encouragement, to them or to my church helpers. I compose a piece of scripture. And then there is a system called user message on the phone, so you can send it to ten church brothers and church sisters at the same time. Especially on special occasions such as Christmas and New Years Day. You could send "May the joys of the Season fill your life with love and with righteousness". My aunt is in the choir and sometimes they don't meet for practice, she would call her church sister and say `what song you have in mind that we could sing for this service.

> I also do counselling by phone. The other night this girl call me, and she said she just did something bad. She had sex with her boyfriend, and her grandmother came and caught her in the act. And she said she just wanted to kill herself or run away. And I encouraged her and prayed for her and she went to bed. Then I saw her in the morning and she said she felt much better. Another time, another young lady called me and told me they are spreading rumours about her and her close friend, that she is a lesbian[ii]. And she went away from her community for a period of time because of the rumours. And I encouraged her and told her not to let what people say do this to you. I always try to influence the environment in a positive way. And she felt much better and went back home. I can spend a whole card on this, and someone might call me seven times in one hour till their credit finish. So I can reach people more easily. It's a friend indeed since it's always there when I am in need.

> The word of God says "be not confounded to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind". I think personally that many

souls are going to be saved, and the phone is a medium in which we can help persons who don't know Jesus Christ, to help them find Jesus Christ by this partnership of prayer and encouragement and counselling. I think the phone is a blessing from God since this is the medium through which I can help many persons.

On the other hand Damian sees a darker side to this technology:-
`People's phone does go off during a service which is very disturbing. Most churches encourage members to put their phone on vibrate or turn it off. Once my pastor stood up and said that God is not pleased when we allow the phones to disturb the service, and that once you are serving God he won't allow anything bad to happen such that a person has to call you urgently. The phone can also be a route to temptation. It is capable of much evil. It can lead people to have phone relationships. They don't know the person, but they can be girl or boy friend because of the phone. They call it voice lovers, or phone lovers. They will do phone sex. One of my friends tried that. There is not much affection in it though. If the phone connects to the internet they can download pornography. Then they would want to get a better one, a newer model that would even allow him to watch a sex movie live.

I think the phone is part of the prophecy of the Mark of the Beast. Because when I first had my phone, the phone company representative called me and started giving me information. And they can tell how much you use, when you made your last call and your text. Then they can even put a chip in it and know your whereabouts. In the Christian religion, we believe that in the last days there will be devices of the devil to stop God's people from going to heaven. They will have the mark on their forehead or on their right hand, and you won't be able to buy or sell without the mark. So I would conclude that this chip in the phone will encourage advancement in the way of the Mark of the Beast and that's how they will get to know different information about different people. I heard there is a chip called a Digi-angel that can pick up 2,000 informations on one person in about one second. Fortunately at this special time, approaching the last days, the phone can also be summoned against the works of the devil. According to Mathew 24, Mark 13 and Luke 21, in last days the enemy will be going about his work with ever more concentration and energy since he knows he has little time left. This is why God has now granted us the technology to move his work within the spiritual system. So we can spread the gospel more effectively, more quickly with the instruments that have been provided'.

Overall, as the year progressed, Damian became clear that the phone is not in itself either an instrument of good or evil. It depends mainly upon the state and motivation of the user. The phone even starts to come into his preaching. He says in a sermon 'Before you run to the phone run to the throne. When something happens to some people they will call their friends and say some bad thing happened at church. They call and create mischief. But they should first run to God and talk to him first before they talk to anyone else'.

Damian does not worry that his phone will be stolen since he has `covered it under the blood'. That is, he has prayed to God to protect his phone under the blood of Jesus against the deeds of Satan. That's why he does not feel the need to back up the numbers in the phone. In any case, he notes he could easily get back most of these numbers, because he is involved with most of these people directly, not just by phone. That is not the only way a phone can be Christianised. At first Damian was tolerant of secular ringtones, but as time went on he increasingly saw these as an abomination, not surprisingly, given the racy titles and lyrics of popular Jamaican dancehall tunes that are popular as local ringtones. Fortunately there are Christian alternatives. He has several on his phone, which also has the facility to record music directly and turn these into ringtones. These include `No matter what they say I made up my mind I am a fool for Christ', and also `My God is an awesome God he reigns for evermore' but also, entirely without irony, `Oh God you are the only one, that's why I am holding on so long'.

Damian never seems to stress the phone's application to his business activities. Although observing and listening to him this does actually seem to be quite an important part of his use of the phone. Sometimes he will ask his mother or a friend to make purchases when church business prevents him coming to Kingston. Sometimes he returns such favours, again being alerted to the indisposition of others by the phone. But if Damian plays down the importance of the phone in this regard it is because he plays down such secular activities in general. For him, two uses in particular, seem to stand out. One is the development of his actual counselling by phone and the fact that he doesn't have to take a taxi and travel to be with those who need his prayers and counselling. Damian regards himself as rather like a doctor. A patient suffering from sin needs certain, what he most often calls, `encouragements,' to be dispensed. If this can be done via the phone, so much the better. The other blessing is the use of the phone to organise meetings, especially his youth meetings. The phone, and its internal system of categories, helps him in these organisational tasks. He goes through his contacts, summoning those most relevant to the various tasks: of providing music, or merely turning up as the congregants to his meetings. He is aiming for an attendance of 120 at his next youth day. So his work is reduced down to the fine art of scrolling through this very organised phone address book. In this way the phone has become an ally in his constant struggle. A variant of that found in so many parts of the world, to maintain respectability, dignity and finally salvation in conditions of constant struggle and poverty.

DRIVEN: THE TAXI DRIVER AND HIS VAN

You are hurtling down a mountainside. There is no lighting, the road is full of potholes, it is narrow, twisting, precipitous, and the van you are in is not small. The driver sitting beside you smells strongly of beer, hardly surprising, since you recently watched him consume his fifth in the last two hours. It's not as if you even enjoy those video games which throw at you a twisting road with sudden obstacles and challenges you to keep within its limits. At least with those, when disaster strikes, you only have to put your `avatar' back on the

screen back to its proper position. Yet actually you are also aware of your own awe at your companion. Because while this is certainly not sensible, you have been driving long enough to realise, perhaps for the first time, just how skilled an activity this can be. That this is quite possibly the best driver you have ever known. There is no hint of hesitation, doubt or concern. There is simply a kind of magical understanding of the relationship between driver and machine. Diamond loves his vehicle, with a sometimes painful intensity. It may be reassuring to know that even if he is not overly concerned with your hide, he is desperate not to scratch its body. Having just completed a three hour interview, during the course of this journey, you are aware that this van hasn't suffered a single scratch in the two years since he purchased it.

As for the advanced state of inebriation, this too is hardly novel. It's what this van drives on. Diamond needs alcohol just as much as the vehicle needs petrol. He simply doesn't do driving sober. This is not just the odd drink, you can't recall an evening when he wasn't pretty close to what for you would have been blind drunk before he goes off driving. This trip has had only one stop so far to refuel that van, but it has had plenty to refuel the man. In the end, I am no Hemmingway. This is still an art I would rather admire from a distance than stake my life on. I am very relieved when we get home.

The car, and by extension the taxi (with its money making capacity) has become one of the most common foci of aspiration among young boys in rural Jamaica. A symbol of mobility, the taxi is a more affordable and attainable dream than migration or the building of a house, goals that have traditionally occupied high esteem in Jamaica. Diamond's own rise came slowly, over a decade of tedious work and dedication. Unlike today's well groomed vehicle, Diamond started out as a conductor collecting fares in a chipped blue van with a maroon hood and ripped seats which he shared with his cousin who drove the vehicle. As a 'ducta', he learned how to work out how many school kids could be crammed into the rows to compensate for their discounted fares (only $JA10 compared to $JA30 for full fare). He learned who had it hard and discerned who to let get by with a free ride. And he also learned that all important axiom; it is not the cost, but how much each person can afford to give, or have taken.

Just as his skills on the road developed so did his handling of girls and women. No longer did he content himself with lurking in the right places or communicating his attraction through awkward stares, followed by such unmemorable statements such as "mi like yu". In its place, he learned to hold onto a hand a little longer as a person paid their fare or entered and exited the bus. He learned to linger in the corners and out of sight and to place the good looking girls in the front seat next to him where he could catch a glimpse of their thighs or breasts as the vehicles jerked around the corners. He gained the confidence and the luck to find his own vehicle by negotiating a deal to purchase his own taxi, a vehicle which outside of Jamaica would have constituted a four to five person vehicle, but could easily carry six adults in Jamaica.

Working the route from Orange Valley to Everton five to six times per week, he developed a regular clientele who asked him to carry them to and from the airport(s) as well as for special days such as outings to the beach. He also started to develop relationships with a number of girls and women who he 'checked' when he had the opportunity to pass by. Some worked in bars or were old friends or contacts from his youth. During this time, Diamond drove his car hard and learned the fastest routes across the island, the best places to stop, where the police hid, and who could be bribed. But he still was not content and could see that his taxi was not going to get him big money. No, the passenger van which could hold up to 14 people was certainly much more lucrative and he began saving his partner's[iii] money and working on his mother to help him finance a van so that he could collect his mother and all of her goods from the airport and wharves, or carry her to church rallies and other events in distant parishes. Within two years of hard work and savings, he managed to obtain the used white van with grey vinyl interior that he owns today.

As soon as Diamond collected the van, he started to feel and to believe that he had arrived. No more torn seats, dirty floors and mats, dents or missing items; this van was meticulously maintained. He kept a chamois cloth in his vehicle to clean the windows and to wipe off the steering wheel which had its own special 'bumpy' covering. He became extra careful in not spilling his beer or the corn-on-the-cob) he occasionally stopped to eat when on the road with passengers. When travelling the routes, he was keen to make sure that the school kids were not marking up his vehicle with pen or that those women who chose to eat a patty or have a lunch didn't leave crumbs. He hired both a 'ducta' to recruit passengers as well as one of the men from his district to clean the car almost daily.

With skinny legs and a concave chest, Diamond never really had the brawn to command a lot of women. But his mother equipped him with Nike shirts, a Kangol hat, trainers and other elements that suggest money and 'connections'. Diamond decided to take on a common-law wife who he kept fitted in new clothes, wigs and pedicures. He also purchased a series of thick gold braided necklaces (probably admired less for their quality and more for its thickness and quantity) as well as three gold rings which bore his initials. He also put gold caps on his teeth, one of which was fitted with a diamond (well cubic zirconia). This 'bling' aspect of Diamond's new life as a 'taxi driver' also made him feel more adventurous. He took on more girlfriends, some in those distant parishes that he travelled to on chartered journeys to the airport.

Taxi drivers are of critical importance to the wider life of this rural area. They represent the core to a rural `public sphere'. There are certainly people who would put themselves forward as the more public face of Orange Valley, and who would feel they have the experience and responsibility to consider its affaires and take them forward. There is a town committee consisting of the leading figures: headmasters, doctors, shopkeepers and so forth. But for the most part, the population who live in the villagers, regard such people as distant. These are people they may need and may depend on, but they experience them as a powerful and sometimes oppressive hierarchy.

By contrast, it is the taxi driver that has become the critical figure that unites and brings together the community, since it is the taxi driver who carried news as well as individuals from place to place. It's not just that they deliver the schoolchildren and the people coming to market. They help supply the shops with their goods, they deliver parcels and produce. But above all in a society that pivots around one phrase that defines Jamaica: `whagwaan', they are the people in a position to know what's-going-on, whether it is the latest dancehall event or the real reason behind last night's murder in Arsenal. To become successful in the way a taxi driver succeeds is not to create any distance from others. Taxi drivers do not grow up and above others in the way of the town's elite. They remain about the most accessible people in the town. You see them everyday except Sundays. They are central to the wider `communicative ecology' of the place (Slater and Miller 2007, Slater and Tacchi 2004). They are the people who will take a parcel for you to a friend further down their route, without charging you for it. They are the ones who will turn up in an emergency to take your sick child to the clinic. They are the ones that can save old limbs from treacherous muddy paths back up to the village. It is the taxi drivers who know that the old man, who used to be a tailor, dreamt last night of cats. And so by seven o'clock in the morning a significant proportion of the town can bet on the `right' numbers in today's `cashpot' lottery.

Furthermore the taxi driver represents the kind of success that most ordinary people can and do aspire to. They have a regular income that, where possible, is invested in their own transport. They are the entrepreneurs that can generate a certain amount of security and constancy in income. But, unlike other forms of investment, this is the one that seems to have little of the negative - the entrapments, that people, especially young people, also associate with such success. They haven't passed over to another side, gone to live down Babylon.

Unlike other symbols of mobility (homes, church, etc.), the taxi doesn't seem to tie one down in the way a shop might, or even another steady job. If anything it seems to actually accentuate the freedoms of an individual who retains their autonomy, their choice to work, their time of work. While other jobs seem like a boulder that drags a person down to a fixed place, this is more like a light and useful carapace that they can carry with them, and that carries them wherever they want to go. To be a taxi-driver is the resolution of work and freedom (Miller 1994). A freedom that finds its definition in the relationships, the women, it brings in its wake.

In Jamaica women have children to show that they can, to show they are mature, to demonstrate that they are indeed properly women, and because in various ways they must (Sobo 1993). Damien is happy to represent himself as the victim of this cycle. `Like if you go court, them charge you to how you work. If you have a woman and she have pickney for you; if dem know say you inna a good work dem demands money from you. Mostly the younger one dem prefer talk to a married man. Them get more benefits, like them get money, and things like that. And seem when them deh wid a married man and so, them nah do nutten for the man, cause them no have to go home to wash,

cook, or something like that'. Actually it is clear that Damien is as much concerned to demonstrate his own masculinity through having women bear children for him. This is a viscous cycle at the heart of Jamaican sexual life Because if a fifteen year old has a child in order to try and `fix' a man, and fails in this venture, then however bad the situation for the fifteen year old, the child is a victim from birth. A remarkable number of babies are indeed looked after, cared for, loved by other women, who actually have no real obligation to care. But there are other children who are not really cared for, have no secure sense of being mothered or looked after. Who become old enough to go to primary school, but have no money for lunch or school books. At a local primary school perhaps a third of the pupils do not attend school with any regularity for precisely this reason. And these are the girls who grow up knowing that the only real hope, the best bet, is to have sex and, better still, have a baby for a taxi driver, who has a secure income, and just might be prepared to provide for baby and baby mother (for the background to this see Chavannes 2001, Mohammed 2002, Reddock 2004) .

These two individuals define in turn the aesthetic of the town itself. Orange Valley is something of a façade. Because the bustle represented by sixty shops, augmented by around twenty small temporary stalls, set up anew each day, and selling snacks or clothes, means that, at first, one hardly notices the lack of residences. There are probably no more than sixty or seventy houses, less than the shops. It simply services the local rural area. The main institution that constitutes the town is a primary school and especially the secondary school with over 2,000 pupils. When the school day ends, these children don't just descend into town, they swarm. They erupt with the force of their release from a place they regard largely as a space of constraint, if not oppression. Orange Valley turns instantly from a quite dusty coloured backwater to a carpet of white and maroon, the school uniform.

The swarm does not last long. Just as Orange Valley looks completely overrun and doomed, the other major feature of the town comes to life as taxis whirl and swoop like birds of prey to pick off the swarming children. A feeding frenzy that whisks them off in all directions, returns and feeds some more, until within an hour only the stragglers remain. For this hour, the two, the dominant imperatives of this town meet and give reason to the place. The educational institutions that garner children from all over the district and the taxi system that brings and returns them, and spends the rest of the day linking up the inhabitants of this straggling region; who emerge to go about their daily business and then filter back to their homesteads. So the core relationship of Orange Valley has become that of the taxi and the schoolchild. At first glance, it seems so innocent. And there are taxi-drivers who go out of their way to care for school children, who ferry them to distant sites, watch over them, know their parents and often share some kinship with them. But as is clear both from Damian's conversation and his actions, there is another side to this relationship, based more on mutual exploitation and sexual predation.

DISCUSSION

Is this a paper about two individuals, or is it a means to convey something called Jamaican society or culture? What is implicit, but needs to be made explicit, is the process of selection, the decision to use these two people to write this chapter? My starting point is that it has entirely different implications from the description of another two individuals, Charlotte and Malcolm, presented in the introductory chapter to this volume. Those individuals were specific to themselves, characteristic only of the diversity of society at an individual level. But the way I have employed Damian and Diamond imply the much older anthropological tradition of the person as microcosm, who stand for the macrocosm. They are society writ small.

Damian stands for Pentecostalism, the dominant ideology of contemporary Jamaican Christianity. A significant percentage of the Jamaican population, mainly older people who have settled down as child carers, or young people still under their influence, largely give their lives to these ideals. Unfortunately for Damian, religion becomes much less important as people move into their late teens and twenties. They then tend more to share aspirations with Diamond. But the way Diamond was described in the context of the central relationship between taxi drivers and school children in Orange Valley showed that he too represents, not just an individual, but the structural core to the town itself, its contradictions and values. Both come from similar conditions of poverty and both have clear aspirations, conventional to their immediate peers. Both are unusually successful, for their age, in fulfilling those aspirations.

The macrocosm - the cosmology that creates society - is not a single normative form, to be represented by a single person. As in much of the work of Bourdieu (1977 and 1989) these two represent a systematic and structural opposition which constitutes that larger structural whole. This should not be reduced to a single representation of Jamaican society. This is many worlds apart from the middle-class of Kingston, for example. But it can apply to the specific area of Orange Valley. These are not individuals chosen at random. They are selected because they do the job of exemplification particularly well. Damien is not just any Christian. He performs what he strives to be with unusual clarity and commitment. Diamond does the same for a completely opposed set of values. They stand as ideal types in an almost Weberian sense. Yet they do actually exist as two individuals encountered during fieldwork, described without requiring exaggeration. That really was my recollection of Diamond's driving.

There is a wonderful monograph on Jamaican Pentecostalism by Austin Broos (1977) that carefully explicates the logic within the cosmology of this faith. But this chapter argues that a similar potential exists for material worlds. As in the previous chapters of this volume by Craciun, Olesen and Dalakoglou the logics implicated in these persons, derives in some measure from that which is external to them. The phone and the taxi are not incidental. They are central to the contemporary manner by which individuals construct themselves. It is impossible to even imagine Diamond, except as partly an emanation of the existence of taxis. The number of ways Damian finds to Christianise his phone, or for Diamond to subsume his life within the ideals of

taxi driving are astonishing. Similarly the way Diamond seems to stand for Orange Valley itself; the taxi driver's relationship with schoolchildren as the very raison d'être to the place. They were brought up in this place with these material things and again, following Bourdieu (1977), it is possible to see them as socialised through the way they inculcate the order found in objects and places. The objects no more represent people than people merely represent objects. It is a process of objectification (Miller 1987).

Both individuals use objects in a manner close to Gell's (1998) notion of an aesthetic as the external expression, that allows a person to extend their agency in order to secure the interest of others. Both use objects for this art of seduction, quite literally in the case of Diamond's desire for multiple sexual relations, and figuratively in the case of Damian's desire to attract a flock from which he can form his church. The `bling,' the taxi, the numbers of youth at a church event are the evident signs of personal achievement for Damien and Diamond respectively. But the concept of aesthetic as outlined in the introduction of this book is not that of Gell. It is a much more holistic device. It is the order and structure that makes sense of the wider values being expressed and the larger opposition that constitutes these values as society and structure. The evidence presented in this chapter is in support of the contention that an aesthetic holism can be discerned analytically, both at the level of the individual, and at a level that transcends them as individuals and is found in Orange Valley itself.

This is therefore not at all a chapter about individualism. It might have been. Jamaican individualism is a fascinating topic. Colleagues working with traditional fishing communities report that a fisherman expects to sell his fish to his wife who then markets them. Similarly people were giving up telephone landlines partly because of their antipathy to a shared expenditure as opposed to their individualised payments for mobile phones (Horst and Miller 2006:73-8). In Jamaica money is used to express the internal relations of families in a way that most English people would see as far too individualistic. So there certainly a form of individualism in Jamaica that derives from long standing features of Jamaican society, and has nothing to do with contemporary neo-liberalism. One could therefore engaged in long debates as to whether Jamaicans or Londoners were more or less individualistic. But the degree of individualism is a different topic and argument. It is not the concern of this chapter. Since that individualism in no way detracts from the ability of individuals to act as a microcosm in relation to the wider Jamaican aesthetic in a manner that I have suggested would no longer be possible in a place such as London. As the introduction suggests, and as the chapters of this book demonstrate, we can examine the individual as one of the media being used to objectify social orders, irrespective of the degree of individualism.

This becomes still clearer when we juxtapose this chapter with that of Murray. Madrid is a modern urban centre, far removed from rural Jamaica, and yet Murray indicates how an individual objectifies Madrid in a manner that corresponds to the case from rural Jamaica, not that of London. By comparison with the rural poverty of Jamaica, most people in London have considerable resources, support from, but also autonomy from, the state. I

suggest in the introduction that this allows them to construct a heterogeneous aesthetic, taken piecemeal from the sheer diversity and heterogeneity of their surrounding and influences. The people in Madrid have comparable resources to Londoners. Yet they retain a homogeneity that means an individual makes sense only in relation to an aesthetic that is objectified by the place itself - Madrid. So the diversity of London cannot be reduced to the wealth of London. The economic conditions may allow for the emergence of aesthetic of household described in the introduction for London, but comparative anthropology shows they do not determine it.

So neither situation, Madrid, London or Jamaica should be regarded as more authentic, or more modern, or more central to anthropology, per se. Rather, in combination, they help us to appreciate another concept of aesthetic as an analytical tool. One that may be found in the portraits of individuals. The way they comb their hair, the way they talk to women, the things that give them confidence and the need to incorporate each and every object within a particular style. This aesthetic is the very shape and form of struggle and hope in Jamaica. Without the skills to fully embody these aesthetics they have very little chance of success.

This aesthetic quality is even clearer when the two figures are juxtaposed. Because whatever they have in common, they are also systematically opposed. Damian's mission in life is to persuade his generation not to take the path represented by Diamond, which he represents as a fundamental choice between heaven and hell. While each island is specific, there is a pattern to such dualistic oppositions that seems characteristic of the Caribbean more generally (starting from Wilson 1966). Such dualisms have been criticised, for the way they present gender (e.g. Besson 1993), but my evidence from Trinidad (Miller 1994) does not support these criticisms. In this chapter the opposition is portrayed through two internally consistent individuals. But it is entirely possible for this situation to change. One day Diamond may find God, but without losing his ambition to accumulate women. Or Damian may become so successful as a preacher that temptations will arise to which he may succumb. The chapter could still have rested on these two individuals but would have had to work through the analysis of their internal contradictions.

The aim would remain the same. There is a cultural order here, as in the classics of anthropology from Malinowski through to Geertz and Bourdieu. It is an aesthetic that people see and express through the material and other orders around them, and gives them their style and aspirations. It not freely chosen, its roots are often in poverty and historical oppression. It doesn't just make sense of life, it is their lives. By focusing upon the phone and taxi we can see how fully it saturates everyday actions and aspirations. There is a wider holism, but we can also explore the internal logics, consistencies and contradictions that can be discerned, at the level of both individual and of society. In this volume we try to make explicit the implications of trying to convey this aesthetic both of the person and of the wider society within which they live. What it means and what is at stake when one makes theoretical and analytical points through portraits of individuals.

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[i] Both of the individuals discussed in this chapter were introduced to me by Heather Horst with whom I conducted fieldwork on the impact of the mobile phone in Jamaica. I am entirely indebted to her contribution, without which I coulld not have participated in the fieldwork. All my observations and insights depended upon continual discussion with Horst, whose fieldwork was much more extensive than mine. We are still considering a more extensive volume of these portraits which would be an entirely collaborative work. All names and places have been anonymised. A considerable amount of additional context is available in Horst and Miller (2006), but for a sense of the wider background also see Austin Broos (1997) and Besson (2002).

[ii] Jamaica remains in general virulently homophobic.

[iii] `Partner' is Jamaican for a rotating credit scheme.