Slavery,

Contested Heritage

and

Thanatourism

Graham M. S. Dann
A. V. Seaton

Editors

Slavery, Contested Heritage and Thanatourism

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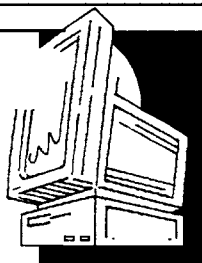
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Slavery, Contested Heritage
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Graham M. S. Dann
A. V. Seaton

SUMMARY. This article introduces a collection of eight revised papers that focus on the connection between slavery and tourism. After tracing the history of the former from its origins to the present day, and after providing some examples of related attractions, it confronts a number of dilemmas associated with their juxtaposition. A brief overview of the contributions to the volume is supplied, along with some epistemological and methodological concerns that they raise. Slavery tourism is finally contextualized within a framework of thanatourism, dark tourism and dissonant heritage, a field which in turn poses several questions for further research into this new and exciting phenomenon. *[Article copies available for a fee from The Haworth Document Delivery Service: 1-800-342-9678. E-mail address: <getinfo@haworthpressinc. com> Website: <http://www.HaworthPress.com> © 2001 by The Haworth Press, Inc. All rights reserved.]*

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INTRODUCTION

This volume brings together two phenomena which at first glance are seemingly quite antithetical–slavery and tourism. It attempts to

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show that, whatever the notoriety of the former, increasingly it is bestowing marked benefits on the latter. By including a number of papers from a conference imaginatively entitled *Plantations of the Mind*, held at the College of Charleston from April 6 to 9, 2000, this collection of select articles focuses predominantly on the British and American variants of slavery in the New World and those instances where its remnants have been put to use by the tourism industry today.

SLAVERY IN THE ANCIENT WORLD

The institution of slavery has far longer temporal antecedents than tourism. It harks back at least 10,000 years to the region of Mesopotamia, the "cradle of civilization" lying between the rivers Tigris and Euphrates, roughly equivalent to modern Iraq (Meltzer, 1993a: 9). In that predominantly hunting society, enemies were killed simply because the winners had insufficient meat and fish to sustain the losers. Subsequently, when animals became domesticated and the cultivation of crops began to yield a surplus, captives were fed and, in turn, worked their victor's land. Still later, enforced labor became a form of punishment, a pledge against debt or just a type of security (Meltzer, 1993a: 1-2).

Around 3000 BC there is evidence of the Sumerians settling in the southern half of the Mesopotamian plain, requiring slaves to install their irrigation systems and of using those taken in battle for that purpose. By 2000 BC, the Amorites from Syria had assumed control of what by then had become known as the kingdom of Babylon, complete with their own set of laws named after their monarch–the *Code of Hammurabi* (Meltzer, 1993a: 9-16). Although this hierarchical society of nobles, priests, free persons and slaves, with most of its servile class constituted by prisoners of war and debtors, could be described as rigidly authoritarian, it was nevertheless sufficiently liberal to permit manumission and to prescribe fines for killing or injuring a slave (Petrovich and Curtin, 1967: 25-26). However, the situation deteriorated with the conquest of Babylon by the Persians in 538 BC when slaves were typically branded and tagged like animals (Meltzer, 1993a: 22).

Ancient Egypt largely thrived without slavery on account of a vibrant peasant class, the main exception being the children of Israel who, circa 18th century BC, offered service in exchange for their lives

(Meltzer, 1993a: 3). The Chinese Chou Dynasty (1000-256 BC) was similarly pragmatic, only utilizing slave labor in the main for the production of salt and mining operations (Petrovich and Curtin, 1967: 613).

Greek society, by contrast, required slaves for labor-intensive farming (mainly grapes and olives (Petrovich and Curtin, 1967: 43)) and domestic purposes (ranging from such occupations as maids, teachers, nurses, civil servants, and even bankers (Meltzer, 1993a: 76)). By the 5th century BC, almost half of the Greek population were slaves with no democratic rights and there was a thriving slave market in the *agora* of Athens. Plato, who argued in his *Republic* that Barbarians were born to serfdom, died leaving five house slaves in his will. Aristotle, who maintained in his *Politics* that some were servile by nature, since they depended on the rationality of their master's will, left fourteen slaves in his testament. Aesop, being a slave himself, was somewhat less fortunate. Generally, the Greek variant of slavery was relatively benign (Meltzer, 1993a: 65-96). Certainly, no color bar operated, public slaves such as policemen could arrest free persons, the granting of liberty was a frequent occurrence and, with the exception of the helots (people from the Peloponnese conquered by the Spartans and forced into slavery), there were few revolts.

Ancient Rome, on the other hand (Meltzer, 1993a: 100-118; Petrovich and Curtin, 1967: 82-90), which had overthrown the Etruscans who themselves had slaves as part of the family unit, tended to draw most of its slaves from wars (against Germanic and Gallic tribes), where they were either sold on the very field of battle or later in the Forum. Piracy was another source of labor on Roman rulers' plantations, so that by 69 BC when Delos (dealing in up to 10,000 slaves a day) was sacked, Rome had become the center of the slave trade. Even though plebeian slaves were generally well treated under the Empire and were either given high positions by patricians on their estates, or else filled such roles as educators, librarians and craftsmen, rebellions were classified as wars and insurgents shown no mercy. Probably the worst case occurred during the aptly named Third Servile War (73-71 BC). Known also as the Spartacus rebellion, and put down by Pompey, it witnessed the crucifixion of some 6,000 slaves.

Practically every society, regardless of color and racial background, treated slavery as an economic fact of life (Meltzer, 1993a: 6). Slave trading and auctions were frequent in Ephesus, Byzantium and Chios

(Meltzer, 1993a: 110), and even on the other side of the globe, and well prior to European entry to the New World, the Aztecs employed slaves and used them for human sacrifice to their god Huitizilopochtli (Meltzer, 1993b: 61).

SLAVERY IN THE NEW WORLD

Long before 1441, when the first Portuguese ship under the command of Antam Goncalvez captured 12 natives from the Atlantic coast of Africa and brought them back as gifts for Prince Henry the Navigator (1394-1460), and prior to a 1445 papal bull authorizing Portugal to reduce to servitude the heathen peoples (Meltzer, 1993b: 1), overseas plantations had been firmly established in Palestine by Europeans during the Crusades. Once they were expelled from the Holy Land, the Crusaders lost no time in setting up sugar plantations first in Cyprus and Sicily, and later in southern Spain and Portugal. Their lands were worked either by prisoners-of-war or by those slaves purchased in Black Sea ports (Petrovich and Curtin, 1967: 386). These operations were subsequently transferred to Madeira (1420), Cabo Verde (1460) and São Tomé (1490) (Meltzer, 1993b: 2). As for the Africans themselves, they had 'practised slavery since prehistoric times . . . both benign and family based' (Meltzer, 1993b: 17). However, it was the presence of Europeans which led to inter-tribal wars of up to 500 miles into the interior, the taking of captives for slaves, and their subsequent on-selling to African middlemen on the coast. European guns were used by the Ashanti and others to capture slaves. The latter were subsequently confined in inland barracoons before being force marched in coffles to the sea and waiting ships (Meltzer, 1993b: 29).

Although the primary focus of this collection of articles is predominantly Anglo-American, it should not be forgotten that the arrival of the Portuguese and Spanish in Africa predated that segment of the slave trade by over a century. In response to Iberian demand, in 1461 raids by Berber chieftains were producing slaves and gold in exchange for silk and silver, with 10 to 15 men changing hands for one horse. By the time the first coastal fort was constructed by the Portuguese at Elmina in 1481, they had already discovered a flourishing slave trade among the Arabs and their Swahili agents for export to Arabia, India and Persia (see article by Essah in this volume).

Most of the Portuguese slaves were taken to Brazil. By 1540 sugar production was well under way and, some fifty years later, over 60 mills were in operation, along with acreage devoted to the cultivation of coffee, cotton and cacao. From just 30 plantations in 1576 the total had risen to 121 by 1625. By the turn of the 17th century, gold and subsequently diamond mines had become well established, all of them worked by slaves (Meltzer, 1993b: 75-79).

In 1492, and under the Spanish flag, Columbus set foot in Hispaniola and captured 1,500 Tainos Indians for slaves, most of whom died (Meltzer, 1993b: 2-6). Those who managed to escape were slaughtered on recapture. Since the remaining survivors who stayed behind were too sickly to dig for gold or labor on the sugar plantations, and many caught smallpox and measles from their captors, in 1518 the first cargo of Africans was brought in under Bartolomé de las Casas (Meltzer, 1993b: 10).

In Cuba the story was similar. Also discovered by Columbus in 1492, and taken by Diego de Velasquez in 1511, the Indians who initially worked the mines were soon replaced by Africans, the latter being found suitable for the cultivation of coffee and sugar (Meltzer, 1993b: 89). The same pattern occurred in Haiti (another of Columbus's 1492 discoveries). By 1506 sugar production was well under way and, by the time it was ceded to France in 1695, cacao, indigo and coffee were additionally being harvested (Meltzer, 1993b: 105-106).

By 1540, and with Charles V's agreement, as many as 10,000 Africans a year were being transported to the New World. Some 60 years later, the total had risen to 900,000. Even though many carried malaria and yellow fever, their constitutions were certainly stronger than those of the native Indians they replaced. Moreover, it was from these bases that expeditions were launched by the Spaniards into such American bases as Florida and Louisiana.

However, in 1564, the Spanish-Portuguese monopoly came under threat for the first time when Sir John Hawkins, an English sea captain, began transporting slaves from Sierra Leone to Venezuela. In spite of his subsequent defeat by the Spanish off the Mexican coast, he had at least challenged the status quo and opened the way for his compatriots to follow (Meltzer, 1993b: 39-40). By the 1620s they and the French were operating successfully in the Caribbean. In the 1630s and 1640s the Dutch West India Company had captured the Brazilian sugar lands of Pernambuco from the Portuguese as well as their main

slaving posts on the African coast (Petrovich and Curtin, 1967: 401-402). For their part, the Dutch supplied the French and English with slaves and knowledge of sugar production, information which was put to good use in such early colonies as Barbados (settled in 1627) and Jamaica (taken from the Spanish between 1655 and 1660). By 1665, trading posts in Africa had been set up by both the English and the French and the latter had established the plantation society of Saint Dominique on Hispaniola. Some seven years later, under King Charles II, the Royal African Company was launched, and Britannia thereafter became the world's greatest slave trader (Meltzer, 1993b: 43), operating under the infamous system known as the Middle Passage (see articles by Seaton and Beech in this volume).

This trilateral process witnessed ships leaving from the principal ports of England bound for the west coast of Africa. There, guns (for rounding up more slaves) were exchanged for human cargo, the latter in turn being conveyed to the Caribbean and America. During the second leg of the journey, and in spite of being ironically supplied with rum and tobacco (the fruit of other slave labor), thousands of captives died or were thrown overboard alive. On arrival in the West Indies, survivors were auctioned off to planters in exchange for plantation fare, and the ships made their way back to such ports as Bristol and Liverpool bearing produce for the popular coffee houses: coffee, cocoa, tea, tobacco and sugar–exotic crops deemed to make life more palatable (Walvin, 1992: 5).

Barbados, a tiny 166 square mile island in the West Indies was one of the first territories to be settled by the British (see article by Dann and Potter in this volume) and to make use of the Middle Passage. After clearing acres of forest, the colonizers lost no time in establishing plantations. By 1650, 300 were in production. Less than twenty years later there were 900, along with a total of 400 working windmills. By 1680, there were 200 planters each with more than 60 slaves and another 200 each with between 20 and 60 slaves. Jamaica's economy witnessed similarly rapid expansion with 146 plantations in 1671 and 690 in 1684 (Walvin, 1992: 69-70).

In spite of a Spanish attempt to introduce slave labor to St Augustine, Florida in 1565, most colonial attention was focused on the Eastern seaboard. By 1626, the Dutch were landing slaves on Manhattan Island which, in 1664, was taken over by the English as their colony of New York. Subsequently, slavery was declared a legal institution, and

many leading American families of the time availed themselves of its services, principally for domestic purposes. Before this enactment took place, however, the English had already established their first colony in Jamestown and, by 1660, slavery was on the statute books of Virginia and Maryland (Meltzer, 1993b: 127-132). Here the main crop was tobacco, and soon plantations and their Great Houses were springing up along the James River from Richmond to Chesapeake Bay (Walvin, 1992: 85). In 1638, the first slaves from the Caribbean were brought to Boston, and within six years a New England triangular trade was operating: food to the West Indies–rum to Africa–slaves to the West Indies–cocoa, sugar, rum and molasses to New England. Indeed, over a century later, slaves were still being priced in terms of volumes of rum, a man being equivalent to 115 gallons and a woman 95 gallons (Meltzer, 1993b: 139-145).

Meanwhile, North and South Carolina (not actually separated until 1730) were respectively settled by the English as early as 1585 and 1670, and soon after plantation slavery cultivating the alternative crops of indigo, cotton and rice was introduced. Boone Hall, just outside Charleston, for example, was a working estate producing indigo and cotton from 1681, and it was later joined by the Ashley River plantations of Drayton Hall, Magnolia and Middleton Place (Hudson and Ballard, 1989: 22, 240-241, 248). In such a manner, the English turned from the North to the Carolinas, the Southern states being looked upon as a source of food and livestock for their West Indian operations (Logan and Muse, 1989). In this endeavor, they were helped by the two-way traffic of planters such as the Draytons who, finding Barbados too cramped, looked to America for their fortunes.

Nearby Georgia was similarly regarded. Its principal crops were rice (e.g., Hofwyl-Broadfield Plantation from 1807) and cotton (e.g., Callaway Plantation from 1785), the latter being given a significant boost by the invention of Eli Whitney's cotton gin in 1793, but nevertheless subject to the incursions of the boll weevil (Logan and Muse, 1989: 271, 341, 345).

Spreading further afield, Tennessee in 1770 and Kentucky in 1775 were later settled, although they did not introduce plantation slavery until the turn of the nineteenth century. By 1818, for instance, Oaklands Plantation, near Murfreesboro, Tennessee, had devoted 1,500 acres to cotton production with 100 slaves providing the labor.

Louisiana soon followed, Destrehan in 1787 probably being the oldest plantation house in the Mississippi valley, and with plantations such as Saint Louis, Oaklawn, Mintmere, Nottoway and Parlange producing sugar, the last mentioned as early as 1750, and Chretien Point, Melrose and Magnolia Mound collectively harvesting cotton, indigo, rice, soy beans and pecans. Indeed, many planters from the Carolinas, Virginia and Georgia turned to Louisiana as an alternative to their own exhausted soil, and even Napoleon looked upon that state as a supplier of foodstuff to the sugar estates of Saint Dominique (Logan and Muse, 1989: 10-17, 58-88).

In Mississippi, the story was similar, with plantations such as Natchez, Rosswood and Aberdeen concentrating on cotton and indigo, and Holly Springs focusing on tobacco, hay, wheat, corn and livestock (Logan and Muse, 1989: 122-123, 140, 170, 173-175).

When comparing plantation slavery in the West Indies with that of America (Kolchin, 1993), it is important to recognize that the different conditions undergone were definitely predicated on the nature of the crop being produced. Sugar, for example, although sweet to the taste, was very much derived from a bitter work experience, both in temporal terms of hours and days and according to the type of work system employed, in this case the gang system complete with its cruel overseers. Tobacco cultivation, by contrast, could be allocated by task and thus, though more intense, resulted in much less labor time. In the Caribbean, too, plantations tended to be crowded, factory-style operations covering vast crop areas, frequently with absentee owners, whereas in America they were much smaller and scattered, and overseen in a more caring, if not in a more paternalistic manner. The health of the slaves often varied considerably under the two regimes. In places such as Barbados and Jamaica up to one third of all slaves died within the first three years (Walvin, 1992: 64), and those who did manage to survive experienced the rigors of the tropics, including the prevalence of related diseases. This situation, together with a much higher male sex ratio resulted in poorer birth rates and hence the need to import increasing numbers of replacements from Africa. In Barbados, for instance, between 1764 and 1771, 35,000 Africans were imported. Yet the slave population only grew by 5,000 persons over the same period (Walvin, 1992: 76). In temperate Virginia and elsewhere, on the other hand, the health of slaves was much better, helped no doubt by superi-

or nutritional intake, and inter-slave breeding was consequently far more prolific.

Then again, the severity of the West Indian system, along with its regime of harsh punishments, witnessed far more rebellions and escapes, with even worse punishments in store for those rounded up, than did the situation obtaining in the Southern and Eastern United States.

Finally, many of the leading members of American society were slave owners, thereby bringing a sense of "normalcy" to the scenario. In fact, by 1860, three quarters of the legislators in the Deep South were in this position, and it should not be forgotten that eight of the first twelve presidents of the United States were also slave owners. Indeed, Davis (1966: 3) relatedly notes that Americans are frequently embarrassed when they are reminded that the Declaration of Independence was crafted by a slaveholder and that black slavery was a legal institution in all thirteen colonies at the beginning of the Revolution. In the West Indies, by contrast, the planters constituted far from an élite class. While not exactly riffraff either, many constituted a motley crew of fortune hunters, soldiers and opportunistic businessmen, who customarily sought solace for their lonely lives in drink and promiscuous sex with their laborers (Walvin, 1992:74).

If there were one thing in common between the two systems it was probably the reluctance of both to treat slaves as human beings. Unlike the predominantly Catholic practice of the Portuguese and Spaniards extending the sacraments to those under their charge, the Protestant dominated plantocracy of the West Indies and American states feared that the literacy and awareness which religious instruction could bring might lead to the complete overthrow of their authority.

Nevertheless, and in spite of the outlined stark differences, slaves in the British colonies were freed in 1834, some twenty-one years before their American counterparts. Moreover, in the West Indies, and even allowing for a further four years before full emancipation, it did not take the trauma of secession, the separation of a country into a north/south divide, a civil war and considerable loss of life as experienced in the United States, in order to rid themselves of a pernicious system, one that continued for some time afterwards in parts of the deep south.

SLAVERY TODAY

There are some who maintain that, even with the post-bellum peri-od of Reconstruction, the implementation of civil rights and the exten-sion of the franchise, the central issue of land redistribution had not been solved (Kolchin, 1993). Gang labor, for instance, still persisted in the sugar fields of Louisiana well after emancipation, and the subse-quent emergence of Jim Crow practices, including those of the Ku Klux Klan, ensured that bitter racial divisions existed until the present era. Dependency theorists also maintain that populations of the Carib-bean continue to be locked into a neo-colonial system of haves and have nots predicated on color.

Indeed, by widening the geographical spectrum, and in Meltzer's (1993a: iii) words, 'Never has slavery disappeared . . . Millions of men, women and children, according to the United Nations' estimates are still held in slavery in many countries.' As evidence of this reality, Meltzer (1993b: 279) cites the 1956 UN Convention on the Abolition of Slavery which indicates that the phenomenon comprises chattel slavery, serfdom, debt bondage, exploitation of children and servile forms of marriage, the living contradiction of which is quite blatant among dozens of nations, including several that have signed the con-vention. As examples of the flagrant practice of slavery today, Meltzer (1993b: 280-300) instances wide stretches of the Sahara and into the Arabian peninsula, slave breeding in Arabia and Yemen, slave markets in Southwest Arabia, Haitian forced labor on the sugar plantations of the Dominican Republic, slave pearl divers in the Persian Gulf, the Mozambique slave trade to South Africa either as forced labor or as sex chattels, unpaid domestic servants in Ghana, the enslavement of southern Christians by northern Muslims in the Sudan, forced labor and rape in Myanmar (along with the beating to death or selling of escapees into Thai brothels), the exploitation of children and bonded labor in India, Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, refugees from Afghanistan being forced into the Pakistani bonded labor market of paper picking and brick making, children working in mines and factories in Hong Kong, Malaysia, Singapore, Japan, Sarawak, Sri Lanka, Peru and Bolivia, rural peasants in Brazil being rounded up and forced at gunpoint to undertake forest clearance, charcoal production and mining in the Amazon, and Kenyans being similarly obliged to work the sawmills in Tanzania. To this extensive list Meltzer (1993b:

274-275) adds enforced labor in Hitler's Krupp works (which used up to 100,000 slaves in 100 factories in order to manufacture guns, tanks and ammunition), the whole question of Russian serfdom (Kolchin, 1993), the slavery and extermination of up to six million Jews under the Nazis (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2000b), the existing traffic in children from Benin and Togo to Gabon (Independent Television, 2000), and the fact that even today two million women are sold into sex slavery annually, including 2,000 to the United States alone (British Broadcasting Corporation, 2000a). Thus, even though 'Europeans brought 8 million black men and women out of Africa to the New World between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries' (Solow, 1993: 1), the contemporary situation does not appear to be any better. Indeed, slavery seems to be as alive and well today as ever it was in the past.

SLAVERY AS TOURIST ATTRACTIONS

Tourism, although just as ubiquitous as slavery, has a far shorter temporal record. In fact, many argue that, in spite of its possible patrician prototypes in Ancient Greece and Rome (Nash, 1979), contemporary mass tourism can only trace its principal origins to as recently as the first Industrial Revolution. Even so, the greatest difference between the two phenomena appears to reside in their respective contrasting emphases on enforced labor and the pursuit of pleasure, an antithesis so marked as to render problematic the scenario of one working to the benefit of the other. Yet, however unlikely this collaboration, we maintain that slavery's pain can and does contribute to tourism's gain through one particular variant of the latter which will soon be discussed.

It thus comes as no surprise to discover that several American plantations, complete with slave quarters of yesteryear, have become tourism heritage sites of today. In North Carolina, for example, there is Somerset Place, the 1830s home of rice planter Josiah Collins, who had eighty slaves dig canals the length and breadth of 100,000 acres of swamp land in order to produce his crop. Now, thanks to archaeological and other historical records, its slave buildings are said to constitute 'one of the country's most important sites for the interpretation of the slaves' experience' (Hudson and Ballard, 1989: 36).

In its turn, South Carolina's Middleton Place (Hudson and Ballard, 1989: 242-246), whose gardens took one hundred slaves ten years to landscape, can offer a stable yard with craftsmen performing such plantation tasks as blacksmithing, woodworking and weaving, and even a living descendant of a slave family able to reminisce about former times. Meanwhile, Drayton Hall (Hudson and Ballard, 1989: 240-241) becomes promoted as the only existing antebellum plantation house not to be torched by General Sherman's Union troops.

Although most plantations in North and South Carolina do not have extant slave quarters, as we have seen, there are quite a few that do. Elsewhere in the south a similar situation obtains. Tennessee's 1858 Smith Trahern Mansion, for example, still has the original dwellings of slaves who worked for tobacco grower Christopher Smith (Hudson and Ballard, 1989: 330). Kentucky has Waveland (near Lexington) with its nineteenth century brick slave quarters and examples of the occupants' craftsmanship (Hudson and Ballard, 1989: 384). Over in Mississippi, there is Waverly Plantation, one of the largest in the pre-Civil War period, which has managed to retain a brick kiln, lumber mill, cotton gin and livestock pens (Logan and Muse, 1989: 167). North Florida, too, has Kingsley Plantation (near Jacksonville). Once a leading producer of sea island cotton, it still has twenty-four slave cabins preserved intact (Logan and Muse, 1989: 382), while the Yulee Sugar Mills ruins (of 1851) are able to display the original boiler, chimney, cane crushing rollers and cooling vats (Logan and Muse, 1989: 397).

The same sort of symbiotic pattern of past slavery and present tourism can be found wherever in the world the former was practiced. In Cidade Velha, for instance, on the Cabo Verde island of Santiago, once the center of the 15th and 16th centuries Portuguese trade, where evangelization of slaves took place prior to their shipment to the New World, there are remnants of the rituals in the Cathedral, Convent of São Francisco, Fortaleza de São Filipe and the Pelourinho (Cabo Verde Airlines, n.d.: 15).

In Tanzania, where 16th century Portuguese settlements were overtaken by the Omanis in the 17th century, the port city of Bagamoyo ('Here I throw down my heart') still features the old prison for slaves before they were taken out to the waiting dhows, as well as a somber collection of shackles, chains and whips (Tanzania Tourist Board, n.d.: 23).

In Zanzibar's Cape Stone Town, the 1879 Cathedral of the Church of Christ was built on the site of an open slave market. There is also the nearby Tippu Tip House, home of the notorious slave and ivory trader, Hamad bin Muhammad el-Marjab, as well as a former slave pit in Kelele Square and Changuu (or Prison) Island used by the Arabs for awkward slaves (Tanzania Tourist Board, n.d.: 27-30).

Meanwhile, in Ghana, Cape Coast Castle (2000), where thousands of slaves were held prior to shipment to the West Indies (see article by Essah in this volume, as also Bruner (1996)), today even has its own website, complete with pictures of the fortress and featuring "a dark male slave dungeon."

In the Caribbean itself, the link between tourism and slavery is far more pronounced. In Jamaica, for instance, Great House tours are on offer, along with a visit to a maroon village. As the brochure explains, 'Some 18th century sugar plantation owners were, effectively, fabulously rich, autocratic squires and their legacy to Jamaica has been their mansions, now called the Great Houses. One of the most interesting is Rose Hall in Montego Bay. It's said the owner, known locally as the White Witch, murdered several of her husbands (the reports vary between three and six). After her death in 1831, the house fell into ruin. It has now been restored and is open to the public' (Discover Jamaica, n.d.: 21).

Meanwhile, on Barbuda, where nearly all the residents are descendants of slaves brought to the island by the Codringtons, visitors can view the complex owned by that family from 1680 to 1870. As the text states, 'You can see the outline of the main house, slave quarters, offices and cistern of what was one High Land House' (The Antiguan, 1998: 9).

In St Lucia, too, one can 'learn about St Lucia's plantations, past and present, on a tour of one of its largest, the Marquis Plantation' (St Lucia Tourist Board, n.d.: 10).

THE DILEMMAS OF SLAVERY TOURISM

Due to the sheer ubiquity and phenomenal increase in slavery tourism sites, there is no gainsaying that heritage of this ilk is becoming increasingly popular. Colonial Williamsburg, for instance, with its 138 original 18th or early 19th century buildings, and 27 million visitors from 1932 to 1984, is easily Virginia's top tourist attraction. Indeed,