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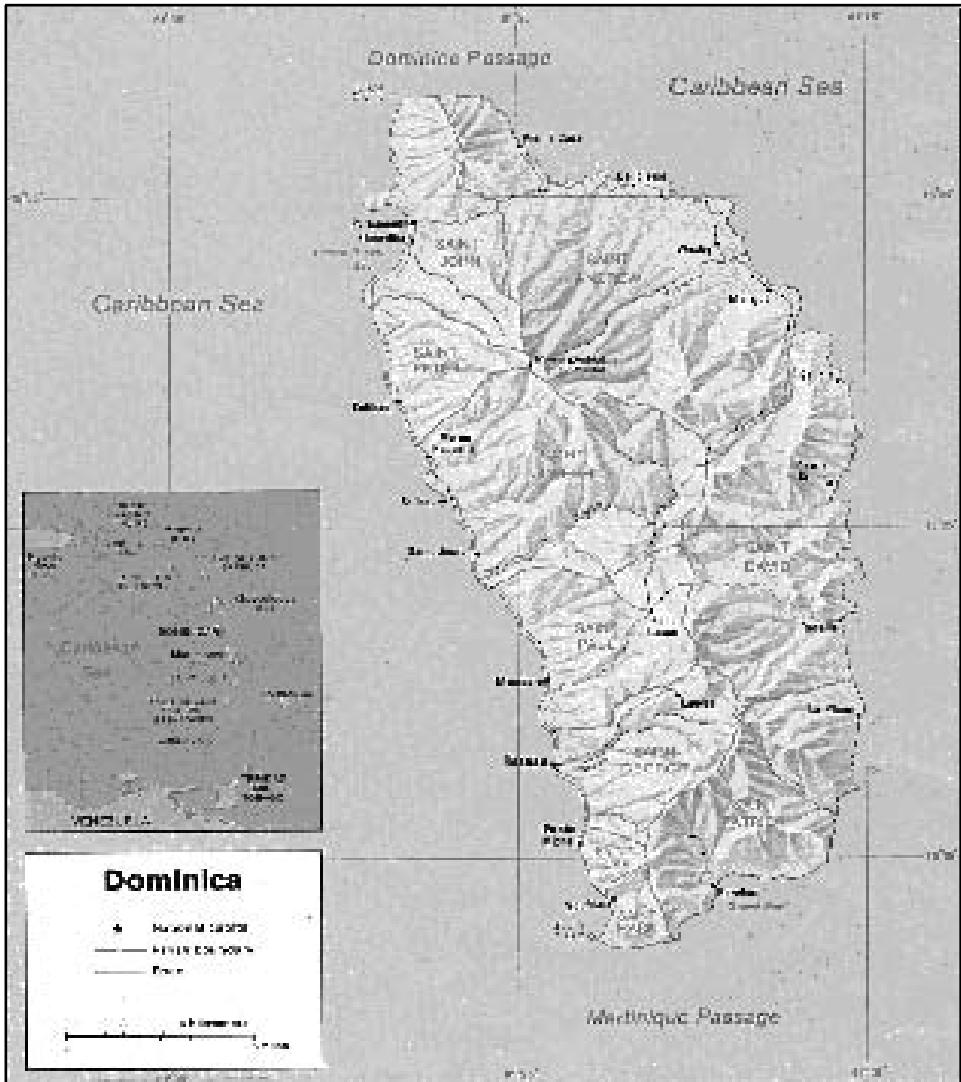


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Consuming Culture: Extralocal Exchanges and Kalinago Identity on Dominica

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a significant global force affecting indigenous residents of numerous destination locales worldwide (e.g., Smith 1977; Bendix 1989; de Vidas 1995; Xie 2003; Van Rekom and Go 2006). This essay examines the relationship between tourism and ethnic identity in the Kalinago¹ community of Dominica. It focuses on how handicrafts, a cultural feature cited unanimously by members of the community as one of the most salient symbols of their identity (Hudepohl 2002), can function simultaneously as tourist commodities and as legitimate forms of cultural expression, the value of which is not diminished by commodification. In fact, consumption of traditional handicrafts by tourists heightens awareness of the ethnic boundary and reinforces the cultural value of the circulated objects. When the case of ethnic tourism² among the Kalinago is considered in a broad community context, it becomes evident that exchanges with tourists constitute just one type of interaction with outsiders that functions as a catalyst to stimulate maintenance of the ethnic boundary. Brief consideration of two other types of external exchanges—boundary disputes with citizens of the larger nation-state and contact with regional indigenous populations—supports the conclusion that local/extralocal interactions enhance preservation of cultural identity.” According to Massey, “... what gives a place its specificity is not some long internalized [or essentialized] history but the fact that it is constructed of a particular constellation of social relations, meeting and weaving together at a particular locus” (1991:28). Interactions with outsiders, then, play an important role in generating meaning at the local level that reaffirms and promotes Kalinago identity.

The use of extralocal cultural interactions as a resource to reinforce ethnic identity by calling attention to boundaries or serving as a creative resource for ethnic renewal is not unique to the Kalinago community of Dominica. Conklin and Graham (1995) discuss ways that Brazilian indigenous

communities use interactions with international environmentalists as a strategy to focus global-level awareness on local problems related to land rights and cultural patrimony. Jackson (1991, 1995) discusses how the cultural identity of the Tukanoan people of Colombia is influenced by various external forces that include an indigenous rights organization, missionaries, and the nation-state. With respect to different world regions (New Guinea, Philippines), Silverman (1999) discusses cultural borrowing that creates new art forms in the Sepik River Valley, and Niessen (1999) presents a similar process for the Toba Batak textile repertory. Brown (1998) discusses an emergent hierarchy of prestige attached to different locales associated with the African diaspora and how this affects cultural borrowing between locales. Mato (2000) discusses exchange and collaboration occurring at the institutional level between indigenous organizations in Latin America. "Cultures" are distinct in part, according to Jackson, "as a function of their structural opposition to other social entities" (1995:22). Interactions with outsiders, whether they be friendly or hostile, at times operate to strengthen or otherwise legitimize claims to distinct or different cultural identity. Kalinago identity on Dominica is shaped by extralocal interactions in ways comparable to the examples above.

The Commonwealth of Dominica is not a typical Caribbean tourist destination. People generally picture a Caribbean vacation as a trip with constant sunshine, miles of white sand beaches, and calm, aqua water. Caribbean destinations have been marketed primarily as "sun, sand, and sea" destinations. As noted by numerous scholars (e.g., Patullo 1996; Boxill and Severin 2004), Dominica is short on white sand beaches and constant sunshine, but long on other natural attributes such as a boiling lake, rainforests, endangered parrots, numerous breathtaking waterfalls, and, supposedly, 365 rivers ("one for every day of the year"). The island is a wild paradise, but, until recently, not what most tourists thought they wanted or expected to find on their Caribbean sojourns.

Dominica has relatively underdeveloped potential as a tourist destination in two important ways. The first is ecotourism, which should be an obvious area of emphasis due to the many natural attributes of the island. Playing up the natural environmental assets of the island, official tourism literature refers to Dominica as "The Nature Isle," but fails to get more specific. The second area of underdeveloped potential is ethnic tourism focused on the local indigenous population. Dominica is home to one of the last remaining indigenous communities in the Caribbean islands. In fact, because the landscape and its products (e.g., sites of myths, food, and handicrafts) figure prominently in tourism focused on the Kalinago, this can be interpreted as a type of ecotourism (cf. Slinger

2000). Tourism overall—including ecotourism and ethnic tourism—has steadily increased in volume and importance to the national economy in recent years (Pattulo 1996; Hudepohl 2002; Boxill and Severin 2004).³ By specifically addressing the relationship between handicraft production, tourism, and ethnic identity for the Kalinago of Dominica, the focus of this essay concerns ethnic tourism.

ETHNIC TOURISM AND HANDICRAFT PRODUCTION ON DOMINICA

Approximately 2,200⁴ Kalinago reside on five square miles of communally owned land situated on the east coast between Marigot and Castle Bruce, an area known today as the Carib Territory. Despite some similarities with the larger population in terms of language, religion, and, to a degree, physical appearance, the Kalinago continue to maintain a distinct ethnic identity. This is due in part to control of their own physical territory. My Kalinago informants identified five salient symbols of ethnicity: a sense of shared history with an emphasis on group struggle; the land (Carib Territory); the office of the Kalinago Chief; physical appearance; and the continuation of traditional practices, particularly handicraft production (Hudepohl, 2002). Based on these criteria, members of the community clearly self-identify and in turn are recognized by the larger society as a distinct ethnic group.

Government-issued tourism publicity refers to Kalinago handicrafts as important ethnic products suitable for tourist consumption, that is, they are tangible and easily transportable proof of contact with an exotic “other.” For instance, mention of the Kalinago occurs in an annually published complimentary magazine produced by the Dominica National Development Corporation, Division of Tourism. The Carib Territory receives a brief description as one entry in a long list of sightseeing locales. The standard description reads:

Carib Territory: An area of 3,700 acres of land on the north east coast of the island, has been given to the descendants of the original inhabitants of the Caribbean islands—the Carib Indians. Today the Caribs engage in agriculture, fishing and their native crafts of dugout canoe and basket making. The altar of the Salybia Roman Catholic church which is made from a canoe, is an immaculate work of art. At Sineku, see “the snake’s staircase,” *L’Escalier Tèt-Chien*, a hardened lava flow which juts into the sea and features in Carib legends. A number of craft shops can be found along the road (*Discover Dominica: The Nature Island of the Caribbean*, Seventh Edition).

The Kalinago community also receives brief mention in the opening historical overview of the island. A photo encompassing the entire back page of the seventh edition depicts an older Kalinago man, seated and shirtless, weaving a traditional basket. Words overlaid at the top of the photograph read, “The Nature Island of the Caribbean: Unspoiled, Undisturbed, Natural” (*Discover Dominica: The Nature Island of the Caribbean*, Seventh Edition). This image, along with a small section at the end of an article in the sixth edition entitled “Art, Craft, and the Artistic Tradition,” constitutes the bulk of advertising, government and private, which promotes ethnic tourism.⁵

Today, a number of outlets exist for handicrafts, both within and outside of the Carib Territory. Owners of large shops in the Territory make contracts with individuals for certain crafts. One shop owner in a northern village has informal contracts with ten different craftsmakers for a variety of objects. The owners of a local guesthouse contract for large quantities of particular items when they are expecting busloads of cruise ship tourists. In addition, a number of the smaller shops and temporary stands are run either by a single craft maker or a small group of them. More recently, space designated for handicraft demonstrations and sales to tourists is available at the Kalinago Barana Autê, the cultural village opened in Salybia hamlet in spring 2006.

One woman recalled traveling to town as a child in the 1970s with crafts made by her grandparents. Today some handicraft producers take their crafts to town on days when cruise ships are due in port. They set up tables at the port or at a public square and hope for sales from passersby. The Kalinago Centre in Roseau, now closed, used to sell crafts on consignment. The Centre, a combination historical gallery and craft shop, was established by Waikada⁶ in the 1990s. Kalinago may also sell their crafts wholesale to non-Kalinago merchants who have shops in Roseau and Portsmouth. I met one merchant at a waterfall popular with tourists. She, along with a number of other vendors, had taken her wares on the road. She brought a number of high quality Kalinago baskets to meet the expected busloads of tourists from a recently docked cruise ship. For cruise ship passengers, particularly those taking prepackaged tours, time for shopping is limited. Bringing souvenirs to the tourists maximizes their time and experience on the island. It also increases the likelihood of tourists spending more money on the island.

The most distinctive, and thus the most heavily promoted and widely available of Kalinago craft forms consist of various sizes of baskets made from a reed known locally as *larouma* (Lat. *Ischnosiphon arouma*). Harvested and dried in the sun before being cut into pliable strips of varying size, the natural colors of the reed—brown on the outside, tan on the inside—



Figure 2. Larouma baskets displayed for sale

are a hallmark of Kalinago basketry. Craftspeople use both sides of the reed to achieve desired patterns by alternating which side of the reed faces outward. Black, a third color commonly incorporated into baskets, is achieved by depositing *larouma* strips in mud holes for up to a week, after which they are cleaned and dried again in the sun. In addition to baskets, the *larouma* reed is ingeniously woven and shaped to create other objects, such as hats, suitcases, a traditional backpack, a molded covering for glass bottles, and watertight purses. “Wife leaders” are another popular craft item. These objects are tube-shaped, four to six inches in length, and woven on a diagonal from the same reed used to manufacture baskets. One end has an opening slightly smaller in diameter than a finger, and the other end is finished with a loop. The diagonal weave enables the tube, including the opening, to expand when the ends are pushed towards each other. An unsuspecting victim is encouraged to put his or her finger into the expanded opening and becomes trapped when the tube is released to regain its natural shape. The victim can then be lead around by the loop on the other end. It is similar in shape, on a much smaller scale, to a

cassava squeezer (or “tipiti” as they are now generically called), and there are endless, amusing stories about how they came into existence and who uses them.

The process of preparing *larouma* for weaving is time consuming, and some basketmakers prefer to purchase the prepared strips rather than do it themselves. Certain individuals specialize in supplying *larouma* strips, splitting and drying collected reeds on roof tops. Another problem with *larouma* is that it is difficult to find. Located in sparse patches along the upper reaches of mountain rivers, it has become scarcer due to increasing demand. The Karifuna Cultural Group, a community cultural performance group replants *larouma* in an effort to ensure that craft makers have continued access to this requisite raw material.

Other common craft forms are created from materials including calabash (*Crescentia cujete*), white cedar (*Tabebuia heterophylla*), and bamboo (*Bambusa vulgaris*). Calabash, a gourd, is sawed in half and the poisonous insides are painstakingly scooped out. The hollowed out halves are left



Figure 3. Making a screwpine basket



Figure 4. Detail of Larouma baskets displayed for sale

to dry naturally or smoked over a fire to achieve a darkened exterior. The outside surface of the gourd is then decoratively carved, most commonly with landscape and mask-face images. Kalinago ancestors used calabash for a variety of purposes, including serving food, transporting water, and storing objects. White cedar, on the other hand is carved into mortars and pestles, while bamboo is used to construct craft stands and items such as wind chimes, cups, and playful animal figures.

A few artists are known for unique objects. One craftsman from Crayfish River makes walking canes with carved, snake-head handles and *zemi*⁷ faces carved from the trunks of giant rainforest ferns. A craftsman in St. Cyr makes tipitís using *larouma*. He was the only source of this specialized object. Having assumed that he was the keeper of unique family knowledge, I was interested to discover that he had only recently taught himself how to make tipitís after seeing a photo in a museum catalogue.⁸

For the Kalinago, crafts function as both an economic resource and a cultural symbol. From an economic standpoint, craft production constitutes the second most important nonfood item produced for cash in the Carib Territory. Perhaps because they are tangible (unlike oral traditions, ideas, or stories) and easily transported, small handicrafts such as baskets lend

themselves to replication for consumption by outsiders. The Kalinago also construct traditional canoes from gommier trees (Lat. *Dacryodes excelsa*) that are still used for fishing by the Kalinago and other Dominicans. For obvious reasons, tourists rarely purchase them as souvenirs. By contrast, a traditional basket is a neatly packaged, culturally laden object, a perfectly sized tourist trophy providing evidence of contact with the exotic “other.”

Curiously, though produced in quantity, handicrafts are used in a functional everyday context with less frequency by the Kalinago themselves than one might expect for a unanimously cited cultural symbol. With the exception of sparse decorations in two guesthouses and the two Catholic churches, and one individual who wears traditionally woven hats, widespread use of the crafts by Kalinago is conspicuously limited. They are sold almost exclusively to outsiders, the tourists who frequent the craft shops. Rather than employing traditionally made objects for decorative or utilitarian purposes, individuals are more likely to use inexpensive, store-bought objects made with modern materials. A Peace Corps volunteer who worked in the Carib Territory and constructed a set of calabash bowls to use as dishes endured endless teasing from community members for her choice. One Kalinago asked, “Why would we use baskets and [calabash] when we can use plastic and glass?” (Hudepohl 2002).

Because of a disparaging attitude held by some community members with respect to the everyday (utilitarian) use of traditional objects, handicrafts do not initially appear to be an important symbol of ethnic identity. To some extent, it might seem disingenuous to proclaim as an ethnic symbol an object that appears to function primarily as a tourist commodity. It is possible that the Kalinago are labeling these craft objects as an ethnic symbol in a calculated move meant only to heighten their value as an economic commodity. It is also possible that skepticism may arise from an attitude that the cultural value of an object is tainted or otherwise undermined once the object is easily available for sale to outsiders. Deeper consideration of such questions indicates that, regardless of their place in the tourist economy, handicrafts made by the Kalinago retain their cultural integrity. Additionally, sale of craft objects provides an interaction with outsiders that serves not to erode but, in fact, to support and strengthen Kalinago cultural identity.

To the Kalinago, handicrafts constitute a physical manifestation of ethnicity. When questioned about the historical shift in handicraft utilization (based on interview data collected by me in 1997, 2005, and 2007), Kalinago informants explained that cultural value is in the knowledge and process of production, not necessarily in the end product itself. Handicraft production relies on a series of traditional skills passed

down to interested community artisans, regardless of age, gender, or any other consideration. Such skills include identifying raw materials in the landscape, preparing those products, and weaving, carving or otherwise assembling the resulting materials into quality handicrafts. Knowledge and ability to make crafts represents a link to Kalinago ancestors, and because there exists a clear history of craft production in the community, present-day activity constitutes a continuation of established tradition. The end product, for instance a basket, is a physical embodiment of ancestral knowledge and of the connection to ancestors. While for the Kalinago, construction of crafts represents a type of interaction with their own ancestors across time, for tourists crafts represent contact with the indigenous “other” across space. Because it is the process of construction that provides the cultural link for the Kalinago as they conceive it, the manner in which this end product is used, and by whom, becomes less consequential to them.

ETHNIC TOURISM: COMMODIFICATION OR SOLIDARITY?

The Kalinago interpretation of their own situation corresponds to one of two theories common in academic scholarship. Both scholarly explanations address the central question of whether or not tourism undermines the internal value of local culture. The first interpretation, articulated by Greenwood (1989), concludes that the commodification of a local practice for tourist consumption inevitably erodes its cultural value in the community. Greenwood developed the phrase “culture by the pound” to describe the process by which culture is turned into a product for economic gain. Van den Berghe and Keyes (1984) use the term “touree” to convey a similar idea focused on practitioners instead of practices or products. The locals become actors, “tourees,” staging their traditions for tourist entertainment. The alternate scholarly interpretation suggests that tourism does not inevitably undermine the internal value of local culture and in fact may actually enhance it by inspiring self-respect and solidarity within the community (e.g., see Boissevain 1996; Grunewald 2002; Oakes 1997). An entire issue of the journal *Cultural Survival Quarterly* (Summer 1999) provides numerous examples of the wide-ranging effects of tourism on local cultures.

One of the most obvious effects of tourism in the Carib Territory is the economic benefit. The two guesthouse owners and the numerous craft makers receive direct monetary reward for their participation in the trickle of tourist activity that reaches the Carib Territory. Through sales of crafts,

room rentals, and the little bit of food that is sold, cash moves into the local economy. Indirect benefits include improvements to the infrastructure, such as the repair and construction of paved roads, which increase ease of tourist access.

In addition to the broad economic benefit, there are also at least two substantial cultural impacts of ethnic tourism in the Kalinago community. One important result is the thriving handicraft tradition. The emphasis on crafts as a prime tourist commodity helps to maintain the vitality of this segment of traditional ancestral knowledge in the community. Also, the tourist gaze reifies the legitimacy of the ethnic boundary. The nature of ethnic tourism is such that it focuses attention on subjects defined as “other.” Tourists demonstrate, through their actions, that the Kalinago are an appropriate and valued subject of attention. In this way, ethnic tourism enhances ethnic distinctions and barriers. Vidas (1995) found a similar situation among indigenous peoples in the Andes. He credits international tourism with being the catalyst for an increase in handicraft production. Vidas defines handicraft as “a specific form of production and employment which creates as its product an object which represents a social group” (1995:68). Thus, he sees the relationship between indigenous groups and tourism as a potentially collaborative one that is exploited by locals for economic and cultural gains. He concludes that survival of handicraft production, no matter how the objects are ultimately used (“consumed”), often serves to support and enhance social identity. In referring to the Arima Caribs of Trinidad, Forte says that “It is the boundary that is drawn around a body of practice, more than the body itself, that is used to articulate Carib identity and heritage” (2005:179).

According to Nobukiyo Eguchi, a possible negative consequence of ethnic tourism is that its growth may cause increased conflict with the larger population because the basis of ethnic tourism—difference—is also a source of tension (1996:379). Emphasizing difference for tourism will also heighten it in daily interactions between members of the indigenous group and representatives of the larger population. A possible mitigating factor, as in the case of the Kalinago, is the economic benefit of ethnic tourism to the national economy. If such a contribution is valued by the larger population, then any resulting conflict may be muted. Data reported in the previously mentioned *Cultural Survival Quarterly* also suggest that the effects of ethnic tourism is not purely a black and white issue, and that a key factor affecting how beneficial or how exploitative tourism is in a community is the level of agency exerted by the host community in tourism endeavors. Growing ethnic tourism may enhance the ethnic boundary, then, in three ways: it validates community claims to a distinct

identity; it helps to maintain traditional practices; and it bolsters national support for ethnic distinctions because it benefits the economy.

LAND DISPUTES, CANOE PROJECTS, AND CULTURAL IDENTITY

When viewed in a broader perspective within the community, it becomes apparent that tourism is not the only situation in which interactions with outsiders reinforce Kalinago identity. These interactions are varied in character and include land boundary disputes and the Gli Gli and Sisserou canoe projects. The example of land disputes constitutes a fundamentally different type of interaction with outsiders—adversarial versus accommodating—than that seen with ethnic tourism. Yet, in both cases, the interaction strengthens ethnic identity for the Kalinago by amplifying self-conscious awareness of it. Another example varies from these first two in terms of who constitutes the “other” and the nature of the interaction, but nonetheless exhibits similar effects.

The Carib Territory consists of approximately five square miles of wedge-shaped land granted to the Kalinago in 1902 by the administrator of the island, Henry Hesketh Bell. The land is communally owned, and use is determined through established usufruct rights. Outsiders are interested in reserve lands, primarily for purposes of farming, and occasionally challenge the exact location of boundaries, particularly on the southern and western edges of the Carib Territory (Owen 1974; Layng 1983). Threats to reserve boundaries are commonly justified by references to loss of traditional culture, in essence questioning the continued legitimacy of the ethnic label that enabled the land grant in the first place. The resolution of conflicts carries significant consequences because community members live and work in disputed areas and because such action makes a statement about the ethnic status of the present-day community. Boundary disputes with outsiders cause a strong emotional response that rallies the Kalinago community into a unified front. Organized actions include lobbying by community parliamentary representatives and protests staged by community members at locations within and outside of the Carib Territory.

The possible consequences of a negative outcome in boundary disputes with outsiders, and the multifaceted role that land plays in the community, provide insight to this unusually uniform response. The land literally and metaphorically nourishes the community by supplying, among other things, food, plants for herbal remedies, and raw materials for homes and handicrafts. The landscape is also dotted with locations of



Figure 5. Kalinago canoe

significant mythical and historical events. Underlying all other purposes is the knowledge that their ancestors lived here. At a fundamental level, land is a touchstone for identity. Present-day boundary disputes are reminders that now, as well as in the past, outsiders have tried to undermine Kalinago society and steal resources, especially land.

The overall effect of boundary disputes with outsiders is that the Kalinago come together in defense of a key community resource. This response represents an example of Frederick Barth's (1969) observation that ethnicity is most strongly emphasized at points of interaction with outsiders. In the case of land disputes, the interaction is a type of conflict. Nancy Owen, who worked with the Kalinago in the 1970s, stated that "... ethnicity may be furthered by certain types of conflict. In fact it seems likely that certain pressures emanating from the wider society play a major role in the maintenance of any modern ethnic group" (Owen 1974:192–193). Jackson noted a similar effect for the Tukanoans of Colombia when she stated that, "Indeed, the absence of an urgent threat sometimes makes

attempts at grassroots organization more—rather than less—difficult” (1995:5). Quinn expands the point with her statement that “... the outcome of local-global interaction is a continuous emergence of new, recreated and hybrid forms of difference” (2005:248). In their statements, Owen and Jackson focus on contentious interactions, whereas Quinn’s allows for effects derived from a wider range of contact exchanges.

Another example of extralocal exchange in the Kalinago community includes two specific endeavors, the GliGli and Sisserou Carib canoe projects. Each involves construction of a traditional canoe as part of an enterprise to recover lost traditional practices and raise awareness about Kalinago history and culture. Each canoe is named for a bird: the GliGli is, depending on who you ask, either a Kalinago mythical bird of prey or a Kalinago hawk; the Sisserou is the Kalinago name for an endangered parrot indigenous to Dominica. The GliGli canoe, built in 1995 and 1996, sailed from Dominica to Guyana and back again in 1997. Community members perceive South America to be the land of their ancestors. The journey, documented in the film, *Quest of the Carib Canoe*, included several stops in the Lesser Antilles so that crew members could present educational lectures before eventually sailing up the Orinoco to a remote village to meet other indigenous populations and exchange cultural knowledge. In May and June of 2007, crew members made a tenth anniversary voyage from Antigua to the Virgin Islands, stopping at various places to present lectures and cultural performances.

The Sisserou canoe project, which is under development, intends to establish contact with Kalinago relatives in another direction. A large group of Island Caribs were deported by the British from St. Vincent in 1796 and sent by ship to the island of Roatan off the coast of Honduras. Present-day descendants, known as Garifuna, live in coastal villages from Honduras to Belize. The goals of the Sisserou project are similar to the GliGli project. They are to establish an enduring relationship with Garifuna communities in Middle America, to increase community understanding of Kalinago history, and to educate outsiders about Kalinago history and culture. Specifically, the Sisserou Project tries:

To complete the symbolic unification of the Carib/Garifuna/Kalinago tribes that started on the 1997 Gli Gli Expedition from Dominica to Guyana. The Garifuna people of Belize are the descendants of the Carib/Kalinago people of St. Vincent who were forcibly removed from their island by the British in the 1780s. The reconnection between the Caribs of the Southern Caribbean and the Garifuna people of Belize will complete the symbolic circle of unity within the Carib tribe.

To search for, meet with, make connections between, and draw attention to the surviving indigenous people of the Greater Antilles and the Yucatan Coast.

To research and document the influence that the indigenous people of the Caribbean have left on contemporary society, and to promote the importance of that legacy for a sustainable future in the region for all people.

To promote and find new markets for Carib craft products through out the region.

To visit and exchange knowledge with craft producing communities encountered on the journey.

To present lectures, films, and slide shows about the Carib/Kalinago people at schools, universities, and cultural centers along the intended route. The intention being to redress some of the myths existing about the Caribs. Particularly those relating to cannibalism (Dick-Read and Joseph 2000).



Figure 6. Christening the GliGli canoe with coconut water

Land disputes and the two canoe projects, along with ethnic tourism, provide various examples of ways in which interaction with outsiders heightens ethnic attachments. Ethnic tourism constitutes an ambivalent situation in which there is a sense of an uneasy balance between potential costs and benefits to the community in general, and to cultural identity specifically. Land disputes stand out as the one example in which a decidedly negative situation functions as the catalyst for strengthening ethnic identity. By comparison, the two canoe projects form positive interactions based on active collaboration.

The types of outsiders in each situation also vary. In the situations of ethnic tourism and land disputes, outsiders are nonindigenous people from either Dominica or some other country. In the case of the canoe projects, real and anticipated interactions occur primarily among individuals from regional indigenous populations. A notable exception is that one of the canoe project co-organizers is an artist from Tortola who, with help from his brother, collaborated with Kalinago community member Jacob Frederick to develop the canoe projects.

Though the significance is not clear, it is interesting to note that the two situations involving nonindigenous outsiders range from contentious to accommodating in a potentially exploitative way. By contrast, the situation involving indigenous outsiders is apparently positive. It is tempting to conclude that interactions with other indigenous groups are naturally more harmonious due to cultural affinity. However, the Kalinago's level of agency suggests that this explanation may be incomplete. Ethnic tourism and land disputes are situations to which the Kalinago respond primarily in a defensive rather than offensive way. Land disputes are rarely initiated by Kalinago, and though the community members have tried periodically to initiate tourism projects, they have met with limited success (e.g., the unsuccessful attempt by the Carib Chief and Council to organize and market tour packages of the Carib Territory). On the other hand, the two canoe projects were initiated and controlled by the Kalinago, and thus amplify the level of Kalinago decision-making control over the situation. Differing levels of agency may contribute to where the various interactions fall on a continuum from contentious to harmonious.

CONCLUSION

Ethnicity, a constructed social identity based on belief in a common ancestry, is an inherently dynamic and self-conscious process. The changing needs of the Kalinago community, and external forces acting on it, affect



Figure 7. Gligli canoe at inaugural launch, 1996

how ethnicity is expressed and how it changes over time. In the current case, ethnic tourism was compared to two other types of interactions with outsiders occurring in the Kalinago community: land disputes and the two canoe projects.⁹ Each of the different interactions, though variable in nature, strengthens Kalinago identity by enhancing awareness of the ethnic boundaries that differentiate the community from outsiders. The Kalinago deliberately choose to commoditize handicrafts—an important symbol of their identity—in order to participate in the global economy. But at the same time, this choice effectively reinforces the cultural value of these objects by promoting outsider consumption of them. The community unites to protect its land from external threats, strengthening awareness of both the literal boundaries of the community as well as the metaphorical ones derived from shared cultural experiences. Finally, the Kalinago actively seek out interactions with other indigenous groups in order to strengthen their own identity, both culturally and politically.

On a basic level, it is logical that one possible outcome of interactions with culturally dissimilar individuals would be to undermine cultural values and traditions, a fact clearly demonstrated in some cases of ethnic tourism (e.g., McLaren 1999). Alternatively, as with the Kalinago community, interactions with outsiders might strengthen attachment to one's own cultural background. Thus, in terms of identity politics, extralocal interactions constitute a potentially valuable arena in which to display, negotiate, and defend identity. The interaction, however, is not a soliloquy that merely reinforces preexisting ideas about cultural identity. Incorporating the idea of the “middle ground,” a mutually constructed accommodation of intercultural exchange (see Conklin and Graham 1995), draws attention to the dialectical nature of the extralocal exchange, an idea that also allows for the possibility that interacting parties bring their own, potentially conflicting, agendas to the exchange. For instance, the handicrafts that tourists are most interested in purchasing may or may not be the most culturally significant ones available on the market. Artisans may choose to produce one type of product for outsider consumption and another for insider use. As suggested by Conklin and Graham: “These intersecting forces propel native activists to frame their identity politics in terms of ideas, images, and symbols that communicate to outsiders” (1995:706).

In a similar way, Jackson uses a jazz analogy to describe the dynamic nature of culture: “... just as a jazz artist's music depends on engaging an audience and fellow musicians, so does a culture come into existence because a ‘we’ and a ‘they’ interact” (Jackson 1995:18). In a similar way, the Kalinago of Dominica have maintained a distinct identity in part by

finding ways to turn recent interactions with outsiders to their advantage. As cogently stated by the community itself, in slogans painted on buildings to mark the five hundred-year anniversary of Columbus' so-called discovery of the new world: "500 years of Columbus a lie, yet we survive."

NOTES

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1. Most community members refer to themselves as Caribs. However, a small but increasing number of Caribs, particularly when discussing their ethnic identity, refer to themselves as Kalinago. For instance, a cultural center located in the capital of Roseau for most of the 1990s was called the Kalinago Centre. The term "Kalinago" may eventually replace the term "Carib," much like the historically related Black Caribs of Middle America have become known as Garifuna. Because my essay focuses on aspects of ethnic identity, I use the term Kalinago here. More rarely, the community uses the term "Karifuna." For instance, Karifuna is the name of the first cultural performance group established in the community, and the full name of WAIKADA, a defunct community nongovernmental agency founded in 1993, is Waitukubuli Karifuna Development Agency. Note that the /k/ in Karifuna and the /g/ in Garifuna are, respectively, voiced and voiceless velar stops.

2. I use the term as it is defined by Valene Smith (1989:4–5) to mean tourism focused on the cultures of indigenous peoples. However, the case on Dominica seems to blur over into her definition of "cultural tourism" as well.

3. The fastest growing type of tourism on Dominica is cruise ship tourism, to the point that Dominica spent over US\$28 million to improve its port facilities in the capital city of Roseau and build a new terminal at Portsmouth. This type of tourism can be costly for host countries (see Hudepohl 2002; and see also Pattulo 1996).

4. Census data for Dominica is unreliable, so this is a rough estimate of Kalinago residing within the boundaries of the Carib Territory. Additional individuals, possibly numbering close to 1,000, live in other parts of the island.

5. That is, until the inauguration of the Carib Heritage Tour in 1996, a multistop, cultural tourism package created by a tour operator for cruise ship passengers.

6. Waikada is a sort of acronym for Waitukubuli Karifuna Development Agency, a Kalinago nongovernmental organization formed in 1993. Waitukubuli is the Kalinago ancestors' name for the island of Dominica. Karifuna is an alternative traditional name for the community infrequently used because it is thought to be gender specific. The community leaders who formed the group chose the name because it incorporates vocabulary terms from the barely spoken traditional language (no one is a fluent speaker, but some vocabulary terms are still known). Waitukubuli is the indigenous name recorded in European colonial documents for Dominica. "Karifuna" is the name of the people in the traditional language. Naming the organization was, in and of itself, a self-conscious display of ethnicity. The stated mission of the group is "to positively strengthen the Carib People's ability to improve the quality of life in the Carib Territory." It serves as an umbrella organization in support of smaller group. The activities of this group range from cultural renewal to economic development, often combining the two.

7. "Zemi" is a general term used to refer to deities, nature spirits, and ancestor spirits revered by prehistoric indigenous occupants of the Caribbean (Rouse 1992; Oliver 1997).

8. Cassava squeezers, known generally as tipitís (among other names) are long, narrow, tubular baskets constructed with a diagonal weave. Each end has strong, looped handles, and one end is left open. These items were used to process bitter manioc, a root food that is deadly if the poison is not leached from it. The root is grated into a mash, the squeezer is compressed from either end to create a wide space to load the mash, and then it is hung from a tree branch, open side up. A weight is often attached to the loop on the other end. The poisonous liquid is pressed out as the basket slowly resumes its original shape. The remaining flour can be used in foodstuffs. Bitter manioc is used by indigenous peoples in South America, and the Kalinago grow it today on Dominica in demonstration gardens, but, I do not know anyone who eats it. It is possible that Kalinago ancestors did eat this tuber and may have had similar baskets for processing it.

9. Other examples of extralocal contact affecting identity occur in the Kalinago community. Two examples include Kalinago participation in the Caribbean Organization of Indigenous Peoples (COIP) (Hudepohl 2002; Palacio 2006) and cultural borrowing from regional indigenous populations to recreate traditional dancing (Hudepohl 2002).

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