

Race, Income and the Ownership of Elite Business Enterprises in Trinidad and Tobago 2017

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Race and the Social Order of Trinidad and Tobago (T&T)

A question devotedly evaded by sociological research on T&T is the impact of race on the structure and power relations of the hierarchy, that is common to all social orders, of the social order of T&T. Existing literature has focused solely on race relations between African and Indian Trinbagonians driven by the premise that the two major race groups are engaged in the constant battle to dominate the state via political power hence these two races therefore wield power in the social order. This position deliberately evades studying the power wielded by minority race groups and specifically the distribution of income between race groups. Salient realities of the social order of T&T are evaded by this position specifically the nexus between race and power in the social order and the power relations that flow from the nexus between race and power. In its place a discourse of race and power defined as the competition between the two major race groups is propagated that relentlessly attempts to mask and prohibit exposure of the reality of race and power on the ground. This is vitally necessary as the reality of race and power on the ground falsifies this discourse of racist hegemony which insists that the two majority black races dominate the social order that drives the politics of race especially voter mobilisation in T&T.

The “Household Budget Survey 2008/2009” of the Central Statistical Office (CSO) presents a picture of race and the social order within the bounds of the paradigm informing the study. Conducted from 2008 to 2009 based on a sample of 7,090 households in T&T it presents an insight into the nature of the social order of T&T at the tail end of the gas boom. The study classifies income into low, medium and high areas and ethnic groups as follows: African, Indian, Chinese, Syrian-Lebanese, Caucasian, Mixed and Other with Not Stated included. In Volume 4 Table 1.8 of the study the percentage distribution of household members by ethnic group and income area is presented. This table reveals that the ethnic groups with the highest percentage distribution in the high income group is as follows: Syrian-Lebanese 83.3%, Caucasian 74.4%, Chinese 52.3%, Other 47.4%, Mixed 29.3%, Not Stated 27.6%, African 24.1 % and Indian 17.1%. Two minority race groups prove that the distribution of income is skewed in favour of these two groups and the third placed minority race group, Chinese, whilst not having the depth of high income distribution as the first two still manages to tower above those groups following i.e. Mixed, African and Indian in that order. The picture is then potently

clear that the structure of the social order is biased in favour of three specific minority race groups earning income in a manner that enables a saturation of its group members in the case of the Syrian-Lebanese and Caucasian groups and in the Chinese group the case is over 50%. The three major race groups of T&T present the counter reality with Indian 17.1%, African 24.1% and Mixed 29.3%. Some 17% of the Indian households of the study were in the high income bracket which meant that the largest single race group in T&T had the lowest presence within the high income bracket. The Mixed group which is the third largest group nationally had the highest percentage of the three largest groups of the national population with the African having a percentage of 24.1% or second place. The discourse of Indian wealth is then severely falsified by this reality. It is then apparent that structures exist within the social order that enable the social mobility and sustainable generation of income to maintain socio-economic positions within the high income bracket that are not available to wide cross sections of the Indian, African and Mixed populations. The structure of restricted access is specifically biased in favour of the Syrian-Lebanese and the Caucasian groups to the detriment of the Indian, African and Mixed groups. This is clearly illustrated by the percentage distributions for the middle income bracket by race groups. The Indian was the largest single group in the middle income bracket with 58.2% yet they are the smallest group in the high income bracket. The African group is the second largest group with 47.5% in the middle income bracket yet they are the second to last group in the high income bracket. The mixed group is the third largest group with 43.8% in the middle income bracket yet it is the third to last group in the high income bracket. The Syrian-Lebanese 16.7%, the Caucasian 21.8% and the Chinese 27.3% are the three lowest groups in consecutive order in the middle income bracket which is the stark opposite of the ranking for the high income group. There is then no ceiling for the Syrian-Lebanese more so, the Caucasian and the Chinese in the transition from middle to high income unlike the Indian, African and Mixed. In the low income bracket the African group with 28.4% of households is the largest group in this bracket followed by the Mixed group with 27.4% then the Indian group with 24.4%. The Chinese group is next with 20.5% then the Caucasian group with 3.4%. There were no households of Syrian-Lebanese in the sample in the low income group. The group Other recorded 15.8% of Other households in the low income bracket, 36.8% in the middle income bracket and 47.4% in the high income bracket. Of the

three largest race groups the Indian had the lowest number of households in the low income bracket, the highest number of households in the middle income group for the three largest race groups and for the entire study and the lowest number of households in the high income bracket for the entire study. The reality is similar for the African and Mixed groups and entirely and extremely different for the Syrian-Lebanese as there were no households in the low income bracket. Clearly the Chinese population has been impacted by the arrival of labour from the Peoples' Republic of China and the migration that has ensued.

Given the demography of T&T the Syrian-Lebanese and Caucasian groups are over represented in the high income bracket of the study and underrepresented in the low income bracket. The mechanism that created this disparity must be deconstructed but much more importantly is exposing the power relations that arise from the positions of privilege the Syrian-Lebanese, Caucasian and Chinese occupy with especially the state and the politicians of the Indian, African and Mixed groups. What is readily apparent is the impact of the gas boom has had on the social order where the number of households of the three major race groups in the low income bracket are below 30% and the number of households of the three major race groups in the middle income bracket range over 40% to just below 60%. But the gas boom has singularly failed to enable the three major race groups to occupy the high income bracket in numbers representative of their individual share of the national population. The gas boom has then been exploited to the full and greater benefit of the Syrian-Lebanese, the Caucasian and the Chinese seen in their dominance of the high income bracket. The gas tide rose but not all ships rose in response in a balanced and equitable manner as an oligarchy dominated by minority races is the outcome. The oligarchy then ensures its hold on power by dominating the spaces they control and relentlessly seeking to exert hegemony over spaces not under their control thereby constricting the supply of free space necessary to enable mobility into the high income bracket. To limit opportunity sustainably demands power and power relations exercised in your favour and in T&T that means minority races exerting power over members of the majority races especially those who animate the state.

The picture presented of race and the social order of a hierarchy driven by a race order very much premised on that of the colonial plantation order some 55 years after independence is made more cogent by the income area heads of households

of the sample are classified in according to race. Volume 2 table 16 (2.16) shows the relationship between the race of the heads of households of the study and the income areas they are classified into. 100% of the head of households of the Syrian-Lebanese were in the high income area none in the middle and low income areas. 80.4% of Caucasian heads of households were in the high income areas with 17.4% in the middle income area and 2.2% in the low income area. 47.8% of Chinese were in the high income area with 39.1% in the middle income area and 13.0% in the low income area. The Chinese whilst overrepresented in the high income area as the Syrian-Lebanese and the Caucasian groups have attained the depth of the process of mass mobility to the high income area as the other two groups. For the demographically largest groups the Indian has 18.7% of heads of households in the high income area, 57.8% in the middle income area and 23.5% in the low income area. The African has 25.6% in the high income area, 47.2% in the middle income area and 27.2% in the low income area. The Mixed has 31.3% in the high income area with 42.7% in the middle income area and 26.0% in the low income area. The Mixed among the three major race groups of T&T has the largest percentage presence in the high income area with an appreciable presence in the low income area and middle income area given the size of this demographic group. Apparently your mobility into the high income area is potently impacted by the race mixture of your miscegenation. Volume 2 Table 1.7 matches the race of head of households to average monthly income and expenditure of the household. Under average monthly income the Caucasian had the largest average monthly income of TT\$19,503.9 next was the Syrian-Lebanese with TT\$ 15,303.1 then the Chinese with TT\$ 12,142.0. The Other followed with TT\$ 10,794.2 then the Mixed with TT\$ 9,317.5, followed by the African with TT\$ 9,255.1 and finally the Indian with TT\$ 8882. The difference between the average monthly income of the Caucasian and Indian groups is marked and potently illustrates the skewed nature of the race based distribution of income.

The context of these tables is framed by the 2011 population census where the population of T&T was 1, 328,019 persons with the ethnic composition by percentage of total population as follows: Indian 35.4%, African 34.2%, Mixed 22.8%, Caucasian 0.59%, Chinese 0.30%, Syrian-Lebanese 0.08%, Other Ethnic group 0.17%, Portuguese 0.06% and Indigenous 0.11%. The non-institutional population by race is as follows: Total T&T 1,322,546; African 452,536; Caucasian

7,832; Chinese 4,003; Indian 468,524; Indigenous 1,394; Mixed: African/Indian 101,363, Mixed: Other 200,503; Portuguese 837; Syrian/Lebanese 1,029; Other Ethnic group 2,280. The study indicates that the apex of the hierarchy of the social order of T&T is dominated by the three minority races: The Syrian-Lebanese, the Caucasian and the Chinese along with non-representative numbers of members of the Mixed, African and Indian groups.

The research instruments utilised by the CSO are not constructed to identify those within the high income area who own and control capital which is exerted via various mechanisms that impact the social order to the extent where individual action has political significance to the extent of impacting the actions of the politicians in control of the state. These mechanisms involve enterprises, investment decisions and personal wealth generation and management. When you have a situation where a small minority of the population can impact the integrity of the social order via the decisions made in the quest to maximise profit and wealth then you have an oligarchy on your hand. When this oligarchy impacts the operation of the state through its power relations with those who articulate the state especially the politicians then you have an oligarchy that has captured the state. When you have an oligarchy that is dominated by minority races wielding power over majority races through state capture buttressed by economic power then you have an apartheid state. This apartheid state will at some point in its evolution generate a race relations crisis which will be expressed via race war in an attempt to resolve the power relations in favour of parties in conflict.

The Three Conglomerates

The T&T energy economy and its place in the international capitalist order has generated an import driven indigenous non-energy private sector catering to consumption driven by imported tastes and lifestyles made possible only by the foreign exchange fed into the system by the energy exporters via taxes and royalties. Those who import what we consume don't export to the world to earn what they need to pay for what they import. It's a delusional lumpen-oligarchy that has evolved in T&T as it squats on feet of clay in its subservience to international capital. The oil and gas wealth that has flowed through T&T via the political discourse of development has resulted in the creation of an indigenous non-energy private sector dominated by three conglomerates: Massy Group,

ANSA McAl Group and Victor E. Mouttet Limited. The original number was four with C L Financial Group included but with the intervention of the state into C L Financial it is now in stasis with an uncertain future. The Massy Group is a listed public company active in the Caribbean island chain, Guyana and Colombia with approximately TT\$ 11 billion in assets as at the 2016 financial report. The 10 largest shareholders of the Massy Group are all institutional and financial services investors of T&T and Barbados. The ANSA McAl Group is a public listed company with the dominant, hegemonic shareholder being the family of deceased Anthony Sabga active in the Caribbean island chain, Guyana and the USA with approximately TT\$ 13 billion in assets as at the 2016 financial report. The Victor E. Mouttet Ltd group is a private company owned by the family of deceased Victor E. Mouttet active in the Caribbean island chain through its joint venture with Goddard Enterprises Ltd of Barbados and in T&T. Combined these three conglomerates dominate or are competitive in the sectors of the economy where they are active and they avoid investing in competitive wars for domination of sectors with each other. Together they dominate two sectors of strategic importance to the social order: the importation and distribution of pharmaceuticals and food. The Victor E. Mouttet is the leading food processor of T&T, the largest importer of pharmaceuticals, a food importer with traction in the local market and the dominant operator of fast food franchises in T&T with KFC, Pizza Hut, TGI, Subway and Starbucks. Massy Group and ANSA Mc Al with their importation of pharmaceuticals and food complete the strategic impact of these three conglomerates on the social order of T&T. There are two models of ownership and control within the three dominant conglomerates of the non-energy private sector: private ownership in the hands of a family owning the business and wielding control over an instrument that contributes to the generation of family wealth and its sustainable management across time and the executives of a conglomerate who don't own and has fleeting control which ends with retirement. This group can only generate and manage personal wealth from the compensation package afforded them by the conglomerate or via personal enrichment via illicit activities within and without the conglomerate. The lesson is then clear that the families handling multi-billion TT\$ businesses are the basis of an oligarchy that is sustainable. Much more importantly is the reality that professionals don't command the resources and the instrumental means to compete with these families unless they command multi-billion TT\$ enterprises

that they themselves own. There is no group of the scale of these three owned and controlled by an Indian Trinbagonian family and a Chinese Trinbagonian family. Given the demise of C L Financial there is now no African owned business of comparable scale and expanse. The Anthony Sabga family that holds the dominant shareholding in ANSA Mc Al is Arab Trinbagonian of Syrian ethnicity. The Victor E. Mouttet family is the product of the marriage of a French Creole Trinbagonian male to an Arab Trinbagonian female therefore their offspring are Mixed. The Victor E. Mouttet group is in the hands of Mixed race persons.

The acquisition of majority shareholding in the Mc Enearney/Alstons group by Anthony Sabga was the most potent business acquisition in the private sector of T&T from 1962 to the present. That it was the acquisition of a white dominated group by an Arab businessman of Syrian ethnicity dramatically changed the terrain of the private sector inherited from the colonial order and by extension the power relations of the post-independence social order. This acquisition by Anthony Sabga and the strategy pursued by Neal and Massy to acquire white owned companies within the ambit of a publicly listed company forever changed the race structure of the private sector formed under colonialism and bequeathed to independent T&T.

The Arab and Chinese groups took the strategic direction to invest in the creation of businesses rooted in families where members of future generations will then have the choice of entering the professions once the wealth base of the family is established and sustainable. To accept the choice to pursue professions at the outset would have negatively impacted their drive to create family rooted wealth generation instruments with the likelihood of continuing deprivation amongst members of the family as not all are cut out for the professions and would have then slipped into the mill of salaried employment. The family owned and worked business was then the chosen instrument to ensure family mobility to the apex of the social order. Both groups today consist of a hierarchy of families who exert power through the amassed resources and sustainable wealth generation.

The Arab clans and families

Besides the family of Anthony Sabga the Hadeed clan is visible on the landscape of T&T through its economic activity through its brands as Blue Waters, Francis Fashions Shoe Locker, Sports and Games and Gulf City Malls but all activity is not

restricted to these brands. The Aboud clan is visible with the brands Amalgamated Security Services Limited and Global Brands Limited, the Starlite Group, Jimmy Aboud, Mode Alive and Aioli but all activity is not restricted to these brands. The Rahael clan is visible with its property development activities seen in its brand Amera Caribbean Ltd, Amera Corporation and the RHL Group of companies. Richard Azar owner of The Falls at West Mall and Dairy Dairy milk products is a financial investor in the North Atlantic of note. The Matouk family owner of National Canners. The Emile Elias group of companies with the flagship NH International (Caribbean) Ltd. The Issa Nicholas group of companies comprised of hotels, an energy company, a new vehicles and equipment sales company, property development and commercial property rentals. The Laquis family pioneered the marriage of medical professional status with the business of the sale of medical supplies and equipment.

The Arab population of T&T especially those of the Syrian ethnicity is the only race group in the social order that has experienced sustained and drastic social mobility into the apex positions of the hierarchical social order of T&T particularly from the second half of the decade of the 1980's which quickened in the decade of the 1990's and solidified its present form and content in the first decade of the 21st century. This upward mobility into the apex positions of the social hierarchy involved a wide cross section of this minority group but this did not eclipse the creation of a hierarchy within the group placed in the apex positions of the social hierarchy. This dramatic upward mobility by a comparatively recently arrived minority immigrant group in a comparatively short time frame is uncommon in the Caribbean and in the North Atlantic which demands research and explanation of but mind you don't lose your livelihood doing such a study.

The Arab population of Trinbago has seen especially since the outbreak of the Syrian civil war the arrival of predominantly Syrian migrants who have established food outlets specialising in Syrian and other food with a Syrian twist. Known commonly on the streets as the "gyro boys" these new arrivals are changing the demographic and the sociology of the Arab population of Trinbago with the pressures of being new arrivals seeking space in which to position themselves in the social order as they are not of the existing Arab population, Arabic is still their first language, yet different from the rest of the population and are subject to the body of perceptions utilised in interpreting the actions of the Arab Trinbagonians

on the ground. Whilst learning a new culture and language they are very much treated as the miscegenate of their race in Trinbago. Already they have had to deal with the move to brand them all with the terrorist brand simply because they are ethnically Arab.

The Chinese families

The Chinese in Trinbago is now a race group in flux with the arrival of a wave of Chinese from the Peoples' Republic of China who are now visible on the landscape of T&T via the supermarkets and Chinese fast food outlets they have established throughout especially Trinidad. Juxtaposed to this wave of new arrivals are the Chinese Trinbagonian families who dominate this group and are ethnically distinct from the new arrivals. Then there are the haquai Chinese or the Mixed products of predominantly Chinese males copulating with non-Chinese Trinbagonian women. This is one aptitude of the waves of Chinese men that preceded the new arrivals of this era are not practising as in the case of my maternal grandfather Chin Ming Lung. The prominent Chinese Trinbagonian families in the public space are: Mack, Scott, Gillette, Chin with Derek Chin as the noted public face, Chin Lee, Poon Tip, Siu Chong, Williams, Tang Yuk, Chan and Soong. The enterprise of note created by haquai Chinese is Albrosco by the Aleong family. The order of the new arrivals is entirely different which raises the question of the power relations between the Chinese Trinbagonians and the newly arrived Chinese in their attempt to replicate the power relations of China in T&T.

The White Group

The White business elite present in 1962 had their ranks severely depleted by mergers and acquisitions with Neal and Massy now Massy Group and the acquisition of Mc Enearney/Alstons by Anthony Sabga. The same would happen to Barbados Shipping and Trading with its acquisition by Neal and Massy. Further inroads were made with acquisitions by Victor E. Mouttet Ltd leaving a vastly reduced number of business enterprises with national impact in the hands of White families. The business enterprise of this race group that has strategic impact on the social order is the Bermudez Biscuit company owned by the Bermudez family through its ownership of the largest baked goods production units in T&T through the Kiss baking company and the Bermudez biscuit plant.

Others of note in the eye of the public are the Peake group of companies owned by the Peake family, Brydens Trinidad and Tobago group of companies, Laughlin and De Gannes and the Furness group owned by the Ferreira family all compete in sectors where the conglomerates and other are active. Label House owned by the Lewis family dominates the sector it's positioned in.

The Mixed group

The largest footprint of a business enterprise owned by a member of the Mixed group is Arthur Lok Jack with his ownership of Associated Brands and investments made such as the number of shares he holds in Guardian Holdings. Mario's Pizzeria the largest pizza franchise in T&T which also has a regional footprint is owned by the Richard Harford family is another noted national brand in this group. The disparity in income within the Mixed group is then starkly illustrated by the disparity in the ownership of elite businesses within the group. Where amongst the three largest race groups in T&T the Indian, the African and the Mixed, the Mixed group had the largest number of households in the high income area, the lowest number in the middle income area and the highest number in the low income area. Clearly what races you are mixed with impacts your life chances, your income earning ability and your ability to own businesses and attain professional status. The glaring contrasts of wealth and income distribution within the Mixed group of T&T then succinctly exposes the racist nature and structure of the social order of T&T contrary to the political discourse of "all ah we is one". Miscegenation works for a minority within the group and condemns the majority of the group to deprivation and social immobility. The racist colonial plantation social order is still hegemonic in 2017 with some apparent changes.

The Indian group

In the Indian group's strategic impact is in the production and processing of chicken for human consumption, the supply of steel for construction and fabrication, general construction including paved roads and steel fabrication, the globalised producer of beverages S M Jaleel and Electrical Industries group. In the chicken processing market Arawak owned by the Mohammed family dominates the T&T sale of processed chicken market. Arawak was originally owned by Neal and Massy who sold it to Jai Ramkissoon. The second placed company in this market is the Nutrimix Group of companies owned by another Mohammed

family. In the steel market the Bhagwansingh Group of companies dominate and they are also the largest single supplier of hardware items. In the construction market which is very addicted to state contracts two dominant players are the Junior Sammy group of companies and the Coosal group of companies. The premier steel fabricating company is Hafeez Karamath Ltd part of the Hafeez Karamath Group which also owns Desalcott the desalinated water plant. In this market sector there are a number of firms competing for state contracts all predominantly Indian owned which heightens the power relations between this sector and the politicians thereby politicising the market. S M Jaleel owned by another Mohammed family is the premier globalised corporation of Trinbagonian origin headquartered in T&T specialising in the production of non-alcoholic beverages on a global scale. Electrical Industries group owned by Dave Ramkissoon grew through acquisitions of plants put up for sale by Neal and Massy, Agostini and L J Williams with his first acquisition at one time being part of the Ram Kirpalani empire produces electrical cables, lighting fixtures and PVC moulded products. Other strategic players are: Southern Sales Group of companies owned by the Ahamad family which is involved in new car sales and the family is noted for their investments as in the case of Guardian Holdings, Solo Beverages owned by the Charles family, Chief Brand products owned by the Khan family, K C confectionary owned by another Khan family and Kaleidoscope Paints by the Parson family. These companies own brands that are household names in T&T but they are active in market segments open to competition from other local producers and imports especially since the dismantling of tariff and non-tariff barriers. These brands have then to-date indicated their sustainability.

What has been the reality of Indian business activity in Trinbago since 1962 is premised on: the inability of a single family to drive their family controlled enterprise to the point of growing into a conglomerate of national strategic scale, the willingness to crowd sectors of the economy where they compete against themselves with cut-throat predatory actions, the willingness to over rely on markets dominated by the Indian Trinbagonian population thereby acquiring and in many cases deliberately pursuing a specific ethnic persona. This strategy yields limited value to any future attempt to expand beyond the ethnic base nor does it insulate from the advances of the conglomerates and minority races into the Indian dominated markets especially south of the Caroni river. Finally, there is the

aversion for joint family investment action in order to launch projects which are not highly leveraged with the mainstream financial structure a strategy common to the Chinese group. Strategic choices have then resulted in action where specific families have generated wealth placing them on the national stage but the strategic impact of the race group on the social order is not reflecting the Indian Trinbagonian size of the national population. The worldview and the discourse that drives it which values the attainment of professional qualification and status over that of wealth generation and power maximisation through enterprise has directly and heavily influenced this reality today. Indian Trinbagonians dominate the medical and legal professions in T&T but this cannot translate into economic power and by extension the political power of capital. Families within the group invest in winning political control of the state as the primary means to grow family wealth and power but on the two occasions when political parties representative of the Indian Trinbagonian electorate have won political power the drive to feed at the trough of the state through contracts and the acquisition of state assets has further divided the economic elite of the group by intensifying the bitter rivalry between contending families. The legacy of this feeding frenzy and the fallout from it continues whilst the Indian Trinbagonian party languishes in sterile opposition politics.

What is obvious with the Indian Trinbagonian group is the number of business enterprises of the elite category owned and controlled by Muslims of Indian Trinbagonian descent. Given the size of the national population of Muslims (5% 2011 census) it's obvious that Muslims are overrepresented in this category. Indian Trinbagonian family owned firms have acquired space in which to grow elite enterprises by acquiring enterprises active in market segments put up for sale by conglomerates and race minority owned enterprises. This is especially apparent with Arawak and the Electrical Industries group. Then there is the reality of pioneering enterprise such as the Parson family who in 1970 founded the first locally owned and operated paint manufacturing facility Kaleidoscope Paints where in 2017 Kaleidoscope paints is now active in an environment where the tariff and non-tariff barriers have been dismantled enabling imports and the local production environment is dominated by ANSA Mc Al who owns three of the dominant brands on the market Berger, Penta and Sissons paints.

The African group

With the demise of C L financial there is no African owned enterprise within the elite group of the indigenous non-energy private sector of T&T. The level of involvement of African Trinbagonians as owners in the private sector of T&T is in fact the lowest of all race groups and given the demography of T&T African Trinbagonians are extremely underrepresented as owners in this sector of the economy. This reality matches that of Jamaica and Barbados. The traction of the discourse of Black Power from 1969 and thereafter raised the question of Why is this so? The responses to this question mainly focused on the differences real and imagined between Africans and the other races culturally which precluded Africans to enterprise. An essentially racist argument borrowed from Max Weber's racist discourse of the "Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism". What is clearly apparent is that African Trinbagonians in their survival strategies have determined that employment with the state agencies, the public service, the state enterprises, the private sector and the professions is preferable strategically to the risks of investment in enterprise. African are then numerically the largest single race group employed as managers in T&T where they manage the enterprises of the other race groups contributing to the wealth generation and management of these groups. Why then don't these managers who have relentlessly proven their skill and competence to manage other people's wealth not invest in generating their own via enterprises which they own? The ability and competence of Africans to manage enterprises and generate wealth is now a given except for the racist hegemonists. The potent question then is there space in the domain of the private sector that will allow African enterprises to thrive and grow into conglomerates and other elite enterprises along with an African entrepreneurial base that now constitutes for the first time in our post-independence history an African Trinbagonian presence of note and impact in the private sector of T&T? Can the African risk aversion to investment in enterprise be the result of the perception that you are entering a severely competitive and crowded domain where you are disadvantaged to begin with and destined to lose your investment? Is this position informed by the actual experience of those who chose to invest, collapsed and ended up in debt and survival trauma? How can you rent from your competitor? Research on the survival strategies of Africans and the choices made thereof and the rationale for the choice of African managers to work for others rather than themselves must be done to expose the

discursive reality underpinning this reality. Without this research the explanations relentlessly propagated over time is simply discourse with a political purpose.

The Terrain of Race Power Relations

An analysis of the race of members of the executive elites of Massy Group and ANSA Mc Al reveals the following:

Massy Group

The President and Group CEO is an African and the Executive Vice President and CFO is Mixed. The Executive Committee of the group comprises 19 executives including the CEO and the CFO and is composed as follows: 4 Africans, 1 Mixed, 1 Indian and 13 White and Latin. The white antecedents of the evolution of the Massy Group is still evident in the overrepresentation of whites on its executive committee even though it's a publicly traded corporation. The colonial legacy survives the transition to being a publicly traded corporation.

ANSA Mc Al

The executive elite of ANSA Mc Al comprises 3 Indians, 1 African, 5 Whites and 5 members of the Anthony Sabga family in 2016. With the acquisition of majority shareholding by Anthony Sabga of a white dominated Mc Enearney Alstons group the overrepresentation of whites in the executive has continued. White executives remain the largest single non-Sabga group in ANSA Mc Al.

An analysis of the race of members of the executive elite of one-member company of the Victor E. Moutett group is as follows. Prestige Holdings Ltd is a public company where the Mouttet family owns the dominant share holding. The race composition of the executive elite of Prestige Holdings is structured as follows: 3 Whites, 1 Arab, 1 African, 1 Indian and 1 Mixed.

In the financial services sector of T&T the executive management picture afforded by Republic Bank, Scotia Bank and Guardian Holdings is as follows: Republic Bank: Indian 5, African 3, Mixed 4, Chinese 2, White/Latin 2, Arab 1. Scotia bank: Indian 7, African 1, Mixed 4, White 3, Arab 1. Guardian Holdings: Indian 4, African 5, Mixed 3, White 3.

In three apex strategic enterprises where the state holds the dominant share holding: T&TEC, National Gas Company (NGC) and National Flour Mills (NFM) the

picture of the executive management of these enterprises is: T&TEC: Indian 4 and African 4. NGC: Indian 3, African 4, Mixed 3 and Chinese 1. NFM general management elite: Indian 3, African 1, Mixed 1. NFM executive management group: Indian 8, African 7 and Mixed 3. It's expected that the politics of race impacts the hiring practices and career paths of employees within the state sector. But what is even more relevant to this study is the absence of the minority races within the executive elite of the state sector which indicates that this sector is not a priority career path for the Arab, White and Chinese groups.

Is there then a limit to upward mobility for African, Indian and Mixed managers in the indigenous non-energy private sector T&T? Specifically, is there a limit to upward mobility for African managers in this sector? The continued relevance of this question in 2017 signals the relevance of another question: was there social change or cosmetic surgery to alter the face of the colonial order post 1970 thereby ensuring its survival?

Methodology

The study is based on information in the public domain specifically the reports from the CSO, on the indigenous non-energy private sector and the state sector. The availability of the information necessary is the major deficiency to overcome hence there is the tendency to present evidence from available entities in the public domain. Private companies which are predominantly family owned in T&T are under no legal obligation to public disclosure hence information is framed by what is actually revealed in the public domain. The state sector is also noted for its willingness to evade placing the information sought in this study in the public domain limiting the expanse of the information presented. The public companies are then the main source of information for this study with its limitations but such is the reality of this sector in T&T. My study on Jamaica is available at:

http://docs.wixstatic.com/ugd/d0264a_88107f3c855746d9a1a358a575dc75ec.pdf and on Barbados at:

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