



CARIBBEAN CRUISE TOURISM

Globalization at Sea

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Abstract: Caribbean cruise tourism provides a particularly illuminating vantage point for understanding the processes of globalization in the world today. After documenting the rapid expansion of this business, the paper explores three central manifestations of globalization at work in the Caribbean cruise industry: the restructuring of the industry in the face of global competition, capital mobility, and labor migration; new patterns of global ethnic recruitment and stratification, including their incorporation into the product marketed to tourists; and deterritorialization, cultural theming, and simulation. The paper asserts that this “globalization at sea” illustrates the contradictions, ambiguities, and uncharted course of contemporary globalization processes. **Keywords:** globalization, tourism, cruise industry, Caribbean, migration, ethnicity. © 2000 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

Résumé: Le tourisme de croisière aux Caraïbes: la globalisation en mer. Le tourisme de croisière aux Caraïbes fournit un point de vue particulièrement approprié pour comprendre le processus de globalisation dans le monde d’aujourd’hui. Après avoir passé en revue la rapide expansion de ce genre de commerce, l’article explore trois manifestations centrales de la globalisation à l’œuvre dans l’industrie des croisières aux Caraïbes: la restructuration de l’industrie confrontée à la concurrence globale, à la mobilité du capital et à la migration du travail; les nouveaux modes de recrutement et de stratification ethniques globaux; et la déterritorialisation, le thème culturel et la simulation. L’article affirme que cette “globalisation en mer” illustre les contradictions, les ambiguïtés et le cours imprévu des processus de globalisation contemporains. **Mots-clés:** globalisation, tourisme, industrie des croisières, Caraïbes, migrations, ethnicité. © 2000 Elsevier Science Ltd. All rights reserved.

INTRODUCTION

Globalization has been the buzzword of the 90s, one that seems likely to continue into the next century. The hoopla around the term has inevitably generated some critical reaction, with various observers complaining about its conceptual amorphousness and its dubious claims of newness (Hirst and Thompson 1996). What Abu-Lughod (1991) has called “global babble” should certainly be dispensed with. But at the same time, terminological quibbles should not distract us from grappling with the complex and centrally im-

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portant set of processes that the term globalization has been coined to deal with.

The task of understanding globalization is complicated by the fact that it is at least three things. First, it is a highly-organized and consciously-designed *project* to promote a vision of a fully-integrated global capitalism (McMichael 1996). Although the globalization project is often talked about as if it were an inevitable and agentless trend, this is clearly misleading: for better or worse, many groups and institutions have worked hard to implement a particular vision, even if they have not always foreseen all its consequences. Second, globalization is a broad and sometimes seemingly contradictory set of *social processes* pulling the world together. While most social scientists would grant that global capitalism has driven many of these processes, some have nonetheless sought to distill their *core ingredients*, on the assumption that these are analytically independent from the globalization project, however, closely they may be related to it (Giddens 1991; Harvey 1989; Robertson 1992). Third, globalization can be seen as a set of *discourses* for making sense of both the project and the processes (Robertson and Khondker 1998).

Correspondingly, definitions of globalization vary greatly. Some are little more than dressed-up ideology. Others range from the narrow to the broad, with the latter sometimes building in a whole theory of social change (Robinson 1998). This paper starts from dual core processes identified by Robertson (1992) in his extensive writings on globalization: the global compression of time and space and the increase in a reflexive global consciousness, two processes that have clearly been integral to the expansion of international tourism. In a work which combines Robertson's insights with those of Giddens, Harvey, and others, Waters has proposed defining globalization as "a social process in which the constraints of geography on social and cultural arrangements recede and in which people become increasingly aware that they are receding (1995:3)". He argues that this process plays itself out in interrelated but irreducible ways in the realms of the economic, the political, and the cultural. Central to each of these is how global processes disembed local practices from their geographies, re-embedding them in patterns and networks that increasingly have a global dimension. Social relations become partially deterritorialized, less constrained by the various meanings of locality. This in turn sets in motion new types of change and response.

In his 1976 pioneering classic, MacCannell (1976) recommended "following the tourists" to construct an ethnography of modernity. Recently Crick has observed that international tourism "represents a potentially rich field ... in which to explore the diverse way in which globalizing forces are responded to in specific localities" (Crick 1994:6). Relevant inquiry questions are whether one can follow the tourists to construct an understanding of globalization, or even which tourist types should be followed. One possible answer is cruise tourists, who constitute the most rapidly growing market in the industry. In the mid-80s, anthropologist Foster and his wife took

a cruise in the South Pacific, which inspired an article in *Annals of Tourism Research*, in which he noted with “astonishment” the lack of attention in the literature to the cruiseship sector. He believes that “cruising and the cruise industry is a major frontier for tourism research” (1986:217).

If the paucity of studies was astonishing when Foster wrote his article, it is all the more so today, after more than a decade and a half of explosive growth in this tourism sector. Sociological and anthropological studies of cruise tourism remain practically nonexistent. The economic literature is somewhat larger, but still surprisingly small (Dwyer and Forsyth 1998; Hall and Braithwaite 1990; Hobson 1993; Mescon and Vosikis 1985). It is the basic thesis of this paper that the study of cruise tourism does indeed represent a new opportunity, both for the understanding of tourism and its increasingly broad ramifications, and for the understanding of globalization in all its global/local complexities (for a sampling of attempts to theorize the relationship of the global and the local, see Appadurai 1996; Cvetkovich and Kellner 1997; Hannerz 1996; Wilson and Dissanayake 1996).

Following the cruise tourists leads above all to the Caribbean, a region long characterized by the deep interpenetration of global economic, political, and cultural forces. As Mintz (1998:128) commented, many aspects of globalization that are often assumed to be new have in fact existed for centuries among the peoples of the Caribbean. “It is not that nothing is new under the sun . . . It is, rather, that we need to ask better questions in specifying what *is* new under the sun”. He complains quite legitimately that “The new theories of transnationalism and globalization are not respectful enough of history, especially of the history of exploration, conquest, and the global division of labor” (1998:131). This paper argues that there *are* some new things about globalization under the Caribbean sun which can be seen by exploring cruise tourism in the region.

As Nash (1996) and others have noted, tourism scholars have scoured a variety of disciplines for relevant theoretical insights, producing in the process a field characterized by a healthy theoretical eclecticism. However, despite MacCannell’s strategy of studying tourism as a means to a broader theoretical end—the construction of an “ethnography of modernity”—the intellectual traffic has mainly flowed from other disciplines to tourism studies, rather than *vice versa*. This imbalance is unfortunate, because tourism by its nature illuminates many broader social processes (for the case of ethnicity, see Oakes 1998; Picard and Wood 1997; Wood 1998). This paper provides an introduction to Caribbean cruise tourism which identifies some of the insights it offers for understanding key aspects of globalization.

CRUISE TOURISM AND GLOBALIZATION

Cruise is the fastest growing major sector (Dickinson and Vladimir 1997:37; Hobson 1993:433). With an 8% annual growth

since 1980, it has increased at almost twice the rate of tourism overall. A record 8.5 million people took cruises worldwide in 1997 (*Economist* 1998:14). The North American market (which includes the Caribbean) is the dominant one, and in 1997 it grew by 8.6% to reach a record 5.05 million cruise passengers (*PRNewswire* 1998a). The sector's trade association predicts 6 million for 1999 (Tutto Crociere 1999).

In 1998, 71 cruiseships from 24 lines plied the Caribbean (including the Bahamas), some year-round and some seasonally. In addition there were a dozen or so sailing and smaller vessels, generally carrying between 50 and 150 passengers, but these will not be discussed in this paper, nor will the related charter yacht trade, which was the subject of one of the few anthropological studies of sea-based tourism (Lett 1983). The 71 cruiseships can carry over 93,000 passengers. They accounted for roughly 10 million tourist arrivals at ports in the island Caribbean in 1997 (*Caribbean UPDATE* 1998). Numerous islands receive substantially more cruises than they do stopover tourists. Already in 1990, Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Cayman Islands, Grenada, Martinique, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and the US Virgin Islands received more cruise than stopover tourists (Holder 1993:209–10).

While the Caribbean has accounted for the majority of cruise bookings ever since the decline of the transatlantic trade in the late 50s, this form of tourism has become a global phenomenon. Competition to add exotic ports of call has been intense, with Cunard adding 55 and Crystal Cruise Lines 24 new ports of call in 1998 alone. In the same year, according to the president of the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA), 130 cruiseships called at over 1,800 ports worldwide (Godsman 1999). The most rapidly-growing line is Star Cruises, a Malaysian-based company which caters primarily to Asian tourists and which aims to be the fourth-largest company by the year 2000, surpassed only by the "big three"—Carnival, Royal Caribbean International, and Princess—that collectively control over two-thirds of the North American market (*Cruise Industry News Annual* 1996:17). Even in the midst of the Asian financial crisis, Star Cruises ordered two new 85,000 ton ships in 1998 in addition to the seven already in its fleet and three others already on order.

Between 1988 and 1998, the number of cruiseships increased from 97 to 129, and the number of berths almost doubled, from 68,474 to 127,943 (*Cruise Industry News Annual* 1996:39–40). A further increase in passenger capacity of 50% is expected by 2002 (Greenwald 1998); no less than 40 additional cruiseliners are due to be introduced between 1999 and 2001. For the Caribbean region, this means that there will be more passenger ship berths than hotel rooms, and cruise arrivals are expected to surpass stopover arrivals by 2005 (Hall and Braithwaite 1990:339), if not earlier. Nonetheless, because of the increasingly global spread of cruise tourism, the market share of the Caribbean and North America has been declining for over a decade.

The sharp increases in passenger capacity have been made possible by larger and still larger ships, whose economies of scale have produced record profits for the largest cruiselines. Carnival's *Destiny* held the record for two years at 101,000 tons, 3,400 passengers, and 1,070 crew, but it was surpassed in tonnage in May 1998 by Princess Lines' *Grand Princess*, at 104,000 tons, 3,300 maximum passengers, and 1100 crew members. In November 1999 Royal Caribbean's *Voyager of the Seas* displaced the *Grand Princess* with 130,000 tons, 3,840 passengers, and a crew of 1181. The *Grand Princess* is taller than Niagara Falls and almost a fifth of a mile long. These huge vessels have spawned a new category—"Post-Panama" ships—because they are too big to go through the Panama Canal. Upping the ante further, Cunard has announced its project *Queen Mary*, to build the "grandest and largest liner ever built" (Goodman 1998). Further, in the wings—although some doubt whether they will ever be realized—are long-standing plans for the 250,000 ton *America World City*, which with three skyscraper-type towers on an aircraft carrier-style hull, would carry 6,200 passengers. Westin Hotels and Resorts has committed itself to managing the project, but the \$1.2 billion in necessary financing remains yet to be raised.

The cruise sector's ability to increase its passengers from 1.4 in 1980 to 8.5 million in 1997 has been based on its success in reaching beyond its traditional upper and upper-middle class base into the middle-class mass market. While the television series *Love Boat*, launched in 1977 and still in reruns in 93 countries, is widely credited with popularizing cruise vacations, the projected image was still quite upscale and had to be overcome for cruising to become a truly mass-market phenomenon (Dickinson and Vladimir 1997:152, 178). Carnival's "fun ship" marketing, introduced in the mid-70s and aimed squarely at the non-upscale middle-class mass market, turned an upstart company into the dominant force in the industry, today with 43 ships and seven separate cruise lines. CLIA currently divides the industry into seven segments—budget, contemporary, premium, luxury cruise, luxury sailing, exploration/soft adventure, and niche—with the mass-market contemporary and budget categories accounting for about 53% of passenger capacity, and the somewhat more upscale "premium" category accounting for another 36% (*Cruise Industry News Annual 1996*:43–648). Both the average age and the average income of cruise passengers have fallen steadily, particularly as baby boomers, still relatively young by this sector's standards, have taken up cruising. In the past decade the average age of passengers has fallen from 56 to 44, and the popularity of the movie, *Titanic*, has led to a surge of bookings by younger tourists. "The market for cruising", Carnival's chairman claims, "is just beginning to develop" (Major 1998).

An important part of the strategy of the mass-market cruise companies has been to define land-based resorts such as Orlando and Las Vegas as their competition and to market their ships themselves as resort destinations. The ship is sold as the primary destination, not the ports it docks at. Indeed, "destinational cruising"—

where the ports are central to consumer choice and experience—is now considered within the sector to be a *niche* market. The new squarish-built towering ships, with their vast atriums and inward-looking architecture, are essentially floating resorts, with everything from casinos and shopping malls to golf courses and ice-skating rinks onboard. Viewing the sea is optional; even the deck chairs are likely to face inwards. The lines have emulated theming from the entertainment and hotel sectors, and conversely the hotel and entertainment giants have been increasing their presence in the cruise business. The Chicago-based Pritzker family, which owns controlling interest in Hyatt Hotels, has owned half of Royal Caribbean since 1988, and Ramada Franchise Systems leased one of Premier's three ships (the *OceanBreeze*, renamed the *Imperial Majesty*) for 1999 and 2000, for short cruises from the Ramada Plaza resort near Orlando, Florida. Radisson Seven Seas Cruises is owned by Radisson Hotels International.

Cruise tourism has thus become big business, but it has accomplished this by becoming more like non-cruise mass tourism. Its distinctive characteristic of sea-based mobility has enabled it to participate especially fully in the processes of globalization, however, and because of this one can see in cruise sector tourism both potential future trends in tourism generally and some of the complex ways globalization plays itself out. This development offers a particularly clear and extreme manifestation of/or how global economic restructuring both reflects and promotes new forms of the deterritorialization of capital, labor, and touristic place itself. The Caribbean region, with its long history of global penetration and dependence and its uniquely high reliance on tourism in general and cruise traffic in particular, represents a particularly fruitful area to explore these processes.

Restructuring the Cruise Sector

The rhetoric of globalization is very much evident in the pronouncements of cruise leaders. The formation of the Norwegian Capricorn Line, a joint venture company aimed at the Australian market, is described by the President and CEO of Norwegian Cruise Lines as fitting “perfectly with the company's ongoing strategy of globalization” (*PRNewswire* 1998b), just as the acquisition by this line of Orient Lines two months later is likewise described as part of its “plans of ongoing globalization” (*PRNewswire* 1998c). Similarly, Carnival Corporation's purchase of Europe's largest cruise line, Costa Cruises, in June 1997, is said by Carnival's CEO and Chairman to be part of the company's effort “to maneuver Carnival into a far more powerful *global* competitive position” (Carnival Corporation 1997:6).

While the rhetoric of globalization may be somewhat new, at the level of practice what is often seen is mainly an accentuation of long-standing processes. An important example of this—on which the success of practically the entire cruise sector is based—is the

use of flags of convenience (FOCs) to circumvent home country labor laws, taxes, and maritime regulations. While flags of convenience go back several hundred years, their increasing use means that today over half the tonnage of the leading maritime nations flies FOCs. For cruiseships, this is even more pronounced. Despite the overwhelming predominance of US-headquartered lines in the Caribbean, not a single large cruiseship plying the Caribbean flies the US flag. (Several sailing ships and smaller vessels of the American Canadian Caribbean Line and Clipper Cruise Line fly the US flag in the Caribbean, but none carrying 150 passengers or more does.) The only full-sized cruise ship to fly the US flag and to have a US crew is American Hawaii Cruises' *SS Independence* (*Economist* 1997b; Buchholz and Cropper 1993).

FOC ship crews are subject neither to the labor laws of their countries of origin nor to those of the country of their employer; rather, their contracts specifically state that they are subject to the laws of the country in which the ship is flagged, most commonly Panama, Liberia, or the Bahamas. Labor laws protecting the rights of workers are virtually non-existent in FOC countries, and where they exist, they are often easily altered. For example, when it was realized that Panamanian law guaranteed one day off each week, the cruise lines successfully lobbied for an exemption.

In his book, *Selling the Sea*, the Carnival Corporation President is quite explicit about the importance of FOCs for the industry:

Many countries, including the United States, Norway, and Britain, have strict regulations concerning unionized labor which severely constrain the ability of a ship to staff with an optimal crew mix, and almost invariably create a higher labor cost than a free-market environment. So-called "flag-of-convenience" countries, do not have these constraints . . . This means that owners are in a better position to negotiate fair and equitable compensation packages in a global, free-market environment. Of course, ships registered in these flag-of-convenience nations pay lower wages and taxes on an aggregate basis than those registered in the United States (or Norway or Italy for that matter). But that makes it possible for them to offer cruises at much lower cost than if their ships were registered in countries with restrictive hiring policies. And that's one reason why American-headquartered cruiselines such as Royal Caribbean and Carnival choose not to operate under American flags (Dickinson and Vladimir 1997:66-67).

Dickinson's rhetoric of "free markets" triumphing over "restrictive policies" exemplifies the dominant economic discourse of globalization, defined and articulated above all by institutions such as the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. And there is little question that the adjustment policies of these two institutions have helped generate both the climate of deregulation and the global pool of migrant labor on which the cruiseships increasingly rely. Furthermore, as will be seen, a number of states have become directly involved in promoting international labor migration for this and other maritime employment.

Globalization of the cruise sector has also led to increased internationalization of ownership and further concentration in this business, with a massive shakeout steadily reducing the number of players. Cunard's famed QE2, introduced in 1969, is illustrative. Cunard was acquired by Trafalgar House, a British multinational conglomerate, two years later in 1971. After being requisitioned by the British government to carry troops for the Falklands war, the ship was refitted in 1986 in Germany. Almost the entire crew was laid off at this time (with general redundancies being paid out as required by British law), and the unions representing all the lower staff and crew levels were broken. Cunard rehired much of the hotel staff on a non-union basis through an agency in Cyprus (but with an office in Southampton). The crew quickly became pan-European, and then increasingly, at least at the lower levels, Asian (Marvin Brown, personal communication in 1998). In the 80s and early 90s, Cunard purchased several Norwegian ships and the Royal Viking name, but in 1996 Trafalgar House was taken over by a Norwegian company, Kvaerner ASA. Two years later, Kvaerner sold Cunard to US-based Carnival Corporation, which promptly merged it with its luxury-end Seabourn Cruise Line. Carnival, despite the fact that its headquarters are in Florida, is registered as a Panamanian corporation; its major competitor, Royal Caribbean, also headquartered in Florida, is formally a Liberian corporation. It is estimated that Royal Caribbean saves approximately \$30 million a year in US taxes by registering its ships in Liberia and Norway (Frantz 1999).

The pace of mergers, acquisitions, and bankruptcies has been dizzying over the past two decades. Carnival Corporation, which in 1980 owned a mere three ships, with 3,950 berths, has in the meantime acquired Holland America, Seabourn, Costa, Windstar, and Cunard lines, and grown to a total of 43 ships with a potential passenger capacity over 50,000; it also has part interest in Airtours' Sun Cruises. In 1997 and 1998 alone, Carnival purchased Costa Cruise Lines and Cunard; Royal Caribbean bought Celebrity Cruises; Cruise Holdings bought Dolphin Cruise Line and merged it with its Premier brand; and Norwegian Cruise Line took over Majesty Cruise Line's ships and purchased Orient Lines. While in the majority of these cases the purchasing company maintained separate brands to compete in different cruise market segments, at least a dozen cruise brands disappeared during the past decade.

Globalization in this sector may also be seen in the construction of a new terminal in the Grenadines. The terminal, which will host mainly US-based cruiseships flying foreign flags, is being jointly financed by the European Investment Bank and the Kuwaiti Fund for Arab Economic Development, and constructed by a Kuwaiti firm (*The Westindian Crusader Newspaper* 1997). As this example suggests, if economic globalization means the increased mobility of capital and its spatial disembeddedness, cruiseships represent the ultimate in globalization: physically mobile; massive chunks of multinational capital; capable of being "repositioned" anywhere in the world at

any time; crewed with labor migrants from up to 50 countries on a single ship, essentially unfettered by national or international regulations.

Ethnic Recruitment and Stratification in Laborforce

Cruise ships promise to pamper their guests, and this makes them very labor-intensive enterprises: one onboard employee for every two to three passengers on average. Most shipboard employees work seven days a week for six months at a time, with never more than a few hours off. Typically these employees are quite rigidly stratified in three groups: officers, staff, and crew. These groups have separate living areas, separate dining areas, different levels of restrictions about interacting with passengers, and vastly different pay. On most vessels there is a clear ethnic cast to this hierarchy: Norwegian or Italian officers, Western European and North American staff (mainly the cruise director's, hotel management, entertainment, and business staff), and Asian, Caribbean, and Eastern European crew. While Eastern Europeans (with a significant proportion coming from areas of ethnic conflict) appear to occupy a somewhat ambiguous role in this hierarchy, there tends to be a quite sharp line between the first two groups and the third. Among "the most common mistakes made", a cruiseship employment guide informs its intended audience of North Americans and Europeans, is "applying for a job that is traditionally held by a Filipino or by someone from other 'third world' countries" (Landon 1997:48).

Cruises are floating resorts, and as such consist of two parallel occupational structures: grafted on top of the fairly traditional ship hierarchy of the captain, officers, technicians, and seamen is the complex structure of a resort hotel, with separate hierarchies dealing with food purchase and storage, the kitchen, the dining room, housekeeping, entertainment, concessions, and the purser's office. A large cruise ship may have over 1,000 employees aboard, in over 160 different occupational positions [for a useful organization chart, see Ward (1995)].

It appears common that the ship's officers, and sometimes the engineers, will be recruited from a specific nationality favored by the company; they in some sense form a separate caste, with upward mobility into those ranks impossible for most. Most ships have fairly clear horizontal and vertical lines of ethnic stratification, although they vary with the level of luxury and with the particular cruiseline. The study of changing patterns of ethnic stratification within the "international" crew category has the potential for shedding light on how economic globalization intersects with historic patterns of ethnic relationships and identities. It is hard to conceive of a more compact and diverse "ethnoscape" than that of a cruiseship, nor of one more directly linked to the global mediascapes, technoscapes, finanscapes and ideoscapes that Appadurai (1990) has described in

his widely-cited effort to map connections and disjunctures between cultural flows in the global economy.

The proportion of Western European and North American shipboard employees has been decreasing steadily for a number of years, with Southeast and South Asians supplying the largest proportion of crew members on most ships. Companies such as Royal Caribbean International, with over 13,000 workers, employ nationals of 50 countries or more, far more than only the largest land-based transnational corporations. Carnival and Royal Caribbean appear to have crews from especially large numbers of countries, typically from 40 or more countries in a single ship. Some other lines have historic patterns of recruitment that focus particularly on a single country: Holland America on Indonesia, Princess on the Philippines. The ships in the luxury segment retain a much higher proportion of European and North American (“white”) staff, extending through all categories involving direct interaction with passengers, including waiters and cabin stewards. On all ships cruising the Caribbean, nationals from this region are a small minority of shipboard employees, no more than 7% by one estimate (Wise 1999), despite the proximity and high unemployment of the islands, a fact that remains surprisingly unexplored in the limited literature on cruise employment.

Several tentative reasons may be proffered for this low number of Caribbean crew. On the supply side, the cruiseships compete poorly with the formal hotel sector in the Caribbean, which is mostly unionized and pays relatively high wages. Many Caribbean nationals also participate in chain migration, and may have better options in London, Miami, or New York if they are considering working away from home. It is possible that there are cultural factors operative as well; certainly the grueling pace of work on cruises is very different from the pace of life in the islands. On the demand side, Caribbean service workers appear to be perceived by insiders as surly and resentful, and are believed to equate tourism with a new form of slavery, and for these reasons may not be sought after (Holder 1993). Some of the literature reflecting employers’ views talks of a “cultural mismatch” between Caribbean culture and tourism employment.

In his pioneering article on cruising, Foster was intrigued with the “short-lived society” of passengers, but equally interesting is the medium to long-term society of workers, many of whom alternate between intensive interaction with passengers and an almost completely-segregated off-work existence, with their own bars, decks, and sometimes even swimming pools. Theirs is clearly a different liminality than that experienced by passengers (Foster 1986; Lett 1983), but one experienced in various forms by the estimated 63 million international labor migrants globally (Ball 1997:1611). Furthermore, they are part of a vast and complex system of national and ethnic-based recruitment and labor promotion that has become one of the underpinnings of the global economy. This example of an

incipient truly globalized laborforce remains virtually unstudied, however.

Cruise companies are secretive about their wage scales, especially for crew members. The wage structure is substantially different on the smaller luxury ships of Seabourn, Radisson Seven Seas, Silversea, and Cunard than it is on the larger ones in the budget, contemporary, and premium categories. The proportion of non-Western crew is much higher in the latter, and the level of wage inequality substantially greater as well. According to Sea Cruise Enterprises, an agency that specializes in cruise job placement, cabin stewards, bar waiters and waitresses, dining room waiters and waitresses, wine stewards, and busboys all earn \$50 a month plus tips, which can range between \$1,000 and \$1,500. Lower-level cooks helpers and trainees earn \$500–800, cleaners \$350–500, and ordinary and able-bodied seamen, \$500–800 per month. A *Wall Street Journal* article in 1997 reported \$182 every two weeks with no tips for a Haitian brass buffer, which works out to roughly \$1.55 an hour; \$45 per month plus almost \$1,000 in tips for a Croatian busboy, which comes out to about \$1.95 an hour (Prager 1997); this author's questioning on Carnival's *Fascination* in 1997 basically corroborated these figures. Virtually all of the cruise workers in these and related categories, which represent the great majority on a cruiseship, are from developing countries, largely from Asia but increasingly from Eastern Europe as well. As both the *Wall Street Journal* and sector spokespersons consistently emphasize, these are often princely wages compared to what can be earned back home. They also underline the enormous savings the cruise companies reap under the flag of convenience system, since they are exempt from their home country's minimum wage; labor savings alone probably come to several million dollars a year on a single, larger ship.

The literature on international labor migration makes clear that, more is involved than individual economic calculations. On the demand side, much is conditioned by the ethnically-based recruitment strategies of the sector. As already noted, some companies focus on specific countries, and sometimes on specific ethnicities within countries. Balinese, for example, seem particularly well-represented on Carnival ships, perhaps reflecting views like that of the president of CTI Recruiting and Placement Agency, which locates crew members for Carnival and a number of other lines: "The Balinese are hard-working and consider it an honor to be in the service industry" (Upchurch 1995:201).

Considerations of nationality are built into the placement of recruiting offices (CTI has extensive offices in Asia, Europe, and South America, but none in the Caribbean). Nationality is also considered an important job characteristic: at CTI's online personnel database, prospective employers are invited to select a nationality category along with a job category in searching for prospective employees. In its "Message to Cruise Ship Employees" mentioned earlier, the International Transport Workers' Federation notes:

Paradise pales in the face of employees who complain of over work and abuse. And the idea of modern tourist travel turns ugly in light of the seemingly institutional racism onboard a number of cruise ships, where more preferable accommodations, wages, and working conditions are given to white Europeans and Americans, while others (mostly Asians) are tucked under deck, not to be seen by the public; doing “dirty work” and being paid far less than their deck-side colleagues (1998).

While such a description of institutional racism has some truth, the ethnic stratification of the laborforce is clearly undergoing significant change, especially on the larger, mass-market ships, where labor costs drive placement more than in the luxury segment. The increase in ships and in passenger capacity has put a premium on experience, and promotion opportunities within the broad “crew” category are clearly good for those with knowledge of English and hotel-related skills. Both the maitre d’ and the head waiters on a Carnival ship the author sailed on were South Asian; they noted that the author’s Portuguese waiter with 18 years of ship experience had declined to be promoted. It is not clear how far these opportunities extend into the staff category, however, particularly in the cruise director, purser, and hotel managerial departments. Officers largely remain a separate caste. Several lines, such as Norwegian Cruise Lines and Crystal, emphasize strongly in their promotional literature that all their captains and officers are Norwegian. Princess’s Caribbean brochure informs readers that “Most of our [British] captains and officers are from long seagoing family traditions, tracing generations of sailors up to 200 years back in their family history”.

With a global crew population estimated at 55,000 in 1997 and probably at least 65,000 today, coming from 100 countries or more, there are undoubtedly a plethora of individual stories that can inform about the complex ways globalization pulls people into the worldwide economy in new ways. How information flows work, the role of brokers, and the calculus of individual decision making, are important issues (Goss, Lindquist, Van Hear, Rajzman and Semynov 1995; Spaan 1994). However, there are larger forces at work here, above all the role of particular states in promoting the kind of international contract labor migration that produces crews for cruise-ships.

The largest category of crew in the Caribbean cruise sector is almost certainly Filipino. The Philippines is in fact the largest exporter of labor in the world, with an estimated 4.2 million Filipino overseas contract workers in over 130 countries (Ball 1997:1612). Another several million have become permanent residents elsewhere, and remittances by Filipinos overseas are estimated to have come to \$8–10 billion in 1997 (Aranda 1997). No state apparatus in the world is more centrally involved in promoting the sale of the labor of its citizens abroad. The Philippine Overseas Employment Administration (POEA), a state agency, attempts to both promote and manage the export of Filipino labor, although it

relies on hundreds of licensed but only loosely-supervised private companies to recruit and place most migrants. In 1996, the agency oversaw the deployment of 660,122 workers, of whom 175,469 (27%) were sea-based (Aranda 1997), up from 165,000 in 1995 [Moran (1996); see Smart (1998) for a report by a POEA consultant about the importance of low-paid Asian seaman for the world shipping industry generally].

The POEA proclaims in its literature and on its internet home page that “labor migration is a global phenomenon that should be managed”. On the Philippine side, a good part of that management involves trying to ensure that the overseas earnings accrue as foreign exchange for the country. Philippine law requires that overseas contract workers remit a large proportion of their earnings to the country through government-approved banks. Furthermore, the proportion for shipworkers (80%) is higher than for land-based workers (50–70%). Both the government and the overall economy are highly dependent on these inflows of foreign exchange, and it is perhaps not surprising then that under the government’s 2000 program, the first quality envisioned of the 21st century Filipino is “mobile”.

The POEA faces a severe dilemma in its goal of managing Filipino labor migration. The Philippine state appears quite ambivalent (at least publicly) about its role in promoting labor migration, specifying in law that it does *not* promote overseas employment for economic development, but only “accepts [it] as a present day reality, and requires assurance for the protection of the dignity and fundamental human rights and freedoms of the Filipino citizens” (Commission on Filipinos Overseas 1995). This latter task, central for the legitimacy of the state’s role (Ball 1997), is not easily accomplished in an increasingly crowded field of would-be labor exporters. In *Cruise Industry News Annual*, for example, the president of a major labor recruiting company for this section complains about the “tedious regulations” of POEA and warns pointedly: little does this overseas administration “realize that this massive amount of frustrating paperwork will only cause the cruiselines to look elsewhere” (Upchurch 1995:201).

Waiting in the wings, and very likely such an inexhaustible source of cheap labor that it could drive ship wages down even further, is China. Its state-owned Marine and Seamen Service Corporation is charged with promoting the overseas employment of Chinese seamen. In contrast to the Philippines, China’s program is more integrated into its development policy, with overseas ship employment seen as a way of raising maritime skills to international standards. A recent article from *Shipping Times* (Fong 1997) reports that “China wants to see its seamen adjust quickly to working in the international crewing scene, as it aims to be a major source of seafarers to the world”. According to the general manager of the office in Singapore, China is particularly promoting employment by Singapore-based employers, because cultural similarities facilitate the process and Chinese workers pick up English much faster than

they would otherwise. He also notes: “Our next target is to supply labor to cruise operators. We hope to interest cruise operators to hire Chinese waitresses, cabin stewards, and cooks”.

The global Caribbean crew offer clues to many aspects of globalization. Tracing the process of how individuals from everywhere are connected to cruiseships plying a sea thousands of miles away leads to the central role of the state and other institutions in the worldwide labor migration on which this sector so heavily depends. It sheds light on global/local connections that are far more extensive than the host/guest relationship often focused upon in the tourism literature. It also draws attention to new niche-based patterns of international ethnic stratification.

Deterritorialization, Simulation and Theming

One of the central features of the globalization process is the disembedding of social relations from their local context, a process that Sorkin (1992) has called “despatialization”, and others, “deteritorialization”. In this view, elaborated further by Zukin (1992) and others, place becomes increasingly separated from historically-rooted space, subject increasingly to outside market-driven forces. Postmodern landscapes become “economic” rather than “vernacular”, and whole sections of cities become detached from local culture and society and recreated through simulation and theming. Sorkin concludes:

This is the meaning of the theme park, the place that embodies it all, the ageographia, the surveillance and control, the simulations without end. The theme park presents a happy regulated vision of pleasure—all those artfully hoodwinking forms—as a substitute for the democratic public realm, and it does so appealingly by stripping troubled urbanity of its sting, of the presence of the poor, of crime, of dirt, of work (1992:xv).

In similar ways, the Caribbean cruise rests on many processes of economic and political deterritorialization: its relative freedom from political regulation; its ability to draw on a global labor pool, quite unconnected to the territorial location of its ships; its decreased dependence on specific ports of call as the ship itself has become the destination, and so on. The cultural parallels are even more obvious. It has been widely commented that the new mass-market ships, particularly Carnival’s, seem more like floating theme parks than ships (Showker and Sehlinger 1998:222). In fact the noted Italian architect, Vittorio Garroni Carbonara, whose company designed both the *Crystal Harmony* cruiseship and Huis Ten Bosch, the fabulously-successful theme park in Japan that replicates various historical sites in the Netherlands, suggested in a speech to the Seatrade Asia Pacific Cruise Convention in Singapore in December 1996 that in addition to mid-sized ships carrying passengers to interesting ports of call, he foresaw ships that would be essentially floating theme parks, artificial islands largely replacing real-life des-

tinations (Garroni Carbonara 1997). A discussion of globalization processes helps to elaborate and expand on this cultural theme.

Onboard Multiculturalism

On the author's cruise on Carnival's *Fascination*, its extremely diverse laborforce was actively marketed to tourists as part of their experience. Its director repeatedly reminded the passengers of the wide range of nationalities among the crew, emphasizing how they formed "one big happy family" and how the ship represented a wonderfully-successful "mini-United Nations" that the rest of the world could learn from. Specific ethnic virtues were extolled and promoted, such as Filipino ice-carving (hardly an obvious ethnic marker for a tropical country). All ship employees wore name tags with their nationality listed along with their position.

As a marketing strategy, both the degree to which this onboard diversity is marketed, and the manner in which it is, appear to vary considerably. Holland America Line's Caribbean catalog declares: "At the heart of Holland America's unmatched onboard experience is our renowned Indonesian and Filipino staff. Trained at our very own school in Jakarta, Indonesia, they pride themselves in exceeding your every wish". Indeed, alongside the brochure's promise that "Somehow the Caribbean seems more exotic from the deck of a Holland America cruise ship", a uniformed Indonesian young man is pictured tapping on a xylophone. Is Asian exoticism constructing the Caribbean cruise tourist gaze?

In contrast, Princess' Caribbean catalog reminds would-be passengers that "Our Maitres d' and Head Waiters are predominantly Italian and have been with us for up to 30 years". As in most of the advertising, a distinction is made between European (English-speaking of course) and "international" staff, which in the pictures is virtually entirely Asian. Several lines take pains to stress that their international staff is "European-trained". In practically all Caribbean catalogs, the staff and crew that appear in pictures are either Western European "whites" or Asians. The standard use of the term "international" to apply only to labor migrants from poorer countries is a revealing semantic reflection of the inequities of deterritorialization; employees from richer countries do not lose their nationality.

Expressing a sentiment greatly feared by the Caribbean hotel sector, Royal Caribbean executive Rod McLeod has said that the greatest opportunity for growth has been "to take people out of hotels within our destination areas. And if we could empty out some Miami Beach hotels, some Puerto Rican hotels, some in Jamaica—all the better" (quoted in Dickinson and Vladimir 1997:140). It is at least conceivable that the practically-total absence of pictorial representations of Caribbean staff in the promotional literature serves to signal to a predominantly white passenger pool that their contact with Afro-Caribbeans will be greatly reduced if they take a cruise rather than stay in an island hotel. Since stayover tourists are far

more economically beneficial to Caribbean countries than cruise day visitors, the shift away from the former towards the latter represents an alarming trend for the region.

To the degree that the inhabitants of the Caribbean are being excluded from both participation in and the benefits of the cruise sector in their region, this process reflects in disturbing fashion the intersection of global processes of uneven development with those of global ethnic and racial stratification. The same globalization processes that are marginalizing black Africa are bringing to an end the special preferences that have protected key industries such as sugar and bananas, upon which Caribbean peoples of African descent have long depended. An *Economist* (1997a) article on the disruptive consequences of the end of preferences for Caribbean commodities is entitled “Expelled from Eden”—even as more and more tourists come in search of it.

Fantasyscapes Onboard and on Land

Disney Corporation, that consummate master of fantasy, only entered the cruise business in 1998, but fantasy has been the stock in this trade for a long time. When one of Carnival’s first specially-constructed ships, *The Holiday*, made its debut in 1985, Carnival’s chairman Micky Arison called it a “Disney World for Adults” (Showker and Sehlinger 1998:223). Other Carnival ships bear names like *Fantasy*, *Ecstasy*, *Elation* and *Paradise*. Sociologist Ritzer (1998) has coined the phrase, “McDisneyization”, to stress similarities between entertainment and tourism, including cruiseships, to the general social processes he has labeled “McDonaldization”.

In an entertaining account of his first Caribbean cruise, “Shipping Out: On the (Nearly Lethal) Comforts of a Luxury Cruise”, Harper’s editor and novelist David Foster Wallace discusses how the fantasy themes in the advertising take on something of the nature of commandments on board:

This is advertising (i.e., fantasy-enablement), but with a queerly authoritarian twist. Note the imperative use of the second person and a specificity out of detail that extends to what you will say (you will say, “I couldn’t agree more” and “Let’s do it all!”). You are, here, excused from even the work of constructing the fantasy, because the ads do it for you. And this near-parental type of advertising makes a very special promise, a diabolically seductive promise that’s actually kind of honest, because it’s a promise that the Luxury Cruise itself is all about honoring. The promise is not that you can experience great pleasure but that you will. They’ll make certain of it . . . Your pleasure will, for seven nights and six and a half days, be wisely and efficiently managed (Wallace 1996:37).

Fantasy theming and simulation are endemic on most cruiseships, particularly in the mass-market budget and contemporary sectors. Even within a themed ship, such as Carnival’s *Fascination*, whose focus is Hollywood, there will be themed spaces drawing inspiration

from all over the globe, juxtaposed right against each other. As Sorkin and others who have explored the global explosion of themed environments have observed, playful fantasy is backed up by high levels of surveillance and control. The ultimate in fantasyscapes on Caribbean cruises is not on the ship, however. It is to be found on “fantasy islands”, privately-owned by the cruise companies, off-limits to all but their passengers and employees, and marketed as the true Caribbean experience—only better.

Of the eight major cruiselines operating regularly in the Caribbean, six own private islands which they include among their ports of call. All Holland America cruises in the Caribbean spend a day at its Half Moon Cay; all Disney cruises spend a day at Casaway Cay; most Norwegian Cruise Lines cruises at Great Stirrup Cay; all Florida-based Princess cruises at Princess Cay; half of Costa cruises at Serena Cay; all Royal Caribbean cruises at either Coco Cay or at Labadee. The last, Labadee, is not actually an island but a piece of Haiti, surrounded by a ten-foot-high iron wall, patrolled by armed guards. According to one account (Orenstein 1997), most Royal Caribbean passengers visiting Labadee do not even realize that they are in Haiti at all. The company’s literature is ambiguous yet revealing. In a section entitled “Private Islands”, Royal Caribbean’s catalog says:

(W)hen we set out to find an island retreat for our passengers, we knew just what we were looking for. And we found it. Twice, actually. One is CocoCay, in the Bahamas. And the other is Labadee, an exclusive destination on the coast of Haiti. Both are perfect island fantasies.

As Orenstein observes, “Royal Caribbean isn’t promoting Haiti; it’s taking passengers to an imaginary paradise”, and whether Labadee is really a “private island” matters little in that context. It is thus important to closely examine what kind of fantasy is being constructed, and what its implications are for the Caribbean.

According to Holland America Lines, its private island “is regarded by many Bahamians as the most beautiful island in the Bahamas”, and it describes the island’s offerings as follows:

Half Moon Cay provides its guests with a West Indies experience harkening back to the Caribbean of 30 years ago. “It offers the best of the Caribbean rolled into one destination” . . . The development, built along the shore of a white sand beach more than a mile in length, is designed to provide—in one day and one harmonious location—the total experience that can be found in the West Indies: paradise rediscovered, as well as a warm ambiance seasoned with the flavors of the countries that made their mark in the Caribbean centuries ago (Holland America Line 1997b).

In another release, entitled “Half Moon Cay Private Island Destination Features: An Uncluttered and Hassle-Free Setting”, the company states:

As guests step ashore at Holland America Line’s new Half Moon Cay private island destination, the tune of Bobby McFerrin’s free-

spirited “Don’t Worry be Happy” may come to mind. Half Moon Cay recalls the idyllic Caribbean of 30 years ago. There are no hassles. It’s just you and a balmy island with a white-sand beach, coral reefs and a clutter-free arrangement of attractive facilities designed for casual roaming (Holland America Line 1997a).

An island with no Caribbean people living on it is “the best of the Caribbean”, offering “the total experience that can be found in the West Indies”. There is no clutter, and above all no hassle. As a Royal Caribbean instructor at Labadee puts it, “It’s super-cheap, it’s pretty, and there’s minimal contact. Contact is disturbing to the passengers” (Orenstein 1997). Indeed, the “islanders” at Disney’s Castaway Cay are hired through casting calls, and hail from as far away as Australia (Sloan 1998); the small number of Bahamian employees are primarily “sanitation workers”. Disney dredged sand from the bay and then ground it up further to make the island’s beaches conform to a touristic image of Edenic perfection (Antoni 1999). Freed of spontaneous contact and experiences, these carefully-planned and artificially-created environments are said to take cruise passengers back to the real, authentic Caribbean—one that existed 30 years ago but no longer exists except in reconstructed form on these fantasy islands.

The cruise companies spend a lot of money on market surveys, and there is little reason to doubt that they know what their mass-market passengers want, even the passenger quoted in a *Time* magazine article who complained on Royal Caribbean International’s private island, “There’s nothing here but some palm trees. I’m going back to the ship and watch a movie” (Greenwald 1998:45). The tourist concerns about harassment and safety are not without basis, as the Caribbean tourism industry is well aware, although sexual harassment and rape are sufficiently common on cruiseships to have rated a recent article in the *New York Times* (Frantz 1998). Nonetheless, it is intriguing how uninhabited privately-owned islands, free of the vitality as well as the problems of local societies, can be marketed as the way to have the truly “authentic” Caribbean experience.

A further development of enclave-based encapsulation of cruise tourists (and their dollars) is the development of private clubs for passengers in Caribbean ports of call. In its annual report, Royal Caribbean International states:

Passengers told the Company they wanted their own private clubs in ports of call, where they could take a break from shopping and sightseeing. Royal Caribbean responded with Crown and Anchor Clubs, adding a new club this year in Old San Juan, Puerto Rico. The first club opened a year earlier in St. Thomas (1996:15).

It goes without saying that the development of private island destinations has been alarming to Caribbean countries, for in essence a local port is being cut out of the cruise itinerary in the process. The company reaps the economic rewards of renting their passengers everything from snorkeling equipment to cabanas to small boats,

and selling them drinks and souvenirs at company-owned shops and markets. The already-limited contribution of cruise passengers to local Caribbean economies is further eroded.

On land, the all-inclusive resorts, where a single-price covers everything, represent a land-based response to these perceived problems. While largely owned and managed by locals and praised as an example of successful innovation by Poon (1990, 1993), they pose similar problems in terms of the extent of their local impact, although it is undoubtedly broader than that of the cruise business. To some extent Caribbean destinations are imitating the cruise ships, introducing theming in the port city landscapes (such as in Aruba, whose main street feels very much like a theme park) and creating manmade, artificial attractions, divorced from the geographical environment, as in St. Maarten (McElroy and de Albuquerque 1998:163). Caribbean destinations must walk a fine line between promoting their uniqueness and trying to meet the expectations and desires of mass tourists, particularly in a context where the President of Carnival Corporation can say, "The limited number of countries and ports offered [in the Caribbean] is not a deterrent to Carnival customers; after all the ship is the attraction, not the port of call" (Dickinson 1993:115). To a significant degree, the response of at least some ports seems to be to try to become an extension of the fantasy environment of the ship, one which reproduces in new form the enclave development long characteristic of the region.

CONCLUSION

Globalization is nothing new to the Caribbean. Probably more than any other region, this one has been fully integrated into and dependent upon the world economy for centuries (Mintz 1985; Mintz and Price 1985). Many of its peoples have undergone what Hall (1997) called a "double diasporization", first coming from Africa and Asia and then dispersing a second time to other Caribbean islands and into North America and Europe. In the wake of global restructuring and competition, its export industries have been in decline for decades. Mandle (1996:71) suggests that by the 60s, the second diasporization—partly the result of this decline—of both its African and South Asian populations had made the Caribbean a "nation without borders", foreshadowing many of the processes that have attracted the attention of globalization theorists in the 90s.

In a recent survey of the Caribbean region, the World Bank reports "with few exceptions, general living standards have declined since the late 1970s and early 1980s", and that "poverty in the region averages roughly 38% of the total population, ranging from a high of 65% in Haiti to a low of 5% in the Bahamas". Supporting most mainstream views both in and outside the region, the report states: "The engines of future growth are likely to be in the areas of tourism and other service industries" (Baker 1997:xiii, xviii).

Caribbean cruise tourism represents a continuing process of globalization in the region, but one which poses in particularly stark terms some of its ambiguities, complexities, and contradictions. It is in this sense that one can raise the possibility that the study of Caribbean cruise tourism reveals globalization as a process at sea in the sense of a drift (or perhaps more a Titanic-style full-steam-ahead rush) towards an unchartered and unforeseeable destination (Greider 1997). As McMichael (1996) has powerfully stated, globalization is a project—a conscious effort by a transnational alliance of actors to implement a particular vision of global free markets. It is a utopian project, in much the sense that Polanyi (1957) has described the 19th century liberal vision of a completely self-regulating economy as an impossible utopia. Today the utopians in the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Trade Organization are implementing, in the name of globalization and free trade, far-reaching changes in the Caribbean. Despite the opposition of both the islands and most European countries, the organization has ruled that European preferences for Caribbean bananas, produced by smallholders on the islands of St. Lucia, St. Vincent, Dominica and elsewhere, must be eliminated in order to level the field with the giant US multinationals in central America, which produce bananas under contract. Other preferences and special arrangements with European countries are also under attack. World Bank and IMF-sponsored structural adjustment and other reforms are widespread in the region.

Globalization detaches economic life from the constraints of geography—physical, cultural, political—and nowhere is this more evident than in Caribbean cruise tourism. The companies are entirely non-Caribbean. Their destinations are increasingly under their direct ownership and control; Caribbean cruises are taking on elements of “cruises to nowhere”. The ships’ laborforce is overwhelmingly non-Caribbean. What these ships do in the Caribbean Sea (including dumping) is outside the jurisdiction of Caribbean states. Meanwhile, the Caribbean Hotel Association complains helplessly about the unequal playing field it shares with the largely-unregulated and untaxed cruiseships and worries about the stated ambitions of leaders to “empty out” its hotels. Indeed, the Caribbean Tourism Organization reports that the proportion of North American tourists who spend at least one night on land has declined from 61.8% in 1987 to 48.6% in 1998 (McDowell 1999). Citing declining demand, American Airlines in 1998 forced Antigua, Grenada, and St. Lucia to pay it a subsidy of \$1.5 million each in order to maintain daily nonstop jet service from Miami (McDowell 1999; Rohter 1998). With stopover passengers vastly outspending cruise visitors and therefore greatly preferred and sought after, smaller Caribbean countries find themselves having to subsidize their transport in order to get them (Pattullo 1996:164–171).

Globalization, it is often argued, is a process unlikely ever to be completed, and a particularly telling example involves the international mobility of labor. Despite the fact that over 100 million

economic labor migrants live abroad, the mobility of labor—as opposed to capital—remains highly circumscribed (for a spirited commentary on this discrepancy, see Seabrook 1998). In *The Rise of Network Society*, Castells (1996:234) argued that the only global labor market that can be said to exist is for “a tiny fraction of the laborforce, concerning the highest-skilled professionals in innovative R&D, cutting-edge engineering, financial management, advanced business services, and entertainment, who shift and commute between nodes of the global networks that control the planet”. Most labor markets are likely to remain national or regional, Castells argues. This reflects the fact, as Mittelman has put it, that “the compression of time and space is limited because flows of capital and technology must eventually touch down in distinct places”. (1996:229). Cruiseships, however, “touch down” only briefly in their ports of call, and spend most of their time in non-territorial waters. In such an environment, one is able to see what is possibly the first truly *non-elite* global labor market and global laborforce.

Cruiseship crews are probably the most globally-diverse yet physically compact laborforces anywhere. They constitute a virtual laboratory for studying what a truly global force might look like, and how global companies are responding to the challenge of both recruiting and managing such diverse aggregations of workers. They also represent a way of seeing how emergent global labor markets forge new connections and articulate with local communities and economies. As Mintz comments, there is in the Caribbean a mix of new and old globalization processes. Asian contract labor migrants, for example, are not new to the Caribbean; they came by the hundreds of thousands in the 19th and early 20th centuries. Despite the intention of most to return to their country of origin, the great majority stayed and today their descendents form major proportions of several southern Caribbean societies (Brereton 1994). The contemporary global forces that fuel the expansion of the cruise sector, with their largely-Asian crews, are reconnecting these two far-flung parts of the world in new ways with potentially equally unforeseen consequences.

Cruise crews may be global, but as already noted, globally-recruited labor is certainly not undifferentiated. Ships carry a heavy cultural cargo from the past, with their ethnically-correlated categories of officers, staff, and crew and their quasi-military authority relations. Furthermore, state strategies of labor export give some workers advantages (and disadvantages) in relation to others, and cruise sector recruitment meshes in complex ways both with tourist images and expectations and with their own interests in labor control, cost minimization, and public relations. Clearly, the labor migrants themselves, individually and collectively, are shaping this history, too, although their stories remain largely untold.

Some never will be. As Hurricane Mitch approached the Caribbean in 1998, Windjammer Barefoot Cruise's *Fantome*, a four-masted schooner that could carry 128 passengers, disembarked its passengers and ten “nonessential” crew in Belize City on October

26th and headed south to try to escape the hurricane. Damage to the vessel (registered in Equatorial Guinea) was feared if it remained in port. Both the *Fantome* and Mitch tacked back and forth over the next two days before they collided tragically: the *Fantome* went down with its entire crew off the coast of Honduras on October 28th. Thirty-one perished (Carrier 1998). This is not the place to second-guess priorities or decisions of either the captain or the company, but the story suggests that the seas have always been an uncertain place, and globalization at sea may be especially so. It is a good place to watch how an unusually unfettered form of globalization plays itself out. Following the cruise tourists to the Caribbean, and then tracing out the global connections on which this Caribbean business depends, and then exploring their complex ramifications around the globe, is one promising strategy for accomplishing this. ■

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