



School of Global Studies

# The Symbols of Sovereignty

A Study of the Symbolism of Jamaica's Route to Republic in the Post Elizabeth II Era

*Dem find out mama earth got gold then,  
Dem mine out mama earth black soul then,  
You work hard just fi get ah black card  
Same card weh you swipe buy back your black gold then*  
– Song by Chronixx (2017)

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## Abstract

Jamaica is a constitutional monarchy and thus still has the British King as head of state, it has been on the table to remove the King as head of state for decades, and as Queen Elizabeth II passed away and King Charles III now has taken over the throne, the issue has come to the surface. This study investigates what perceptions exist on making such a constitutional reform, with the main focus on gaining greater understanding of how removing the British King as head of state of Jamaica being perceived as part of the process of gaining full independence. The study takes a stance in the postcolonial school of thought, and expanding the knowledge about the symbolic aspects of decolonization is the aim of the essay. This is done through analyzing tweets regarding the keywords 'monarch', 'republic', 'constitution' and 'independence', posted since the death of the Queen. The main results regard how the Crown has come to be a symbol of colonialism, and how removal of the Crown is seen as a step of symbolic decolonization on the route towards full independence.

*Thank you!*

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## Chapter 1. Introduction

*This chapter will first provide an overview of the political and social context of the issue today, to give an overview of what the problem is. After this the purpose of the study is pinpointed and the research task outlined. There is then an overview of the historical and geographical context in which this research is situated, as history and context is of great importance for understanding the issue this research is investigating (Chowdhury, 2019, 105-110; Biswas, 2021, 222). Lastly, there is a discussion of the societal and academic relevance of the study.*

### 1.1 The issue

Did you know King Charles III, the recently coronated king of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (hereafter Britain), is also king and head of state in some of Britain's former colonies? Colonialism is something that many regard a regrettable time in history, something that can never be repeated. However, despite formal decolonization, official independence and sovereignty, colonial structures persist through, for example, the global economic system, and as shown here in how the colonial institution of the British Crown (hereafter 'the Crown') has endured into the post-colonial period (Manzo, 2019, 315). Despite officially gaining independence and sovereignty such postcolonial structures linger and is a constant reminder of the colonial past (the distinction between post-colonial and postcolonial is described in chapter 2). Many hold that this prevents the attainment of full independence and a break from this colonial past.

#### *1.1.2 Political and social context of the issue*

The Black Lives Matter-movement (hereafter BLM), which in the US has been calling attention towards everyday examples of institutionalized racism, often materialized in violent oppression and racial profiling by American police forces, spilled over into global discourse and came, in the Caribbean, to include questioning of the endurance of the British monarch as head of state in many Caribbean countries (Taylor, 2019, 288-289; Bobaro, 2022; Austen, 2022; Coizer, 2022). A renewed drive to remove the monarch as head of state was induced as "demonstrators drew a direct link [...] between notions of police brutality and the Queen as the symbol of law enforcement" (Mark Landler in Bobaro, 2022). In other words, BLM came to draw attention both to the areas' history and colonial heritage, but also to Queen Elizabeth II as head of state as a symbol of continuing colonial structures.

On November 30, 2021, these ideas materialized through Barbados, one of Great Britain's former colonies, becoming a republic. This transition had been on the political agenda since independence in 1966 and Prime Minister Mia Mottley has described how the "time has come to fully leave our colonial past behind" (Richards, 2021). The transition is also described by the Barbadian scholar of Caribbean nationalism Robert Goddard as symbolic and as key to the process of 'symbolic decolonization' (Goddard, 2022). Other Caribbean countries have further expressed intent to follow suit, one of them being Jamaica (Hall & Gentleman, 2022).

In March 2022, a visit by Duke and Duchess of Cambridge to former British colonies Belize, Jamaica, and The Bahamas to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II 70<sup>th</sup> year on the throne generated protests for reparations for slavery and republican sentiment (Hall & Gentleman, 2022; Karim, 2022). Protestor and human rights activist Kay Osborne (in CNN, 2022) describes how the visit became an insult to the Jamaican people, as they are on the road to removing the chains of the past this visit acts a metaphor for the Crown trying to hold on to those chains. On the Jamaican news-site 'Jamaica Observer' the Duke was further criticized for not including a formal apology for the time of slavery in any of his speeches during this 3-day visit to the country (Cross, 2022).

In 2012 44% of Jamaicans declared they wanted to remove Queen Elizabeth II as head of state (Wright, 2023). This number increased and was in August 2022 up at 56% (Jamaica Gleaner, 2022). In a poll made on Twitter by Jamaica's minister of Legal and Constitutional Affairs Malahoo Forte (*tweet 1* – tweets are referenced in appendix 1) in October 2022 the percentage in favor of abolishing the monarchy was up at 82%, and in another poll made by Ms. Forte in April 2023 69% of the respondents voted in favor (*tweet 2*). Wright (2023) further reports in connection to King Charles III coronation on 7 May 2023 that Jamaicans are over the monarchy and now wants a head of state to which they can relate.

King Charles III, in April 2023, as a response to documentation showing how the monarchy has been involved in the slave trade, expressed intent to further investigate the links between the monarchy and the transatlantic slave trade (Conn & Hill, 2023). Historians and civil rights groups however argue that this is not enough. According to them, the Crown needs to take responsibility through acknowledging the role the monarchy has played in the past, and discussing what they can do today to make amends (*ibid.*). Hence, the Crown is showing some reflexivity today, but not enough.

After the Queen's passing on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September 2022 some immediate Caribbean reactions pointed to the Crown as a symbol of "bad things" (Vofo Kana, 2022). The changing of the monarch from Queen Elizabeth II to King Charles III could further be an important factor for some Caribbean states to transition to republics as the Queen was personally popular and as it brings renewed attention to the issue (Gunia, 2022; O'Brien, 2018, 973). Dr Opal Palmer Adisa, a Jamaican writer and doctor in ethnic studies and Caribbean literature, says that:

*it's a moment in time, it's an important historical moment for us to pause, look at where we are, and look at where we wanna go, and make some decisions that will make our children proud of us, and be able to move further with their own sense of independence and sovereignty (Coizer, 2022).*

This situation makes this research particularly relevant at this time, because it is these kind of reactions to the change of monarch and reactions to Jamaica's steps towards the transition to a republic that this research is aimed at.

## 1.2 Purpose of the study and research questions

This study aims to attend to issues of embedded injustice symbolized in the form of the continuing (post-)colonial institutional structure of the monarchy, and more specifically ideas behind attempts to disrupt such structures. This will be done through studying perceptions of this matter found in the Jamaican context, more specifically through analyzing Twitter-data to find perceptions of republicanism and notions of the monarchy. By doing this the aim is to bring further understanding to how republicanism can be an expression of symbolic decolonization in the 21<sup>st</sup> century Caribbean. Therefore, the purpose of the study is to gain greater understanding of the phenomena of symbolic decolonization (a concept which will be elaborated on in Chapter 2), and what, from the previously colonized' perspective, is seen as important for 'completing independence.'

### 1.2.1 Research questions

- In what ways and why is removing the British King as head of state of Jamaica being perceived as part of the process of gaining full independence?
  - o What perceptions of the monarchy can be found?
  - o What is the transition to a republic presumed to change?

## 1.3 Background

### 1.3.1 *Historical and geographical context*

A broad overview of the historical and geographical context is of importance for understanding what the King as head of state in Jamaica can symbolize. This section is by no means an adequate description of the history of Jamaica, but it highlights some key historical events which are of importance for fully understanding the issue at hand.

In 1492 Christopher Columbus set sail from Spain to the West with the goal of reaching East India, but instead he reached the Caribbean (the reason as to why this area is also called the West Indies) (Krishna, 2019, 320, 331; Emmer & Carrera Damas, 1999, 1). At this time in history European powers were in the early stages of bullionism and wealth-extracting missions to the parts of the world which we today call the Global South (Emmer & Carrera Damas, 1999, 275-276). At arrival in the Caribbean, Columbus encountered natives. Some, he described to the Spanish Crown, could be ‘good servants’ and easily converted to Christianity, while others were described as ‘cannibals’ (Beckles, 2021, xiii; Emmer & Carrera Damas, 1999, 325). These indigenous peoples of the Caribbean were exposed and exploited, and by the 1560s their number had been reduced from over a million to less than 500 (Beckles, 2021, xiii-xiv).

*He said he discovered new lands  
And he thought that I wouldn't know  
He discovered a lot of Indians  
Who discovered the lands before*  
– Song by Shadow (1991)

Once word got out that Spain had found this ‘New World’ other European countries wanted a piece of the cake. Wars for economic dominance in the region between Spain, the Dutch, French and British therefore characterized following decades (Beckles, 2021, xvi-xv). During the 16<sup>th</sup> century, sugar, cotton, and coffee was introduced in the Caribbean, and the labor force at such plantations gradually changed from indigenous slaves and European settlers to enslaved and transported African people (Beckles, 2021, xiv; Knight, 1997, 5). This became the beginning of centuries of European wealth extraction and exploitation of enslaved African labor and Caribbean resources. In his book ‘Capitalism and Slavery’ Trinidadian Eric Williams (1964, 102) argued that these industries, or in other words the triangular trade-system, was what facilitated the British industrial revolution.

This era is characterized by 'chattel slavery'. This means that the enslaved peoples, in the name of the law and social control, were treated as chattel, or property, of the colonizer or slave owner (Beckles, 2021, 17-18; Petley, 2005, 483; Knight, 1997, 194-195). These people were owned, exploited, and essentially dehumanized for the sake of the European wealth extraction system, and it is estimated that less than 20% of the persons imported from Africa survived. This in a system that was kept in place for almost 300 years, from the first enslaved Africans entering the Spanish Caribbean in the 1540s until 'emancipation' from the British slave owners in 1833 (Beckles, 2021, xiv, 17-24). The British Slavery Abolition Act 1833, however, did end the legal permission of owning people, but it also outlined how the slave owners were to be compensated for the loss of 'their property' as emancipation was carried out (Beckles, 2021, 21-24; Manzo, 2019, 299; Knight, 1997, 251). This essentially mean that the abolition of slavery provided reparations for the slave owners, and not the slaves. At emancipation, the British government compensated the enslavers with 20 million pounds, which was about 44% of the market worth of all slaves in the British Caribbean territories in 1833 (Beckles, 2021, 24). The remaining 66% were to be paid by the slaves in free labor for an additional six to twelve years under so called 'apprenticeship' (Knight, 1997, 251), which was justified by the British as of importance for making the former slaves 'industrious' (Beckles, 2021, 24). However, slavery continued in other parts of the Caribbean, and British capital kept flowing here (Knight, 1997, 251). Last of the Caribbean islands to abolish slavery was the Spanish colony Cuba in 1886 (Knight, 1997, 251).

This wealth extraction model essentially led Caribbean economies to primarily continue with agricultural export after the abolition of slavery when entering the global capitalist market (Brereton et al., 2004, 31). The European territories in the Caribbean further kept colony-status and, for example, political and economic events were decided by the colonial ruler, or Governor-General as it was called in British colonies (Brereton et al., 2004, 44; Beckles, 2021, 71, 89). These governors ruled with the economic gain of the mother country as the main goal, and racism was used to justify this suppression (Brereton et al., 2004, 192-193).

Demands for self-government evolved in the 1930s in the Caribbean, and in Jamaica two nationalist leaders came out of labor strikes in 1938 (Brereton et al., 2004, 136). Jamaica was at that time a so called 'crown colony' of Britain, a structure based on racist principles of white government, and exploitative economic extraction in favor of Britain (Brereton et al., 2004,

189-195). In the struggle for independence Jamaica long fought to instead gain ‘dominion status,’ sometimes referred to as home-rule which British colonies such as Canada (from 1867), Australia (1901) and New Zealand (1907) maintained (O’Brien, 2018, 960). Dominion status meant the right to choose ones own government, as opposed to a crown colony where the British imposed Governor-General ruled as a single despot (Beckles, 2021, 89). The goal was in other words to be treated as an independent entity albeit still connected to the Crown through the British Commonwealth of Nations; a community wherein all members were seen as equal but where allegiance was pledged to the British monarch (O’Brien, 2018; The Commonwealth, n.d.).

At the time of independence from British colonial rule in the Caribbean (approx. 1960), most colonies retained the British Crown and became constitutional monarchies (O’Brien, 2018, 969; Trotman, 2012, 37). These states then became members of the British Commonwealth of Nations and obtained, what was described as, a seat to the table equal to the community’s ‘white settler dominions’ (O’Brien, 2018, 964). However, as the Commonwealth has a history of in fact not treating all members equally, especially with regards to dominions gaining independence at later stages, one must not blindly assume that this ‘equal seat’ was indeed equal (Waseem, 2016, 76-77, 82).

Today, there are in total 14 independent states (excluding the United Kingdom itself) which have both kept their monarchial status and are part of the British Commonwealth Realm. Among these we find Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Belize, Grenada, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines in the Caribbean.

In Jamaica then, the Crown, in dialogue with the current Prime Minister, appoints a Governor-General whose job is to function in the King’s stead (Kings House Jamaica, n.d.). The Constitution of Jamaica (1962) further states that the Governor-General shall “hold office during Her [or His] Majesty’s pleasure” (section 27), and the position comes with responsibilities such as swearing in of the Prime Minister and other senior officials (Kings House Jamaica, n.d.). Other than that, the position mainly holds ceremonial functions, including giving a ‘throne speech’ in the beginning of each parliamentary year (which includes outlining the government’s legislative program for the coming year), and hosting ceremonies of state visits and various celebrations (ibid.). All in all, the Governor-General keeps mainly ceremonial

status in Jamaica today (as in other Commonwealth Realms) and no direct power is wielded by the British monarchy (O'Brien, 2018, 972). The symbolic significance of the Crown has however been given attention over the last few years as “calls for reparations for Britain’s often brutal role in the slave trade have been rising” (Austen, 2022).

#### 1.4 Delimited research task

Due to the timeframe of this research to be completed being no more than 9 weeks the scope of the study needs to be limited in space and time. The context about which data will be gathered is therefore geographically delimited to Jamaica. First and foremost, this limits the research to investigation of one former colony, as opposed to investigating the colonizers. A conscious choice, as the research aims to investigate issues faced by previous colonies from their perspective, as an attempt at avoiding further contributing to Eurocentrism and instead bring another perspective to the forefront (Thurén, 2019, 29-30). Jamaica, as opposed to other Caribbean monarchies and former British colonies, is further chosen for two reasons. First, due to my personal experience with Jamaica thanks to my exchange semester at the University of the West Indies (UWI), campus Mona. My previous knowledge about this context makes it a more accessible area of study. Second, it has been accepted policy for decades that Jamaica will eventually transition to a republic, which makes it a purposively chosen critical case sample, and further enables analysis of the phenomena of interest to this study (Bryman, 2021, 99, 497).

As this research is based on data gathered from the social media platform Twitter, “digital diasporas” are included in the dataset. As information technologies has made geographical demarcations less important, and as it has evolved the understanding of identity (Ponzanesi, 2020, 981), diaspora Jamaicans can now take part in the political discourse in Jamaica in real time. This means that the study includes diaspora discourse, however distinguishing between locals and the diaspora is not a problem as they all can take part in this ‘Jamaican discourse.’

When it comes to limiting the research in time, the study’s timeframe is set to start on the 8<sup>th</sup> of September 2022, the day of Queen Elizabeth II passing, and end on the 4<sup>th</sup> of May 2023. This because of the heightened attention to the matter of constitutional reform the change of monarch has brought.

The research task is also theoretically delimited to investigating the symbolic element of decolonization, rather than material steps (Ngugi, n.d.). This to investigate values regarding structurally embedded injustice and notions behind how to get rid of this.

Another delimitation of this research was made in the choice of focusing on the symbolic meaning of the removal of the monarchy in Jamaica. One could also have investigated the fact that Jamaica *still* has the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (JCPC) (“the court of final appeal for the UK overseas territories and Crown dependencies” (JCPC, n.d.)) as its final appellate court (Jis, n.d.). This is another institution that, like the Crown, is historically colonial and seen as a hatch in Jamaican sovereignty (O’Brien, 2018, 959; Robinson, 2012). However, the JCPC is not the focus of this study. However due to the limited timeframe and scope of this study the investigation of the symbolic meaning of the JCPC, and possible removal of same, will have to be left for future research.

### 1.5 Societal and academic relevance

Biswas (2021) describes the emergence of an amnesia regarding the brutal colonial history and an “ignorance about the ways that its ideology and practices have been inscribed into the structure of world politics” (221) (Krishna, 2019, 229). This makes research in this area of utmost societal importance, to enhance awareness of global injustices, postcolonial structures, and power relations. Furthermore, this research is of scientific relevance as Queen Elizabeth II has been an important factor to Caribbean states’ in keeping with the Crown (O’Brien, 2018, 973). Queen Elizabeth II is further the only monarch Jamaica has had as an independent state, making King Charles III the first monarch to be crowned in the post-colonial era. Accepting a new monarch, rather than inheriting a Queen that was already there, is a quite different situation. This new situation that these states now face is as yet unresearched, which gives this project empirical relevance. The subject is further of academic relevance to the field of Global Studies as the process of decolonization is an intrinsically global phenomenon affecting people in local contexts such as the Caribbean.

## **Chapter 2. Theoretical framework and previous research**

*In this chapter the theoretical framework of the study is shown describing first what I mean by post-colonial and postcolonial, and the central concepts sovereignty and independence. Secondly, the overarching theoretical school of thought and starting point of this essay, postcolonialism, is described, followed by central ideas of the importance of symbolism in the move towards decolonization and description of the basic principles of semiotics (how symbols matter). All of which will be of importance for understanding and analyzing the symbolic importance of the removal of the Crown in Jamaica today. This is followed by a section where previous research in this area of study is elaborated on.*

### **2.1 Theoretical framework**

#### *2.1.1 Important concepts*

##### **2.1.1.1 Post-colonial and postcolonial**

When using the term post-colonial (with a hyphen) I refer to something that occurred after colonialism, or post the formal colonial era. When using the term postcolonial (without a hyphen) I refer to the theoretical school of thought, postcolonialism, and is used to indicate how colonial conditions still exist and affect global politics of this time (Sylvester, 2017, 175). Postcolonial structures, then, can be described as colonial institutions that has endured into the post-colonial period.

##### **2.1.1.3 Sovereignty and independence**

The state is at the center of world politics and an underlying principle of international relations is the sovereignty of all states and formal equality between these (Biswas, 2021, 225). A simple definition of Sovereignty is that it is a “key characteristic or a norm in the international system/society denoting the independent, territorially self-standing, and self-determining qualities of states” (Dunne et al., 2021, 382). In the Caribbean context, independence did increase these states’ level of sovereignty, but it did not provide such autonomy for newly independent states to make their own decisions without outer influence from, for example, the dictates of global capital (Lewis, 2013, 4-5; Biswas, 2021, 225). Even though the level of autonomy has increased, these countries still suffer from consequences of not being fully autonomous. Difficulties include poverty and unemployment, but also accompanying social ills such as corruption, human trafficking and both general and domestic violence (Lewis, 2013, 5).

As Caribbean states are connecting a complete independence with removal of the monarchy, the dots between sovereignty and the Crown can be connected. This research uses the concept of sovereignty to better understand and concretize postcolonial theory in practice (Bryman, 2021, 463). This as the British monarch today is a symbol both of the oppressive colonial control of the past and structural inequalities continuously affecting the Caribbean today despite formal sovereignty.

### *2.1.2 Postcolonialism*

The concept of equal states comes for a colonial period, a period where all states were in fact not seen as being of the same worth (Waseem, 2016, 82), and postcolonialism essentially looks at the continuation of colonialities after independence. Fundamentally, postcolonial theory is a model of understanding the world focused on the endurance of colonial institutions and practices of world politics (Biswas, 2021, 220-224).

Colonialism was in essence the practice of colonizing territories, either for the purpose of settling or of economic exploitation (Young, 2001, 17-20). It was a kind of subjugation and domination by European powers in lands not seen as being ‘settled’ already (ibid.). According to Van Aarde and Rukundwa (2007, 1189), colonial experiences from around the world is what has shaped postcolonial theory. Postcolonial theory came about at the end of the Second World War as the imperial powers’ authority became undermined and colonies started demanding independence (Young, 2001, 44, 57, 162). Postcolonialism further points to how these, now independent, states emerged “into a new imperialistic context of economic and sometimes political domination” (ibid., 57).

Progress and civilizing mission are ideas that both morally justified colonialism and made it seem like an obligation for the global north to colonize, something also known as the ‘white man’s burden’ (Mignolo, 2018, 110, 117; Said, 1993, xi; Fanon, 1961/2001, 169). Postcolonialism, however, argues that the real or underlying motivator of colonialism was always power and extraction of wealth (Young, 2001, 19). The ideas of civilizing and progress has further in the post-independence era been exchanged by a narrative of *development* (Mignolo, 2018, 110). A narrative which by the Jamaican Rastafari movement is seen as just another way for ‘the white slavemaster’ to show his supremacy (Shilliam, 2012, 344). Postcolonial thought, instead, invites ideas from outside of metropolitan locations to join the

discussion, which can be seen as a step away from Eurocentrism and “the European experience as the normative referent” (Biswas, 2021, 223).

The reality of the postcolonial world then, the post-independence world where no formal colonies exist, is according to postcolonialism not free from colonialism. Postcolonial theory puts an emphasis on the “history and politics of colonialism in the making of the modern world” (Biswas, 2021, 220), and assumes the global inequality in today’s world order despite formal decolonization and independence (Biswas, 2021, 220-224; Young, 2001, 57). Colonial forms of power still exist, according to postcolonial theory, and still affects the relationship between the global south and north (Lewis, 2013, 3; Young, 2001, 57-58).

Of importance to postcolonialism is further the fact that postcolonial structures are not just material but also psychological (Van Aarde & Rukundwa, 2007, 1185). The global order of today is not the same as that of classical colonialism, but according to Biswas (2021) much can be “gained from understanding how colonial logics and habits of mind both persist and are retooled to continue the exploitation of resources and people around the world” (234). This psychological aspect of postcolonialism will be further elaborated on below.

This research assumes the reality of the postcolonial world, which makes postcolonialism an important theoretical baseline. Arguments for republicanism in the Caribbean today can further be seen as tightly connected to postcolonial thought; as these arguments are hinged upon notions of how the Crown as head of state embodies these otherwise invisible postcolonial structures. Hence, postcolonial thought aids the analysis as it helps pinpoint different aspects of how removing the Crown in Jamaica is perceived. Especially as to how and why becoming a republic is seen as an important step towards completing independence in Jamaica.

### *2.1.3 Symbolic aspects of decolonization*

What is usually regarded as the decolonizing moment is the time in which colonies gained formal political sovereignty and independence (Darwin, 1988, 6). Historians, however, agree that decolonization is a process where the starting and ending points cannot be simply defined, and which is not the result of a single cause, but a multitude of reasons (ibid., 6, 330).

The psychological aspect of postcolonialism relates to the consciousness of both the previously colonized and the colonizer. It relates to attitudes, and how discourses and ideas intrinsic to colonialism persist. The structure of such ideas can be depicted through Edward Said's (1978) notion of *Orientalism*. Said, profoundly influential to the postcolonial school of thought, describes how the West (here referring to Europe<sup>1</sup>) has gained their position of superiority through racism, imperialism, and dogmatic views of 'the Orient'. Said (1978) describes how the Orient, geographically referring to areas east and south of Europe, is portrayed as and has been portrayed as a negative opponent of Western supremacy. Orientalism, then, refers to a way of looking at the Orient from the European perspective and experience, and it is a form of dominating the Orient (ibid.). This dichotomous view of the Global South - which entails not only the Orient but all the Western overseas territories (Said, 1993, xi) - and the superiority of the West, has further been resilient to this day (Biswas, 2021, 223-226). This as exemplified in the narrative of development and the white man's burden described above (ibid.).

Historically, British colonies were deemed unable to rule over themselves, an argument used by the British to justify not letting these states become independent (O'Brien, 2018, 962; Trotman, 2012, 37). Confronting the Crown can hence be seen as a way of confronting the 'superiority of the West'. Even though the Crown today does not have more than ceremonial position in these overseas monarchies, it is still a materialization of these notions of superiority.

Frantz Fanon (1952/2021, 21), a philosopher from the then French Caribbean colony of Martinique also influential to postcolonial thought, has also developed ideas on how colonial thought has affected the idea of 'what it means to be human' (Mignolo, 2009, 165). This can be exemplified in how Fanon describes how the black Antillean *becomes* more truly human the better he can speak the language of the colonizer (Fanon, 1952/2021, 2). Another way in which Fanon depicts the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized, and the image of the colonized, can be found in a telling simile made in his last book "The Wretched of the Earth":

*On the unconscious plane, colonialism did therefore not seek to be considered by the native as a gentle, loving mother who protects her child from a hostile environment, but rather as a mother who unceasingly restrains her fundamentally perverse offspring from*

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<sup>1</sup> Important to note is that using the term 'the West' in the Caribbean refers to the parts of the world geographically located to the West of the Atlantic Ocean.

*managing to commit suicide and from giving free rein to its evil instincts.* (Fanon, 1961/2001, 169-170).

Fanon further describes how psychology can be used in the anti-colonial struggle. Understanding one's position and how colonial thought affects one's own consciousness is both of importance for understanding postcolonial structures and a tool of resistance for the previously colonized (Fanon in Van Aarde & Rukundwa, 2007, 1185-1186; Young, 2001, 275). As Bob Marley so effectively expressed in his 'Redemption song:' "emancipate yourselves from mental slavery, none but ourselves can free our minds" (Bob Marley & the Wailers, 1980).

Said's Orientalism, and Fanon's theorization, brings us further towards understanding how symbols of the colonial past can carry such importance. The Barbadian scholar Robert Goddard (2022) has described how symbols matter in the process of decolonization from Britain, and further how Barbados' transition to republic in September 2021 is one such important symbolic step.

To give an example, Trotman (2012, 22) paints a picture of how the process of symbolic decolonization carry importance. Trotman describes how naming of places has been used as an act of possession by colonizers in the Caribbean, and how then *renaming* has been an important aspect of symbolic decolonization in Trinidad and Tobago as it gives post-colonial regimes a way of "inscribing their visions of themselves and their histories" (2012, 21). This process is however not unproblematic. As the history of the Caribbean includes bringing together of people from different parts of the world at different times in history, Caribbean states today make up a wide demography of diasporas from all around the world. When renaming places then, an issue of renaming in favor of one group of people rather than another arises. Especially as Caribbean governments has been preaching multicultural harmony between its diasporas in the post-independence period (ibid., 36-39).

### **2.1.3.1 Semiotics**

Semiotics is the study of signs, which in turn can be defined as something that stands for something else, or a *signifier* which signifies something that is *signified* (Chandler, 2007, 2, 14-15, 39). At the center of the field of semiotics is the study of how signs, or symbols, are produced, transmitted, and interpreted and of what meanings that are put into signs. Signs are created by and are part of creating the way we see the world around us, they are instrumental in the making of meaning and they exist both in the conscious and the subconscious (Johansen

& Larsen, 2002, 3, 23). Furthermore, “the relationship between a symbolic sign and the object it represents is conventional, functioning on the basis of an interpretative habit agreed to by consensus” (ibid., 46), which in other words means that symbolic signs keep existing because of a broad consensus of their meaning, and can change as this consensus changes. For reading signs it is furthermore not essentially important to understand all aspects of semiotics per se, but to have deep understanding of the context of a sign is what Kjørup & Torhell (2004, 12) emphasizes as important.

The logic behind semiotics helps with understanding how signs and systems of thought created by colonialism keeps existing despite formal decolonization. Symbols matter, but “symbols are not, however, an end in themselves; they are only a vehicle to take us where we want to go” (Robinson, 2012, 454). Because, symbols entail consequences in the ‘real world’ (for example eurocentrism), and semiotics can help with understanding the basis of symbols, how they persist and gain their meaning. Bryman (2012) describes how semiotics invites the researcher to “try to see beyond and beneath the apparent ordinariness of everyday life and its manifestations” (560). This is of help when analyzing how and why the removal of the monarchy is (or is not) seen as a symbolic step on the route of decolonization.

## 2.2 Previous research

The empirical academic field in which this research is located essentially concerns republicanism in Jamaica in the new King Charles III era. As Jamaica has never experienced a previous change of monarch in the post-independence era, and as the shift has occurred so recently, during the last third of 2022 and beginning of 2023, research before this has only theorized about the symbolic importance of such a shift. This makes this study timely, but the previous research in this specific field limited. However, in this section some research concerning republican sentiment in the Caribbean and Jamaica, and research that has touched upon the symbolic meaning of the Crown, will be explored.

### *2.2.1 On the importance of history for decolonization in the Caribbean*

The historical heritage of Caribbean countries (their colonial past) is not seen as something to just ‘forget and move past,’ but as integral to the identity of the Caribbean. Trotman (2012) describes, in his research on ‘Acts of Possession and Symbolic Decolonization in Trinidad and Tobago,’ how this is due to the way the Caribbean diaspora was created. As the period of

colonization in the Caribbean meant “the shaping of a diasporan space” (ibid., 36), as opposed to in for example India where it meant disruption of ancestral lands, “decolonisers in the Caribbean had to come to grips with colonisation and all it meant, not as an episode in an interrupted history but instead as integral to the making of the Caribbean and a defining and determining feature of the history of the region” (ibid., 37). This way the specific historical context in the Caribbean has been a factor as to why symbols of colonialism has been kept and is hence one reason for the seeming anomaly of Caribbean states keeping with the Crown.

### *2.2.2 Republicanism in other Caribbean countries*

To start off, there is some previous research on the display of republicanism in other Caribbean countries. Four Anglo-Caribbean countries (or previous colonies of Britain) have as yet taken the step to excise the Crown and transition into constitutional republic. These are Guyana (in 1969), Trinidad and Tobago (1976), Dominica (which embarked upon independence as a republic in 1978), and Barbados (2021) (O’Brien, 2018, 970-973). The movements leading up to these countries transitioning were further all different and dependent on the countries’ own specific context, however one aspect unite these countries’ stories. When it comes to the reasoning behind why a transition was of importance, all stories in one way or another refer to anti-colonialism, the Crown symbolizing colonial oppression, removal of the monarchy for ‘meaningful decolonization,’ and leaving behind the colonial past (Lutchman, 1970, 99; O’Brien, 2018, 970-973; Richards, 2021).

#### **2.2.2.1 On the situation in Jamaica**

According to O’Brien (2018) there are two main reasons why some Anglo-Caribbean states has not yet transitioned to a republic. The first reason is a historic loyalty to the Crown, a sense of tradition and genuine affection of Queen Elizabeth II (O’Brien, 2018, 973). The second reason is the need for a referendum to make constitutional changes in a number of these countries, Jamaica being one of them (ibid., 973-974). To change the constitution of Jamaica, both a two-thirds majority is needed in both Houses of Parliament and a positive outcome of a referendum (Robinson, 2012, 451). Securing positive outcomes of referendums where constitutional change is on the ballot has further according to O’Brien (2018, 974, 977) been proven difficult in other Caribbean countries, which according to him in effect makes chances of succeeding with constitutional changes in these countries slim. The way the Jamaican constitution is built can therefore be seen as something that becomes a barrier between Jamaica and republicanism.

Previous research has tended to connect the removal of the Crown and the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council (JCPC), as both are hangover colonial institutions (O'Brien, 2018; Robinson, 2012). However, there are differences in terms of the incentive to remove the JCPC, which would require the same level of constitutional reform as the process of replacing the constitutional monarchy with a president (Caserta & Madsen, 2016, 111, 115), but which is not on the political agenda as of today. This, added to the heightened sense of injustice at the presence of the monarchy in Jamaica in the wake of the BLM movement, suggests that a study that focuses solely on the monarchy as a colonial institution is particularly pertinent.

### *2.2.3 On the symbolic meaning of the Crown*

At independence, a common political goal among Caribbean nationalist leaders was to take after the British model of government (the Westminster model) and retaining of the British Crown was seen as a good way of creating stability post-independence (Darwin, 1988, 220-221; Bishop, 2011, 420). One article that elaborates on the symbolism of the Crown in modern day Jamaica is 'The Monarchy, Republicanism and the Privy Council: The Enduring Cry for Freedom' by Robinson (2012). Here it is argued that the Crown "goes to the heart of the identity and self-image of the Jamaican people" (Robinson, 2012, 447), and that having the King as head of state (and the JCPC as final appellate court) ultimately symbolizes still being ruled by foreigners (451). Here Robinson point to a 'muddled sense of identity' in Jamaica where everything white, European, American, British (foreign) is seen as good, but anything local is never good enough (450-451). What can here be seen is an adhering to everything British by Jamaican leaders at independence, essentially resulting in a Jamaican sense of self stuck in the postcolonial.

Another author who in contrast does not describe the Caribbean independence-movement as compliant to Britain's wishes is Beckles (2021). He instead paints a picture of the Anglo-Caribbean independence-movement as being steadfast and determined, demanding both independence from Britain and asserting claims of reparations for the debt they perceived that Britain had to the region (for example for the years of slavery, further described in the background) (Beckles, 2021, 183-184). These claims were further according to Beckles seen as an important part of gaining justice from Britain, because "not to insist on reparatory economic

demands would be to accept and ignore the crimes of slavery and colonialism and by so doing promote a culture of political apathy” (Beckles, 2021, 184).

Republicanism in Jamaica is clearly connected to the move towards independence. As this research seeks to explore the symbolic meaning of removing the monarchy in this new era, I seek to expand on this research. This to gain greater understanding of *how* and *why* removal of the monarchy in particular is perceived as a symbolic step in decolonization.

## Chapter 3. Method

*In this section the method used for gathering and analyzing data and relevant methodological considerations will be clarified and discussed. First, the overall design of the research is displayed, secondly the method used is described and discussed and lastly critique of the method and ethical considerations are observed.*

### 3.1 Methodology

This study takes a *constructivist ontological starting point* as the main focus is on meaning put into social phenomena, which are always created and understood by individuals (Bryman, 2021, 455). Amitav Acharya (2021) has described the special relevance of *constructivism* in studying “contributions to contemporary IR from the periphery” (307) (i.e. not from the otherwise hegemony-creating parts of the world). This due to the importance of ideas and identity-building as a way for the periphery to be heard, and as constructivism allows “more space for considering ideational forces of the kind that Third World actors [... can] deploy to a greater degree than material power” (ibid., 312).

The rather extensive background and previous research-parts are further justified by the design of this research. As the focus is of meaning and values behind notions of republicanism, and as the data consist of tweets, the data requires understanding of the context in which this was constructed and is situated (Chowdhury, 2019, 105-110; Quan-Haase & Sloan, 2018, 4). The extensive contextualizing parts are further also justified by the importance of understanding the past for understanding the present that is central to postcolonial thought. Because of this, this study puts emphasis on the history of the Caribbean and the way in which it has shaped the society of today (Biswas, 2021, 222).

As theories and concepts such as postcolonialism and symbolic decolonization are part of both the explanation of the problem and the research questions, they assist in creating the starting point for this study. Therefore, *abductive reasoning* is adopted, as I still take an open-minded approach with regards to new themes and categories that the empirical data might add (Boréus & Bergström, 2019, 50). By both understanding the problem based on theory *and* being open towards the empirical data, the reasoning will contribute to the aim of this research, a broadened understanding of symbolic decolonization and notions behind attempts to disrupt postcolonial structures.

### 3.1.1 Qualitative research

This research is of *qualitative strategy*, understanding reality through people's interpretation of this reality (Bryman, 2021, 455). Fundamental to qualitative research is further studying things in their 'real world setting' (Yin, 2011, 7-8). This research aims to do just that by interpreting points of views that has been created in 'the real world' and that are about 'the real world.' Further, as I will not simply count views regarding the Crown but try and interpret what lies behind different points of view, the research is primarily driven by qualitative data (Yin, 2011, 7-8; Quan-Haase & Sloan, 2018, 7).

A *case study design* is applied where an in-depth study of a single case (the Jamaican context) is done. One point of critique towards this design can be the lack of generalizability to other contexts (Bryman, 2021, 484-485). This applies not only to the generalizability of results to other British 'postcolonies' in the world but also to those located in the Caribbean, as all Anglo-Caribbean postcolonies have unique relations to and attitudes towards the Crown (O'Brien, 2018, 969-973). This design however allows for a deeper understanding of the phenomenon, rather than if a multi-case study would have been done (Bryman, 2012, 70). Additionally, while generalizability is not the goal of this study, the case of Jamaica represents an "exemplifying" case (ibid.) as the move towards removing the monarchy is also occurring in other Commonwealth realms of the Caribbean. The results of this study will further be generalized to theory rather than to other cases (Bryman, 2021, 101, 485).

### 3.2 Empirical method

The empirical material is gathered from the social media platform Twitter and consists of **tweets** discussing the monarchy and republicanism in Jamaica and **replies** to such tweets. This type of data is chosen, first, due to the way texts and language can be analyzed to find out how reality is perceived (Boréus & Bergström, 2019, 27). Because even though there is no such thing as a neutral representation of reality, written words can be a good source of understanding perceptions of reality (Bryman, 2021, 656-657).

Another possible empirical method for this research would have been interviews, which could have been a fruitful method as you could then have asked respondents about their notions and ideas behind their position towards the Crown. Interviewing would however have affected the

empirical data as it would then have been created for the purpose of the study. There would in other words have been a reactive effect, which also would have affected the validity of the data (Bryman, 2021, 656-657).

### *3.2.1 Social media research*

Social media, today, is a place of everyday public debate (Quan-Haase & Sloan, 2018, 1). The so-called big data created here is directly linked to what is going on in ‘the real world,’ leading it to be a fruitful source of data for research (Quan-Haase & Sloan, 2018, 4; Williams et al., 2017, 1151). McCay-Peet & Quan-Haase, (2018, 11) further describes how research questions compatible with this social media research are either ones about social media use or ones that aim to gain greater understanding of social phenomena. The second is what this study aims to do.

Social media research comes with some challenges (Quan-Haase & Sloan, 2018, 7-8). A first one is the great *volume* of data that exists, leading to researchers having to be precise in their sampling as not to end up with too big of a dataset (ibid., 7). Connected to this is the issue of *variety* of data (ibid.). In my case it includes both text, videos, images and gifs, making the dataset a broad variety of sorts. Another issue relates to the *veracity*, or truthfulness, of the data (ibid., 8). Is the data of such quality that it will actually tell us something of importance? However, my constructivist ontology goes some way towards addressing this, as I am not looking for *truth* from Twitter, but rather discourse, i.e. the social construction of what people consider to be true, veracity is not an issue for this study. Another issue is the *velocity* of data, the speed with which data is created and events reacted to (Quan-Haase & Sloan, 2018, 8). This can however also be seen as a benefit, as comments made often are pure and direct responses made by people, showing what they ‘really’ think.

#### **3.2.1.1 Twitter data – advantages and issues**

In terms of sampling of relevant material, Twitter-data will be used. This choice is based on my knowledge of the use of this media in the spread of news across the island. About 9,4 percent of the Jamaican population uses Twitter in 2023 (Statista, n.d.c; Statista, n.d.a), which could be considered average as percentages range from for example 46,9 percent in Japan, 9,3 percent in Germany and 4,7 percent in Egypt among the countries with the most Twitter users in the world in 2022 (Statista, n.d.b). As Twitter is a space both for news-media, public figures, and

non-public figures, relevant data from different points of view regarding perceptions of removing the king as head of state can further be found here.

Twitter has been long noticed by scholars to be used by social movements, as for example in the Arab Spring and BLM (Raftopoulos & Specht, 2022, 599). Twitter can be used to frame arguments and issues, and to coordinate political action (ibid., 600). With regards to this, the hope was that Twitter-data would be able to, for this study, provide insight into how the issue of the monarchy is framed within the Jamaican context.

When it comes to limitations of the use of Twitter-data one aspect is the 280-character limit to tweets. This creates a limit of what can be expressed in a tweet, and therefore what can be discovered through the study of them (Bryman, 2021, 673). This can however be used to my advantage, as it makes it possible to analyze a larger number of tweets to get a broad understanding of the discourse regarding the Crown in Jamaica. Another limitation of analyzing Twitter-data is the possibility of making statements about what people outside of Twitter think, as for example elders who might not be on Twitter (Mayr & Weller, 2018, 11). However, generalizing the results of this study to a population (for example Jamaican citizens) is not my goal, but instead to gain theoretical understanding of the phenomena of symbolic decolonization.

### 3.2.2 Sampling

A transparent description of data-gathering is of importance to ensure a high level of reliability in a study of qualitative sort (Bryman, 2021, 485-486, 706). Therefore, a precise description of how tweets and themes has been chosen now follows. Methodic-ness is further a way to decrease the likelihood of bias and deliberate distortion, which is why both the sampling and method of analysis are systematic in style (Yin, 2011, 19-20).

The initial idea for gathering of relevant tweets was to make an advanced search for tweets mentioning the monarchy and republicanism published *in Jamaica* since the 8<sup>th</sup> of September 2022. However, searching for tweets published in a specific area turned out to be ineffective as most Twitter users post without location. Further, making a search for tweets using keywords and gathering **all** results would require that I get access to the Twitter API. Twitter recently updated their public API (in March 2023), it now has a cost-barrier and applying for ‘Academic

Research access' is not possible for undergraduate level. But there are other ways, frequently used by researchers, to gather Twitter-data where copying tweets and screenshots are two common ways (Mayr & Weller, 2018, 3). For a fast and easy gathering-process I decided to take screenshots.

To be able to gather relevant data from the vast volumes Twitter holds, a generic purposive sample was made based on what data would be needed for the research questions to be answered (Quan-Haase & Sloan, 2018, 7; Mayr & Weller, 2018, 5-6; Bryman, 2012, 418-422). Data was gathered with regards to their theoretical relevance to the issue and research question, with the goal of finding tweets that can give a greater understanding of the issue. Here I concluded that the data would need to encompass perceptions by Jamaicans of the monarchy, becoming a republic, and independence. Secondly, the timeframe within which these tweets were to be gathered was set to be from the 8<sup>th</sup> of September 2022 until May 4 2023 (Mayr & Weller, 2018, 8). The first date was set due to the heightened attention to the issue I'm researching in connection to the change of monarch, and the end date due to the timeframe for this research.

I decided then to gather all tweets relating to the keywords 'monarch,' 'republic,' 'constitution' or 'independence' posted by relevant public figures and news agencies (how these were chosen is described in the next paragraph) within the chosen timeframe, and all comments posted by non-public users to tweets discussing the monarchy or becoming a republic (Mayr & Weller, 2018, 8). Text produced by political leaders gives a more 'official' stance on the issue, whereas news articles produced by news agencies' posts and comments gives ideas of what perceptions on the issue exists in this context (Bryman, 2021, 664-668). All give an idea of what the basis is of the public debate, which is valuable to the study.

To identify accounts by public figures, I have chosen to define such accounts as by figures "who aim to communicate to a wide audience" (Williams et al., 2017, 1162). Therefore, politicians' official Twitter-accounts (distinguished by the bio declaring that these accounts are official) and accounts by news agencies have been used. The public figures chosen are Andrew Holness (Prime Minister and leader of the Jamaica Labour Party in Jamaica since 2016 - user ID @AndrewHolnessJM), Malahoo Forte (Minister of Legal and Constitutional affairs in Jamaica - @MalahooForteMP) and Mark J Golding (Leader of the Opposition and the People's National Party in Jamaica - @MarkJGolding). Holness and Golding were chosen to get a broad range of

political opinions on the matter, and Forte as she is the minister in charge of the constitutional reform at the moment. Other public persons such as celebrities were further not chosen as the comments on such posts would more likely be by non-Jamaicans. The news agencies then were chosen based on a list (W3newspapers, n.d.) of Jamaican news sites, and tweets were gathered from all sites which had a Twitter account, except from those with less than 500 followers. The sites gathered from are: Jamaica Observer (@JamaicaObserver), Jamaica Gleaner (@JamaicaGleaner), Jamaica Star (@jamaicastar), Loop Jamaica (@LoopJamaica), Radio Jamaica News (@rjrnews) and Jamaica Information Service (@JISNews) (Go Jamaica (@gojamaica) generated 0 results). One first observation here was further that politicians generate more comments than news agencies, which made the share of data gathered from public figures larger.

Gathering was done by making searches for tweets containing either of the keywords, by the accounts chosen, since 8<sup>th</sup> September 2022. For example, when gathering tweets from Andrew Holness the search was: “(monarch OR republic OR constitution OR independence) (from:andrewholnessJM) since:2022-09-08.” Here the (from:)-part includes Andrew Holness’ User ID. This was done for all public figures and news agencies. After gathering, the dataset contained 313 screenshots, each holding between 1 and 7 tweets.

### 3.3 Method for analysis

Qualitative content analysis in the form of *thematic analysis* was conducted as it fits the aim of investigating how a transition to republic is being valued and depicted (Boréus & Bergström, 2019, 53). NVivo was used to be able to keep track of all the tweets, to make the coding-phase smoother, and to enable demonstration of choices made along the way to increase the level of transparency (Bryman, 2021, 722-725).

The analysis was done through systematic review of data where first, all tweets were read in their entirety, second, initial themes were made, and third, a first round of coding was conducted making codes close to the content of the tweets. In this first round of coding the aim was to be as objective as possible, to avoid biased coding (Yin, 2011, 176). After this the initial codes were reviewed and divided into four main categories. These categories were: ‘becoming a republic,’ ‘sentiment towards the monarchy,’ ‘postcolonialism,’ and ‘criticism of Jamaican politicians and government.’ All tweets were further reviewed repeatedly and key points that

could be seen were picked out. Important to note is further that the tweets were reviewed both as part of a specific category and in connection to the thread of tweets from where it was posted. The importance of reviewing tweets within their context is further something I want to emphasize, as losing the context of a tweet (also referred to as ‘context collapse’) can easily lead to misinterpretations and hence decrease the credibility of the study (Williams et al., 2017, 1150; Bryman, 2021, 467). The last step of the analysis consisted of making theoretical and historical connections between what was found in the data and what the codes displayed, which finally resulted in interpretation of the findings made and connections to research questions, previous research, and the problem at large (Bryman, 2021, 702-705).

One problem with this type of analysis, where underlying semiotic meaning behind tweets is essentially what I am trying to decipher, is the *polysemic* nature of signs and symbols (meaning that they can be interpreted in different ways depending on the viewer) (Bryman, 2012, 560). This can lead to a sense of arbitrariness when analyzing, a feeling that the analysis is just made on a whim based on personal experiences (ibid.). However, analyzing tweets shouldn’t be more arbitrary than, for example, analyzing other documents.

One could also have used quantitative content analysis. A quantitative strategy would instead put emphasis on measuring and counting things in the data, rather than increasing understanding of phenomena (Boréus & Bergström, 2019, 50). When explaining themes found in the data, numbers are however used in order to demonstrate how common certain themes are compared to others within the data. However, these elements of quantitiveness are not the focus of the analysis, as a qualitative thematic content analysis better suits the aim of this research, for deeper understanding engaging with the symbolism of the discourse surrounding republicanism in Jamaica.

### 3.3.1 Displaying tweets

The way data is presented is on the one hand through summaries of main features that have been found in the data (further arguments as to why summaries is used can be found in ‘ethical considerations’), and on the other hand by display of telling examples of tweets. The summaries have been made through a thorough reading of all data and are required as the presentation of all tweets in their entirety would both take up too much space and be an impractical way of making the data comprehensible. As the tweets are to be understood and analyzed within their

context it would also be unwise to present only single tweets under each research question and expect to get an understanding of the big picture and what those tweets convey.

When referring to specific tweets these are referred to as (*tweet 1*), (*tweet 2*), etc., and are displayed in full including Twitter-ID, profile picture, date, the content of the tweet, number of replies, retweets, likes and views, all in accordance with Twitter's display requirements (Twitter, n.d.b). Further information and URLs to these tweets can be found in Appendix 1.

### 3.4 Ethical considerations

Aspects that traditionally stands at the center of ethical considerations are informed consent, anonymity and potential for undue harm (Bryman, 2021, 170-171). When it comes to social media research, and Twitter in particular, the debate on these aspects of conducting ethically approved research is twofold. One common view is that what is publicly posted on social media websites is to be deemed public - i.e. from "a place where people would reasonably expect to be observed by strangers" (Williams et al., 2017, 1159) - and hence free to use and quote without consent, confidentiality, and anonymity (Beninger, 2018, 15, 21; Williams et al., 2017, 1159). Williams et al. (2017, 1150) argues that one of the most important things to take into consideration is 'user expectations,' if the person posting understands that it is publicly posted and available for use by third parties, such as researchers. However, even if the Twitter Terms of Service clearly states that content is posted publicly and fully available to third parties (Twitter, n.d.a), Beninger (2018) notes that "most users neither read nor understand these complex conditions" (8). This leads us to a second position in this debate, that consent for using of content should always be sought (Beninger, 2018, 3). However, as it all comes down to the public-ness of the tweet and the environment in which it is posted, if it can be expected that the tweet was published with the intent of being public there is according to Williams et al. (2017, 1159, 1163) and Beninger (2018, 20) no need to seek informed consent. Responses to public figures' posts can further be argued that they are posted into a public debate, and hence be seen as intrinsically public. However, as I cannot assume all Twitter users are at all times fully aware of this, I have taken the position that tweets posted by non-public figures will be anonymized.

The issue of anonymity is hence tackled by keeping non-public figures as anonym as possible. This is done by summarizing and discussing what they express without directly quoting any such persons. To further avoid *context collapse* (further described below) these summaries was

created by in a first round summarizing what was said in in the comments-sections while keeping some key words not to forget the original meaning. And in a second step presenting with my own words in the 'result and analysis' what these summaries displayed.

In research made to investigate how social media users feel about their data being used for research it has been found that 'context collapse' is something that concerns users (Beninger, 2018, 10; Williams et al., 2017, 1150). Context collapse refers to content being taken out of context, and used to support a cause or an argument which it was not intended to by the author (Beninger, 2018, 10). This is further something I want to avoid by all means possible, because as much as people are afraid of their words being distorted, misinterpretations can also lead to false results and conclusions. I have many times throughout this thesis stressed the importance of context for the research problem, but it is just as important for individual tweets to be understood within their context.

Beninger (2018, 17-18) describes how consent is of extra importance when it regards sensitive content, including religion, health, and politics. Sensitive information, such as political opinions, can create issues for the people who have posted it if it comes into the wrong hands; where one common example is careers being put into danger due to things posted online (Beninger, 2018, 8, 15, 16). Even if I were to anonymize a tweet by removing the user ID a quick google search of the quote will easily lead you to the person posting it (Beninger, 2018, 3; McCay-Peet & Quan-Haase, 2018, 10). However, as political views are of importance for this research this data can still be gathered, if I do everything in my power to eliminate risks of undue harm for those expressing these views gathering of this kind of data is regarded ok (Göteborgs Universitet, n.d.).

Lastly, University-based, non-profit and non-governmental research projects are generally more accepted according to studies investigating what type of social media research that people find acceptable (Williams et al., 2017, 1156, 1154; Beninger, 2018, 21-22). Research with the aim to for example provide knowledge about a social issue is generally accepted, if content is anonymized (Williams et al., 2017, 1154), which is another reason in favor of anonymizing non-public figures.

### 3.5 Positionality

Ethical considerations regarding reflexivity are further of importance for this project (Bryman, 2021, 471). Personal biases, beliefs and feelings are aspects which all influence social research, therefore awareness of these and their possible consequences is of importance (Bryman, 2021, 64-65). One aspect that concerns positionality is how I, as a white, European individual, am essentially created by the oppressive structures which I want to investigate (Tuck & Yang, 2012, 9-10; Wibben & Rutazibwa, 2019, 86).

This became very clear to me during my exchange semester at the UWI. There, I got to experience the anger of students in a foundational course on Caribbean Civilization on the matter of European colonization, imperialism, slavery, and postcolonial oppressive structures. As the professor discussed these themes the chat-function in the online learning tool went wild with comments blaming Europe for everything from the atrocities of slavery to economic disadvantage and poverty today. However, not only the students' reactions to what was taught made me question my role in the global system, but also what the course taught and how the professor did it. The course took a revisionist approach to history, aiming to de-colonize history through re-examining the Eurocentric narrative, through seeing beyond 'the single story' (notes from lectures). Throughout the course the professor encouraged students to think about how the dominant narratives of history had shaped us and our identity.

Regardless of how guilty I felt for being European it does not remove the fact of my belonging to this structurally favored part of the world. Thus, particularly as symbols are deemed important in this research, I must reflect on what my being a white European person symbolizes doing research in the Caribbean context. Historically, the position from which my research is conducted (the 'developed world' investigating 'the rest') is troublesome due to the power relations it implies and reproduces (Tuck & Yang, 2012, 2; Inayatullah, 2019, 436, 448). How then can I be sure not to fall in the trap of my ancestors and avoid reproducing these skewed power relations? The answer is I can't (Tuck & Yang, 2012; Sylvester, 2017, 181). But I believe being aware of my position and understanding that the motives put forward in this research does not make it innocent, is a good place to start (Tuck & Yang, 2012, 10). Having an 'outside perspective' is further not in itself a bad thing, but naturally the way social research is done. Making my position, however troublesome, intrinsically connected to the construction of social research.

## Chapter 4. Results and analysis

*In this chapter data is presented and connected to the theoretical framework in a systematic manner with the aim of answering the research questions. The chapter is divided by the research questions, starting with the two guiding questions and ending with the main question.*

### 4.1 What perceptions of the monarchy can be found?

#### 4.1.1 Respect towards the monarchy

After the death of Queen Elizabeth II both the Prime Minister of Jamaica, Andrew Holness, and leader of the Opposition, Mark J Golding, posted tweets expressing their condolences, conveying the message of the Queen having served with duty and dignity. In these posts, Holness and Golding expressed respect and said that Elizabeth was a symbol of stability throughout her reign, and the Office of the Prime Minister said in a press release that “the Government and people of Jamaica [...] join in mourning the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II” (*tweet 3*). The replies-sections in connection to these tweets are further filled with non-public figures (hereafter also called users or people) also expressing their condolences. A total of 29 references are found in the dataset of people saying variations of ‘rest in peace’ and ‘blessings.’ (These ‘...’ indicate that I have paraphrased what non-public users have said).

From the perspective of postcolonialism this respect and these polite expressions of condolences can be seen as evidence of these users being stuck in a *colonial mindset*. Looking for example at the Government saying that the Jamaican people joins in mourning Elizabeth, and people expressing their condolences to the Queen, can with Fanon’s theorization be seen as a way for the previously colonized to keep complying with the postcolonial order of things, or in other words keep speaking the language of the colonizer (Fanon, 1952/2001: 2).

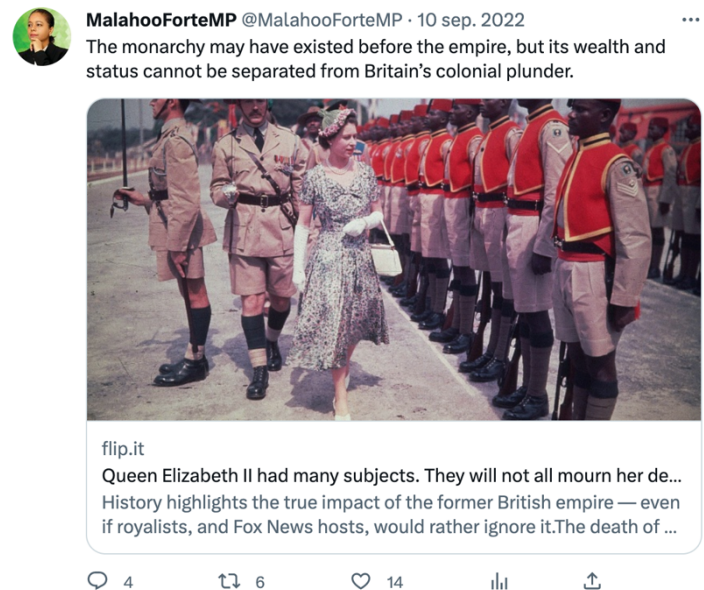
Another perspective that can be pointed to here is how these expressions of condolences and mourning by both Jamaican politicians and users were expected by the Crown, Britain, and the world. Because it is unthinkable that the Jamaican Prime Minister for example would not make these statements. However, as these people express their condolences they consequently accept the structures from where these expectations come. It can be seen as a materialization of postcolonial structures, an acceptance by the formerly colonized of the Crown and its position.

## 4.1.2 The Crown as the colonizer

### 4.1.2.1 Not mourning

When digging deeper into the replies-sections, however, we find both people being indifferent towards the Crown overall and a flood of people expressing that they do not agree, for example, with Holness' statement of the Jamaican people mourning Elizabeth. There is total of 90 references in the dataset of people neither agreeing with such condolences nor expressing mourning, essentially disagreeing with the idea of Jamaica mourning the Queen. These posts include statements that 'no one is really mourning Elizabeth,' but also thoughts of embarrassment at mourning 'the colonizer' and mourning as disrespectful to Jamaican ancestors. Additionally, 29 users simply react to the number of condolences being expressed in the reply sections, saying that it is ridiculous to express condolences to a 'colonialist' and 'descendant of murderers.'

One public figure who has not expressed condolences is Minister of Legal and Constitutional Affairs Malahoo Forte. On September 8, 2022, she posted a tweet stating the fact that King Charles III had become the new head of state of Jamaica. Further, on September 10, 2022, she posted an article with the title "Queen Elizabeth II had many subjects. They will not all mourn her death equally" to which she tweeted what is seen in *tweet 4*. In this tweet she especially points to the Crown's colonial history and suggests that this is a reason as to why some 'subjects' will not mourn Elizabeth equally. Forte never expresses any condolences, but instead post tweets similar to this one in conjunction with the death of the Queen.



*Tweet 4.*

By the fact that these users express that they are not mourning Elizabeth, and by the character of Fortes tweets after the death of the Queen, an awareness of colonial structures is seen. Eleven users further expressively point to Jamaica being stuck in the *colonial mindset* mentioned above. These users imply that grieving the oppressor must be an expression of confusion and

that it is time to ‘wake up’ and stop putting oneself in a submissive position in relation to ‘the oppressors.’ Some has further commented that Jamaican identity still resides in ‘white people’s ideas of truth,’ and that it is time to break with these psychological chains and ‘mental enslavement.’ These users can, with Fanon’s theorization, be seen as having gained awareness of how colonial *habits of thought* affect their consciousness, and their expressions can be seen as a way in which psychology is being used as part of the anti-colonial struggle (Fanon in Van Aarde & Rukundwa, 2007, 1185-1186; Young, 2001, 275). Further, by stepping outside of what postcolonial structures are expecting of them, both Forte, these 90 non-mourning users, the 29 users questioning condolences being said and the eleven users pointing to the colonial mindset, choose not to conform with what the overarching postcolonial discourse would otherwise demand. They instead imply that those who do mourn the Queen are in fact just obeying the wishes of the Oppressor and accepting their legitimacy.

At one level this debate, between those expressing condolences and those who are not, shows a key disagreement between understandings of the monarchy; with one group rejecting any sympathy or condolences with the Queen as being stuck in a colonial mindset. Some users suggest however, that such condolences are a choice and that Jamaica ‘doesn’t have to burn down the house’ just because they are leaving. Here, condolences and respect are seen as a sovereign choice, and show a certain dignity. Both positions however consider themselves being aware of the postcolonial situation and as being anti-colonial.

#### 4.1.2.2 The Crown symbolizing the colonizer

Just as the 90 references indicating that they are not going to mourn what they see as ‘the Oppressor,’ and just as *tweet 2* by Forte above say that the British monarchy is inevitably connected to Britain’s colonial history, there are others pointing towards seeing the Crown as a metaphor of the colonizer. One telling example of this anti-monarchist sentiment is a *tweet 5* by Jamaica Observer, posted September 12, 2022.

Here, a sentiment of how the Queen was seen as a representation of both colonialism and slavery is clearly shown. With the post being from a mainstream Jamaican news agency it can further



*Tweet 5.*

be assumed that it gives more of a broad understanding of the public discourse on the issue. Another post that indicates what the Queen symbolized is *tweet 6* posted by Forte, also on September 12, 2022.

Here, too, it is implied that the Queen and the Crown are both seen as symbols of British power. This power is here associated with the ‘racist empire,’ and a connection is made between the Queen and colonialism. The intention of these two tweets is to show the viewpoint of the oppressed, and turning

to semiotics, one would say that Queen Elizabeth II became a *signifier* of colonialist European supremacy and oppression, which then is what she as a symbol *signified* (Chandler, 2007: 2, 14-15, 39). Forte’s post here shows what this symbol of power and wealth can mean, and when putting on the glasses of postcolonialism one could clearly see how this way of picturing the Crown comes from a postcolonial point of view. Because essentially what Forte does is rejecting the picture of the Queen as a loving matriarch and instead point to how she embodied all the colonial history. Forte shows how the Queen was a contemporary example of colonial structures still existing in the post-colonial period (Biswas, 2021, 220-224).

These tweets by Jamaica Observer and Forte are however not the only ones making direct connections between the Crown and colonialism. A second portion of tweets here are ones where non-public users point to colonial events such as slavery, the murder of Africans and selling of people, theft, rape and overall colonization and oppression, saying that these events seem to have been forgotten. In connection to this, users asking for *reparations* for historical atrocities are frequent in the dataset with 21 non-public users expressing such wishes. Some users here are asking for apologies from the British Crown, some are just asking for ‘reparations,’ and some mention financial compensations. In *tweet 7 below*, posted December 25, 2022, Jamaica Observer further reports of the Dutch King making apologies for their role



MalahooForteMP @MalahooForteMP · 12 sep. 2022

"ElizabethII bore guilt merely b/c she embraced being symbol of British crown. But symbols matter. She willingly took on role of representing Britishpower&wealth."  
'Propaganda' of Queen as 'dedicated, elderly grandmother' 'blunts' truth of 'racist empire'.



flip.it

'Propaganda' of Queen as 'dedicated, elderly grandmother' 'blunts' t...  
Washington Post columnist Karen Attiah felt as though the death of Queen Elizabeth II was the perfect opportunity to examine the allege...

1



8



***Tweet 6.***

in slavery. This points to the interest that is shown in Jamaica towards the issue of reparations for slavery. As some point out that the British Crown has not so much as issued an apology for their involvement in slavery and colonization, an unawareness (or a disregarding) from the Crown regarding historical wrongdoings is seen.

A third section of tweets regarding the Crown as a symbol of the colonizer concerns users seeing events of today as rooted in colonial structures. For instance, some point to the fact that Jamaicans needed a visa to attend the funeral of their own head of

*Tweet 7.*

state, something that only a few commonwealth countries need. Related to the royal funeral, but making another point entirely, is one user commenting on a post regarding the funeral saying that Holness attending is similar to ‘the slave attending the funeral of their master.’ Further, on a tweet where Holness posts about a meeting with the King expressing his condolences for the death of Elizabeth and congratulations for the King’s newly acquired position (*tweet 8*) another user comment calling Holness a ‘marionette of the oppressors.’ In these examples, Holness is seen as ‘the oppressed,’ something that is a reoccurring theme throughout the dataset; users pointing to politicians conforming with, and subsequently legitimizing, postcolonial structures. From another point of view, the Prime Minister attending the funeral of the country’s head of state can also be seen as just what global politics today demand of him. Because as the structures that exist today made Holness Prime Minister he owes his position to these and is therefore incentivized to support their legitimacy. As politicians likely want to maintain power within the new republican structures, they are not likely to want to, as mentioned before, ‘burn down the house’. Nevertheless, these expectations of the Prime Minister attending Elizabeth’s funeral, expressing condolences, and mourning can with postcolonial theory be pointed to as not just *common curtesy*, but a way in which colonial structures, and the dichotomy between the Global North and South, show their presence.



Dutch King Willem-Alexander welcomed the government's apology for the Netherlands' role in 250 years of slavery in his Christmas address on Sunday, saying it was the "start of a long journey".  
[Oversätt tweeten](#)



jamaicaobserver.com  
Dutch king says slavery apology start of 'long journey' - Jamaica Observer  
THE HAGUE, Netherlands,(AFP) – Dutch King Willem-Alexander welcomed the government's apology for the Netherlands' role in 250 years of slavery in his ...

8:17 em · 25 dec. 2022 · 7 798 visningar

4 Retweets 2 citat 28 gilla-markeringar

A fourth expression of the Crown as a symbol of the oppressor is shown under a Jamaica Observer post on September 19, 2022, about the royal funeral (*tweet 9*). Here Jamaica Observer states that the coffin was decorated with 3000 diamonds, the imperial state crown, orb, and sceptre, and four people reply to this tweet that these things were ‘stolen.’ In total, eleven users point to the historically exploitative relationship between the Crown and Jamaica, calling the Crown a thief which has never apologized for its wrongdoings and that keeps living off colonial riches. This again points to a connection being made between the Crown and colonization.

A last piece of evidence of how the Crown is seen as a symbol of colonialism would be how both public and non-public users express how it is ‘time to leave the colonial ties behind.’ Pointing then both to historical atrocities and practices of today which are further upholding colonial structures in the post-colonial period. All the arguments presented in this section show a breaking with the acceptance that has existed towards the monarchy in Jamaica since independence (O’Brien, 2018, 973; Jamaica Observer, 2015). Before, there was no haste in removing the monarchy due to arguments of stability, but now new processes fueled by social media (such as BLM) has occurred whereby the symbolism of the Crown as a *signifier* of colonialism has been lifted.

#### *4.1.3 Lack of tweets regarding the King*

Another thing to point out is the lack of tweets in the dataset regarding the new King. There is a large disparity between the number of tweets regarding the late Queen (218 references in total), and those expressing sentiment towards the King (25 references in the dataset). This despite Charles becoming king at the moment of Elizabeth’s death. However, the absence of tweets can in fact also be telling, pointing here to a lack of support for the monarchy as an institution.

#### 4.2 What is the transition to become a republic presumed to change?

This question is also asked by non-public users in the replies-sections where a total of 29 references in the dataset relates to people wanting more information about the process and its possible outcomes. People are asking about what a transition would mean, some want to know if the president would be ceremonial or executive and what either option would entail, and some ask about the costs. Overall, users are requesting education and debate on different options for constitutional change and want to know all sides of the argument.

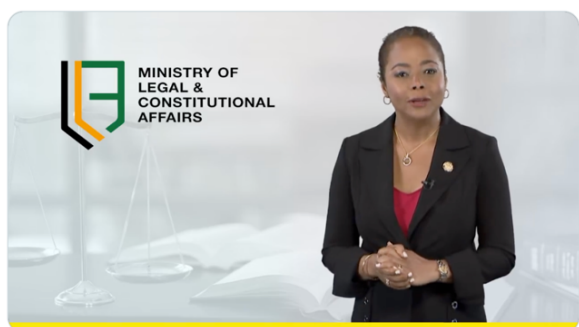
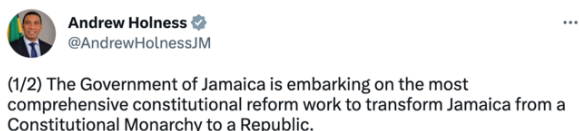
#### 4.2.1 Sovereignty and independence

In the dataset there are 67 users agreeing with the objective of removing the monarchy. Reasons given by these users as to why a transition should take place include expressions of how keeping with the monarchy is of no benefit to Jamaica.

Another reason is that the change of monarch, from Queen Elizabeth II to King Charles III, is the start of a new era, and that ‘time has now come to leave the monarchy behind.’ Holness expresses this as seen in *tweet 10*. This is in essence the same message that non-public users express too, that time has come, and that this particular time is a good time to transition. Yet another reason for Jamaica to sever ties with the monarchy is the shame that people express towards having the former colonizer (or as some call it ‘slavemaster’) as head of state. People are essentially saying that Jamaica need its own constitution, and some are saying that the government should ‘just get it done.’ All in all, these users express how transitioning is an obvious step for Jamaica. The attitudes that are shown here, on the one hand persons asking what a transition would entail and on the other hand people saying Jamaica should ‘just get it done,’ are further different from attitudes of the past where stability and continuity was



*Tweet 10.*



2:55 em · 22 mars 2023 · 213 tn visningar

354 Retweets 84 citat 963 gilla-markeringar 28 Bokmärken



Let's begin the [#RoadToRepublic](#)

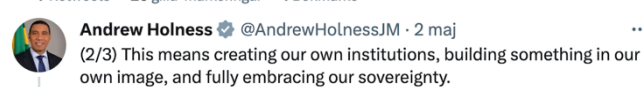
[#ConstitutionalReform](#)

*Tweet 11.1 & 11.2*



1:07 fm · 2 maj 2023 · 2 985 visningar

7 Retweets 26 gilla-markeringar 1 Bokmärke



*Tweet 12.1 & 12.2*

prioritized (Darwin, 1988, 220-221; Bishop, 2011, 420; Jamaica Observer, 2015). Now, the symbolic decolonization of removing the monarchy seems to be more of a priority than before.

Another category of replies consists of people making connections between having the British monarch as head of state and not being fully independent. Twelve non-public users are found in the dataset expressively connecting removal of the monarchy to independence, for instance by asking when independence will be completed, and by saying that a transition will lead to ‘true freedom.’ The above displayed threads of tweets (*tweets 11* and *tweets 12*) posted by Holness further shows this connection being made. In *tweets 11.1* and *11.2*, a thread where the road upon which Jamaica is embarking is being described, Holness point to the transition as being of importance for the self-determination of Jamaica. Furthermore, in *tweets 12.1* and *12.2* Holness express that transitioning is important both for a completed independence and sovereignty.

A clear and explicit connection is here made between severing ties with the monarchy and increasing the level of sovereignty in Jamaica; and as both Holness and other users point to how this transition will give Jamaica ‘political independence,’ a message of Jamaica today feeling neither independent nor fully sovereign becomes evident. Now, this message point to an understanding of the global order as unequal. As Jamaica is seen as still being *under* Britain, the endurance of colonialism in the post-colonial period is here pointed to (Biswas, 2021, 220-224; Young, 2001, 57). The change that a transition is presumed to make can further here be referred to as symbolic, a symbolic step towards a feeling of autonomy and a step of symbolic decolonization.

#### 4.2.2 Make symbolic change

In the beginning of section 4.2 it is mentioned that people request more information about what kind of president that would be inducted, ceremonial or executive. In the dataset arguments for both options can be found. First, there are both public and non-public figures arguing that the King should be replaced by ‘a Jamaican,’ essentially requesting a symbolic change



*Tweet 13.1 & 13.2*

of head of state. This as exemplified in Mark J Golding's thread (*tweets 13.1 & 13.2*) from a PNP (People's National Party) broadcast in March 2023.

Secondly, among the non-public users who are making requests about what kind of presidency they think should be induced, 22 persons are requesting an executive president. These users put forward arguments of a ceremonial, figure head-president, would be 'worthless,' not making any substantial change for the Jamaican people, and a 'waste of money.' In other words, they see a change to a ceremonial president of Jamaica as unnecessary and are instead asking for 'real change.' Instating an executive president would indeed lead to substantial change in the Jamaican political system as it would mean a break with the Westminster system 'inherited' from Britain at independence (Bishop, 2011, 420).

Having 'a Jamaican head of state' can be seen as a symbol of independence, and as Golding points out in *tweet 13.1* a step towards "full decolonization from Britain." However, a divide between those who see such a symbolic shift of head of state as crucial and those who see such a shift as unnecessary can here be seen. The discourse around making a solely symbolic transition is hence neither unanimous nor straightforward, and what the transition is presumed to change, or what people want it to change, differs.

#### **4.2.2.1 The issue of the JCPC**

As seen in *tweet 13.2* above by Golding, the issue of transitioning is being connected to the issue of having the JCPC as Jamaica's final appellate court. Ten non-public users also express this sentiment, pointing to how it is a colonial structure and a way for 'the oppressor' to keep power. Some are even questioning what change removing the monarchy without removing the JCPC will make. However, as the previous research indicates, changing the Jamaican constitution is not an easy process, which could be a reason as to why the issue of removing the JCPC is not on the agenda as of today (O'Brien, 2018, 974, 977).

#### *4.2.3 Deviate from more pressing issues*

Everyone does not agree that Jamaica should leave the monarchy behind. Four users express indifference towards staying or leaving, while 23 argue that Jamaica should keep its monarchical status. Among those who argue that the monarchy should stay, a lack of faith in Jamaica's politicians is expressed. Some further argue that Jamaica has more pressing issues to

deal with, such as crime, corruption, food security and health care. Some also point to how a colonial mindset among Jamaican politicians could make a transition detrimental, expressing concern of a transition only leading to these politicians gaining more benefits and power. A last argument put forward for keeping with the monarchy is that Jamaica is not ready to stand on its own, as they 'cannot even manage as it is now.' These people arguing against republicanism hinge their argument on Jamaica having *more pressing* issues, essentially rejecting the idea of symbolism being important.

#### 4.3 In what ways and why is removing the British King as head of state of Jamaica being perceived as part of the process of gaining full independence?

From answering the two guiding questions we have already touched upon perceptions of *in what ways* removing the British King as head of state is a part of the process of gaining full independence. For instance, I have already argued that the Crown today is a signifier of colonialism and a racist system of oppression. It has been described how the monarchy is a colonial structure existing in the post-colonial, and how therefore removal of the Crown would be to remove remnants of colonialism. It has also been shown that having the monarch as head of state is perceived by people as being neither fully sovereign nor independent. In consequence, we have seen *that* a transition is seen as a step towards independence *because* Jamaicans simply does not feel like they are fully independent today. When it comes to the question of *why* the transition is perceived this way, it can further be argued that it is *because* of this feeling of subordination, and the reality of the postcolonial order.

As it relates to the symbolism of a transition, essentially, what people want to get rid of is the Crown as a signifier of oppression. People are not suggesting that there will be a material difference without the Crown, but instead removal of the Crown would indicate an act of symbolic decolonization. In other words, the crown represents symbolic colonialism, and removing it would signify a symbolic decolonial act. With the psychological aspect of postcolonialism, and semiotics, we can further see how changing the understanding of the Crown, by changing the broad consensus on the meaning of it to being seen as symbol of colonialism and oppression, here is used as a tool of 'emancipation from mental slavery,' and a way in which the previously colonized stand up against the postcolonial superiority of the West.

#### 4.4 Additional interesting point

Another point to take into consideration about this dataset is the fact that one of the biggest codes, with 72 references, is a category called ‘critical sentiment towards Jamaican politicians.’ Perceptions of Jamaican politicians and government are not what this study aims to investigate. However, as such a big part of the dataset consisted of this critical sentiment, I want to address it shortly. This code consist of tweets expressing criticism towards Jamaican politicians and government, with a few examples being people expressing concern about corruption, the process of transitioning not being done right, public consultation of the transition and constitutional reform not being adequate, and on a poll made by Forte on Twitter regarding if people want to have a Jamaican head of state many reply that such an important issue should not be discussed on Twitter. Other than this there are also many comments simply cursing the sitting government and politicians. A reason as to why so many references could be found relating to this theme could further be that Twitter is an easy way for people to express their unhappiness with politicians, being an outlet for disapproval. This could explain the vast amount of such tweets in the dataset.

## Chapter 5. Discussion and conclusions

*In this chapter the analysis is summarized and discussed, and main conclusions are stated.*

### 5.1 Discussion

What have we now learnt about Jamaica's route towards independence? How is removing the monarchy seen as a symbolic step on this route? And what can now be said about republicanism as an expression of symbolic decolonization today?

Regarding people's sentiment towards the monarchy, the biggest portion of tweets depict the Crown as the colonizer, as the oppressor, as the slavemaster and as 'descendant of murderers.' Looking at the result and analysis we find that the Crown, by many, is associated with colonization, slavery, and overall oppression. The Crown is both being tightly connected to the history of the Caribbean, and to the postcolonial world order where global injustices prevail. Essentially, the Crown is seen as a symbol of the colonizer, which is what makes removal of the monarchy a step on the route to independence, and a step in the process of symbolic decolonization.

Those arguing that Jamaica in fact should transition are essentially pointing to how time has come for Jamaica to stand on its own two feet, and that the transition is needed to rid Jamaica of the shame of still having the oppressor as final tic in their system. People are arguing that a transition *is* a step on the way towards gaining independence, a higher level of sovereignty, and to no longer being 'under Britain.' The change that is presumed here can be referred to as symbolic, a symbolic step towards a feeling of autonomy and a step of symbolic decolonization.

There is further a large group of people expressing their condolences for the Queen. This respect towards the monarchy can further be seen as expected by both Britain and the world, essentially pointing to the existence of the postcolonial order. However, as we also can see in the number of tweets regarding Elizabeth (218) versus the number of tweets expressing thoughts about the new King (25), other than that respect there does not seem to be much support for the monarchy. That people express their condolences towards Elizabeth might or might not be an expression of being stuck in a 'colonial mindset.' But we cannot forget that Elizabeth has been with Jamaica since before they became independent, she has been a symbol of stability and continuity, and, albeit what she today is seen as a symbol of, she has been liked. However,

without this personal respect existing for the Queen, the question is for how long the Crown will be able to retain. Because as it seems, the respect people had for her has not transferred neither to Charles nor the institution of the Crown.

Further, people pointing to this breaking free from the 'colonial mindset' is one reason as to why removal of the King is seen as part of the process towards full independence. People want to leave the colonial division behind. As long as these (postcolonial) structures persist, independence and freedom will not be achieved, and the colonial divisions will keep existing. Although succeeding with a referendum might be a difficult task, the discourse found in this research tells us that Jamaica is well on the way.

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## Appendix 1

Tweet 1 – Forte, M. @MalahooForteMP. (2022, 25 Oct). *As I registered voter in Jamaica will you vote in favour of change to abolish the Monarchy and establish Republic of Jamaica?* [Tweet] Twitter <https://twitter.com/MalahooForteMP/status/1584722604115787777>

Tweet 2 – Forte, M. @MalahooForteMP. (2023, 23 April), *Jamaica and the British Monarch separated in 1962 but are not yet formally divorced. The move to Republic will formally* [Tweet] Twitter <https://twitter.com/MalahooForteMP/status/1650195527256928258>

Tweet 3 – Holness, A. @AndrewHolnessJM. (2022, 8 Sept). *#PressRelease: The Government and people of Jamaica join with the British Royal Family, the people of the United Kingdom, and* [Tweet]. Twitter <https://twitter.com/AndrewHolnessJM/status/1567980824540086273>

Tweet 4 – Forte, M. @MalahooForteMP. (2022, 10 Sept). *The monarchy may have existed before the empire but its wealth and status can not be separated from Britains colonial plunder.* [Tweet]. Twitter

Tweet 5 – Jamaica Observer. @JamaicaObserver. (2022, 12 Sept). *Talk has turned to the legacies of colonialism, from slavery to corporal punishment in African schools to looted artifacts held* [Tweet]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/JamaicaObserver/status/1569340721999581184>

Tweet 6 – Forte, M. @MalahooForteMP. (2022, 12 Sept). *ElizabethII bore guilt merely b/c she embraced being symbol of British crown. But symbols matter. She willingly took on* [Tweet]. Twitter <https://twitter.com/MalahooForteMP/status/1569097198624817154>

Tweet 10 – Jamaica Observer. @JamaicaObserver. (2022, 25 Dec). *Dutch King Willem-Alexander welcomed the government's apology for the Netherlands' role in 250 years of slavery in his Christmas address on* <https://twitter.com/JamaicaObserver/status/1607093268365414403> [Tweet]. Twitter

Tweet 8 – Holness, A. @AndrewHolnessJM. (2022, 18 Sept). *Yesterday I had audience with King Charles III, the first since he became King. I congratulated King Charles on his new* [Tweet]. Twitter <https://twitter.com/AndrewHolnessJM/status/1571526565414019074>

Tweet 9 – Jamaica Observer. @JamaicaObserver. (2022, 19 Sept). *The coffin was draped with the Royal Standard and the Imperial State Crown, sparkling with almost 3,000 diamonds, and the* [Tweet]. Twitter <https://twitter.com/JamaicaObserver/status/1571867556717232130>

Tweet 10 – Holness, A. @AndrewHolnessJM. (2023, 1 May). (2/2) *Our 60th year of independence, and the associated momentum, presents a profound opportunity for us to enact, update and* [Tweet]. Twitter <https://twitter.com/AndrewHolnessJM/status/1653104234487767059>

Tweet 11.1 & 11.2 – Holness, A. @AndrewHolnessJM. (2023, 22 Mar). (1/2) *The Government of Jamaica is embarking on the most comprehensive constitutional reform work to transform Jamaica from* [Tweet]. Twitter. <https://twitter.com/AndrewHolnessJM/status/1638539946397949964> & <https://twitter.com/AndrewHolnessJM/status/1638539950693007360>

Tweet 12.1 & 12.2 – Holness, A. @AndrewHolnessJM. (2023, 2 May). (1/3) *As a country, our authority lies solely in our Constitution. If we truly want to be a self-respecting country and pursue our own path, we must* [Tweet]. Twitter <https://twitter.com/amnesty/status/1648286888141176835/mediaviewer> & <https://twitter.com/AndrewHolnessJM/status/1653174288730472449>

Tweet 13.1 & 13.2 – Golding, M. J. @MarkJGolding. (2023, 14 Mar) *This requires both the removal of the British Monarch as our head of state, to be replaced by a President who is a Jamaican; and also the removal of* [Tweet]. Twitter <https://twitter.com/MarkJGolding/status/1635738997447163906> & <https://twitter.com/MarkJGolding/status/1635738998801874944>