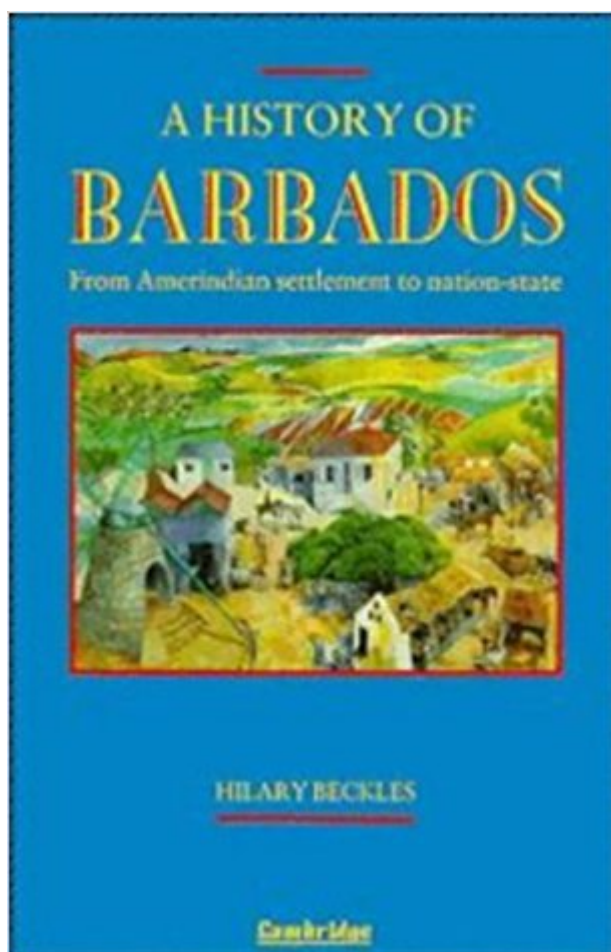




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A History Of Barbados: From Amerindian Settlement To Nation-State



Synopsis

As Barbados celebrates 350 years of established parliamentary government, this concise and authoritative history makes a timely appearance, covering the period from the first human settlement by the Amerindians to the present day. Social, political, and economic themes run throughout the book, including detailed aspects of early English colonization, the emergence and eventual abolition of the slave trade, and the development and growth of the sugar industry. Professor Beckles emphasizes the struggles for social equality, civil rights, and material betterment, detailing their continuous flow through the island's history since 1627.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This is a careful, thorough history of Barbados. It is a scholarly work in the best sense. It is interesting, thorough, clear and well written. If you are interested in the history of Barbados, as I am, you will be glad you read the book. It covers the entire history of Barbados, with perhaps only recent history being a little short on detail. Beckles writes with a point of view: the history of Barbados is a struggle between the slaves and later freed people against a monolithic "plantocracy." The book is not particularly good at sorting out currents and cross-currents in developments, instead forcing everything to fit into this point of view, whether or not the people or the developments really fit. Beckles has no capability of seeing the history of Barbados from the viewpoint of people who were not slaves, whether they are rich English people or poor Irish people. People from both of these groups were in Barbados for hundreds of years, in fact they were in Barbados before African

slavery. He mentions in passing that many of these people left Barbados in the last half of the twentieth century, without discussing either the number who left or the underlying reasons or implications. The observations in the book related to economics are simply dreadful. I am a professional economist, so this probably is a bigger deal to me than you unless you are an economist, but Beckles has no grasp of basic economics. Beckles presents simplistic answers when the results of thoughtful analysis would be informative. The discussion of population and emigration is particularly poor. He sees emigration as all bad. It is hard for those leaving. Still, Beckles does not seem to realize that emigration raised the wages of those remaining in Barbados.

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