UNESCO International Scientific Committee for the New Volumes of the General History of Africa

GENERAL HISTORY OF AFRICA · X

Africa and its Diasporas

EDITOR VANICLÉIA SILVA SANTOS

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Africa and its Diasporas

UNESCO General History of Africa

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EDITOR VANICLÉIA SILVA SANTOS

Published in 2025 by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 7, place de Fontenoy, 75352 Paris 07 SP, France.

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ISBN 978-92-3-100637-1
DOI: https://doi.org/10.54678/IHFW3136

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Cover Photo: © Milton Guran

Graphic Design (cover and text): Maria Luiza Monteiro Bueno e Silva, Rafael Hildebrand

Technical revision: Professor Augustin F. C. Holl

English Editors: UNESCO

Proofreader: Gina Doubleday

General History of Africa website: https://www.unesco.org/en/general-history-africa

Printed by UNESCO

Printed in France

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

UNESCO acknowledges with gratitude the generous contributions received for the production of this publication from the following public and private partners (in alphabetical order): Government of Angola, Government of Brazil, Companhia Energética de Minas Gerais, Escola Superior Dom Helder Câmara, MTN (Republic of South Africa), UNIBANCO (Brazil), Xiamen University (China).

IN MEMORIAM

The following experts who contributed to the new *General History of Africa,* Volumes IX-XI, passed away prior to publication of the present volume. Their work is gratefully acknowledged and their presence is greatly missed.

Professor Ambassador Olabiyi Babalola Joseph Yai, Benin, member of the International Scientific Committee for the drafting of the new volumes of the GHA

Professor Alain Anselin, Guadeloupe, France, author

Professor Mamadi Dembelé, Mali, author

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FOREWORD

by Audrey Azoulay, Director-General of UNESCO

In the first volume of the *General History of Africa* (GHA), published in 1981, historian Joseph Ki-Zerbo of Burkina Faso wrote: "Unless one chooses to live in a state of unconsciousness and alienation, one cannot live without memory, or with a memory that belongs to someone else".

The *General History of Africa* is a pioneering publication project which UNESCO has been carrying out for over half a century. Mr Ki-Zerbo's words shed light on the GHA's aim: to constitute a history of the continent in which African perspectives have pride of place, and to enable, thereby, Africans and people of African descent to reclaim their history.

Written by the continent's greatest historians (including Djibril Tamsir Niane, Cheikh Anta Diop, Théophile Obenga, Ali Mazrui and Gamal Mokhtar), the first eight volumes of the *General History of Africa* provide a comprehensive account of the history of Africa and Africans - from prehistory to the present day - which is freed from the hegemonic views imposed by colonialism and slavery.

I am delighted that this unique intellectual enterprise continues today with the publication of Volume X. At a time when UNESCO has made Africa its strategic priority and the International Decade for People of African Descent (2015–2024) is drawing to a close, the GHA's grounding in openness, pluralism and emancipation has a particularly powerful resonance.

This resonance is all the more powerful where, as in Volume X, the history of Africa is linked to that of its diasporas. As a result of this major historiographical renewal, which rejects the long-outdated dichotomy according to which the history of Africans is separate from that of people of African descent, Volume X revisits the place and role of Africa in world history.

Africa and Its Diasporas reveals an Africa of multiple connections: an Africa which, through the circulation of individuals, of ideas and of know-how, has a continuously revitalized influence on the fields of science, art and politics.

The concept of "global Africa", which serves as the basis for the chapters written by the 75 contemporary historians who contributed to this volume, encourages the reader to reconsider the dynamics and focus of world history and geography.

Above all, it gives shape to the history of the African diasporas. It gives a voice, a biography, to its protagonists, especially the victims of the slave trade, retelling the story of their vast heritage - from pan-Africanism to the Harlem Renaissance, and from Negritude in the French Caribbean to Negrismo in Cuba. The volume's editor, Vanicléia Silva Santos, takes a fascinating look at the subject in the work's introductory chapter.

The history of the diasporas has also been marked by the role played by Afrodescendants, past and present, from Latin American countries, India and the Islamic Republic of Iran, among others, in defining and disseminating an active Africanness. This sense of identity has left an indelible mark on cultural history. Eloquent examples range from the reflections of sixteenth-century Songhai Empire scholar Ahmad Baba al-Timbukti to the writings of nineteenth-century African-American intellectuals W. E. B. Du Bois and Frederick Douglass, among many others. It has also fuelled struggles for emancipation and independence.

Written within these pages is a global history of Africa that enriches our knowledge of the relationship of Africa and Africans with the rest of the world. The volume thus offers to both Africans and Afrodescendants, especially the younger generations, a source of pride and identity.

This volume is not just a history book; it also conveys a humanist message. At a time when our societies are facing a surge in hate speech and inequality and exclusion persist, *Africa and Its Diasporas* provides valuable intellectual resources to combat stigmatization, injustice and misrepresentation.

By shedding light on contemporary debates, and in particular on the consequences to date of the slave trade and enslavement of Africans, this publication can and must serve as an inspiration to inform and feed into public policies geared towards justice and the fight against racism. UNESCO

will ensure this by accompanying each of its Member States along the path to equality.

The publication of Volume X would not have been possible without the support of the members of the International Scientific Committee for the drafting of a General History of Africa, its president and vice-presidents, the volume editors, the authors, and all those who have contributed to this collective work. I would like to thank them all. My thanks also go to our donors and partners, both public and private, who have made it possible for us to pursue the noble and necessary endeavour that is the *General History of Africa*.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Reconceptualizing the History of Africa and its Diasporas

Augustin F. C. Holl

Introduction

The UNESCO *General History of Africa* (GHA) project consists of a three-stage process. The first stage, 'the *General History of Africa*' *stricto-sensu*, was launched in the early 1960s, the second, 'the Pedagogical Use of the *General History of Africa*', in 2009, and the third and last, 'Volume IX of the *General History of Africa*', in 2013.

The Volume IX of the GHA project was initially shaped at the Expert Meeting held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, under the auspices of the African Union, from 20 to 22 May 2013. Some 50 experts from different parts of world were invited to share ideas and make recommendations on the best ways to proceed. The initiative was spearheaded and initially funded by the Federal Government of Brazil. The International Scientific Committee for the Preparation and Publication of Volume IX of the General History of Africa, composed of 16 members appointed by the UNESCO Director-General, met later in the year in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil, to craft the project agenda and set it in motion. From 2013 to 2017, the Committee met successively in Salvador, Bahia, Brazil (November 2013), Paris, France (June 2014), São Carlos, Brazil (October 2015), Luanda, Angola (February 2016), Havana, Cuba (January 2017) and finally, in Xiamen, China (December 2017). The Committee crafted the initial structure of Volume IX in three tomes, organized the editorial teams

and selected some 250-300 authors worldwide. During the last meeting in Xiamen, it was decided to produce three volumes (IX, X and XI) instead of one Volume IX comprising three tomes. When the last stage of the process is complete, the GHA will be an impressive eleven-volume series.

The launch of the *General History of Africa*

The middle of the twentieth century was the crest of a wave of independence of African countries. The legacy of World War II, which pitted the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and Warsaw Pact military alliances against each other, was the key variable of international geopolitics. The Cold War, spreading its frozen wings over all international affairs, was at its peak. The raw ideological and geopolitical tensions manifested themselves on all continents. In Africa, Patrice Emery Lumumba, the Prime Minister of the newly independent State of Congo-Leopoldville, was deposed and assassinated on 17 January 1961. In Europe, the construction of the Berlin Wall, a palpable symbol of the Iron Curtain, started on 13 August 1961. In the Americas, the Cuban Missile Crisis, which lasted from 16 to 28 October 1962, brought the world to the brink of a nuclear conflagration. And finally, in Asia, following the implementation of the 'containment' doctrine, the United States Air Force attacked North Vietnam in 1964, triggering a sustained escalation in a war that lasted up until 1975.

The World War II alliance to defeat fascism and German-Japanese militarism was shattered in the immediate post-war years. The Chinese Communist Party and the People's Liberation Army defeated the Kuomintang and the Chinese Nationalist Party, and proclaimed the People's Republic of China on 1 October 1949. The Berlin Blockade, implemented from 24 June 1948 to 12 May 1949, signalled the onset of a new era of ideological rivalry, political confrontations and an arms race. Newly independent countries, pressured to choose sides, were faced with difficult and unpalatable choices. They attempted to create a space between the antagonistic blocks with the formation of the Non-Aligned Movement during the decade 1950-1960. The Bandung Conference, which took place from 18-24 April 1955 in Indonesia, was an epoch-marking event. It brought together Asian and African leaders and called for a rapid end to colonial domination. The movement toward independence of former colonies – predominantly in Africa – kicked off and the outcome was inevitable. The *General History of Africa* (GHA) project was born in that tense context. The

move was motivated by the strong will of newly independent African countries to take their destiny into their own hands, improve their present, shape their future and reflect on their history from their own perspective.

The history curriculum taught in colonized Africa was inadequate in many aspects. Schoolchildren in French colonies were taught to sing 'Our Ancestors the Gauls'. The European self-assigned 'civilizing mission' was predicated on the erasure of African historical agency. A new approach to Africa's past was an absolute necessity. The process of writing the GHA was consequently launched by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in 1964. Its main goal was to write the history of Africa from an African perspective. The monumental task undertaken then took some 20 years, at the end of which, in the early 1980s, the first volumes were produced. Eight volumes, numbered I-VIII, initially in French, English and Arabic, and translated later into 10 other languages, were published between 1981 and 1999. Some 350 historians and scientists, two thirds of them Africans, were involved. Their work was coordinated by the International Scientific Committee for the drafting of a General History of Africa, comprising 39 experts. They had to challenge the colonial library and rebuild an African historiography free of colonialist imprints and stereotypes. The history of Africa was not confined to enslavement, poverty, famines and civil unrest. The rich and diverse tapestry of Africa's past had to be rendered as thoroughly and precisely as possible through sound and rigorous scholarship. The GHA project pioneered an alternative way of writing history (Schmidt and Patterson, 1993). It brought to the fore marginalized and silenced people's voices and promoted a 'de-nationalized' historical narrative, featuring hidden space and time connections between different countries and regions of the world.

Starting with the GHA, UNESCO launched a series of general and regional histories, including the *History of Humanity*, a *History of the Civilizations of Central Asia*, a *General History of Latin America*, a *General History of the Caribbean*, and the *Different Aspects of Islamic Culture*. The process was triggered by the liberation of different parts of the world from colonial rule. It showcased new knowledge allowing for the build-up of a new universalism, a universalism that takes into consideration different historical legacies and worldviews. The pluralist and multidisciplinary approaches relied on for the writing of these histories shifted the narrative from the chronicles of kings, princes and dominant elites to the histories of political, social and cultural transformations, as well as scientific and artistic developments in different geocultural areas.

The *General History of Africa* as an alternative

The GHA was crafted as an alternative to the Eurocentric views of world history. The search for an alternative to the situation of alienation, domination and dependency has been part of the activities of some individuals or organized groups as early as the nineteenth century, with activists like Marcus Garvey, intellectuals like E. W. Blyden, W. E. B. Du Bois, and more recently Cheikh Anta Diop, to name but a few towering figures. Surfing the waves of political independence of African countries in the middle of the twentieth century, UNESCO's GHA project was launched to decolonize African history. The product that emerged from that initiative ended up as an important collection of eight volumes, published between 1981 and 1999. They are arranged along a chronological sequence, with some unavoidable overlap, each volume coordinated by one or two editors. In his preface, A. M. M'Bow, then Director-General of UNESCO, summarized what was at stake in the writing of the eight-volume *General History of Africa*. His presentation focused on a number of key issues, including 'the denial' of history, the false assumption of a 'balkanized' continent, and the conception of Africans and Afrodescendants as 'the wretched of the Earth'. He explained the genesis of the project and its scientific ambitions, and asserted the imperative for a widespread circulation and the need for pedagogical use of the published works.

Centuries of enslavement, followed by destructive conquest and colonial domination have generated peculiar conceptions of Africans, their past and their position in the world, as well as their future. Despite important contributions of a small number of scholars – Leo Frobenius, Maurice Delafosse and Arturo Labriola – mentioned in his text, M'Bow points to a common theme that emerged during the nineteenth century and spread during the colonial period. According to that theme, derived from the Hegelian conception of world history, African communities were societies unlikely to have a history. The core of the issue was that of the nature of the sources needed to write history. The lack of written sources in most ancient African societies was erroneously equated with the absence of history. Oral sources were paradoxically disparaged. Most of African history was still written from an outsider's perspective, based on external sources and relying on a European template as a model. African history was filtered through a series of preconceptions. It thus appears crucial for the historians to reshuffle their methodological tools and abandon the misleading preconceptions.

The dominant perception of Africa was that of a continent with juxtaposed subsets. North Africa, known as 'white' and sub-Saharan Africa, known as 'black' were thought to have lived separately on account of an insurmountable obstacle, namely the Saharan desert. Ancient Egypt and Nubia were also thought to have evolved independently from the rest of the continent. Consequently, Africa was not considered to be a historical entity. While each of the regions of Africa possesses its own originality, those regions have maintained uninterrupted exchanges between each other. North Africa, for example, was a bridgehead between the Mediterranean world and sub-Saharan Africa, and as for the margins of the Sahara, they have always been fluctuating. Egypt and Nubia have an interwoven history and share many cultural characteristics with the rest of Africa.

Racial stereotypes linked to the slave trade and colonial domination have distorted the very basis of African historiography. The use of discriminatory categories, for example, establishing white superiority and the '*essentialisation du nègre*' have distorted this historiography. In fact, Africa had to fight against twofold enslavement, economic and psychological. The hierarchy established among races as featured in colonial historiography served to justify colonial domination and the 'civilizing mission'. Changes that occurred after World War II, particularly the entry of African States onto the international scene, contributed to the evolution of the situation.

In this particular context, the Africans themselves felt the profound need to re-establish the historicity of their societies on solid foundations. This was one of the main stakes involved in the GHA project. The methodological innovation required gave great importance to African sources, particularly oral traditions (which require a systematic critical approach for satisfactory exploitation).

GHA volumes I to VIII

UNESCO's GHA includes the following eight volumes:

Volume I – *Methodology and African Prehistory*, edited by J. Ki-Zerbo (1981), has 28 chapters and three themes: methodology; archaeology and its techniques; and environmental change and regional sequences.

Volume II – *Ancient Civilizations of Africa*, edited by G. Mokhtar (1981), has 29 chapters and four themes. It deals with the evolution and emergence of the continent's early States up to 500 CE, with Egypt and Nubia having the lion's share.

Volume III – *Africa from the Seventh to the Eleventh Century*, edited by M. Elfasi and I. Hrbek (1988), comprises 28 chapters and five themes. It focuses on the expansion of Islam and its consequences on peoples and cultures of the African continent.

Volume IV – *Africa from the Twelfth to the Sixteenth Century*, edited by D. T. Niane (1984), partly overlaps chronologically with the previous volume. It comprises 27 chapters and four themes, dealing with the diversity of Africa's political, social and economic organizations as well as the 'Africanization' of Islam.

Volume V – *Africa from the Sixteenth to the Eighteenth Century*, edited by B. A. Ogot (1992), focuses on Ottoman expansion in North Africa, the development of the Atlantic slave trade, and their consequences on African societies. It has 29 chapters organized into thematic subsets: global processes on the one hand, and regional and local syntheses on the other hand.

Volume VI – *Africa in the Nineteenth Century until the 1880s*, edited by J. F. Ade Ajayi (1989), consists of 29 chapters and four themes, dealing with European settlements in northern and southern Africa, the formation of new States, Islam revivalist movements in West Africa, and the general state of the continent on the eve of European colonization.

Volume VII – *Africa under Colonial Domination 1880-1935*, edited by A. Adu Boahen (1985), has 30 chapters on the comparative analysis of European colonial systems and the multifaceted response of African societies, including the emergence and development of nationalist movements.

Volume VIII – *Africa since 1935*, edited by Ali A. Mazrui and C. Wondji (1999), has 30 chapters and seven themes. It explores the effects of major world crises and their impacts on the emergence and development of African nationalisms, pan-Africanism, the struggle for liberation and the place of independent African countries on the world scene.

Unfortunately, the impressive achievement of the GHA project was not widely disseminated in African bookstores, libraries or research institutions. Its impact on history curricula was virtually non-existent in most, if not all, African countries. A new initiative was necessary. The opportunity for launching that new initiative was found on 9 September 1999, with the Sirte Declaration, the founding act of the Organization of African Unity (OAU), which changed its name to the African Union (AU) in 2002.

The pedagogical use of the *General History of Africa*

The Pedagogical Use of the *General History of Africa* project is but the second phase of the GHA long-term objectives. It is geared to shift the momentum back into the hands of Africans and people of African descent. Building on the political dynamics triggered by the Sirte Declaration and the establishment of the Organization of African Unity on 9 September 1999 in Sirte, Libya, the Libyan Government provided funds for an ambitious project geared to support the movement toward the integration and construction of a united continent. Following a request from the African Union, UNESCO launched the Pedagogical Use of the *General History of Africa* project, first through an extensive review of the published volumes and an international meeting in Tripoli from 10-17 June 2010. Once the programme was launched, expert meetings were organized successively in Harare, Zimbabwe, in Accra, Ghana, and in Khartoum, Sudan. The foundational idea was to generate a common frame of mind, and shape a manifest destiny based on a common history and shared future that would further the construction of a peaceful, united and prosperous continent.

The dense and rich material assembled in the eight volumes of the GHA had to be analysed and included in the history curriculum of all the continent's school systems, from elementary schools to higher education institutions. Africans and Afrodescendants have to learn a history written from their own perspective, away from narrow national histories inherited from the colonial library. Despite significant transformations and sustained curricula changes in almost all African countries, the legacy of the colonial period is still present and resilient. The use of African languages at all levels of the education institutions will be critical for the future success of this project. The destruction in Libya left the project without funding. Alternative funding sources are being explored, with the project moving forward, but at a slower pace.

The post-colonial imperative and new epistemology

Some 60 years after the wave of independence of African countries, it was possible to pause and think. The Bretton Woods institutions – the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and, more recently, the World Trade Organization – set the rules and imposed liberal capitalism as the economic norm. After the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the ensuing collapse of

the Soviet empire, some authors wrote about the 'end of history' (Fukuyama, 1989, 1992) and 'clash of civilizations' (Huntington, 1993, 1996). By way of an introduction to his 1992 book, Fukuyama wrote:

> 'In it, I argued that a remarkable consensus concerning the legitimacy of liberal democracy as a system of government had emerged throughout the world over the past few years, as it conquered rival ideologies like hereditary monarchy, fascism, and most recently communism. More than that, however, I argued that liberal democracy may constitute the "end point of mankind's ideological evolution" and the "final form of human government," and as such constituted the "end of history"' (https://www.marxists.org/reference/subject/philosophy/works/us/fukuyama.htm).

Imposed structural adjustments, deregulation, privatization and laissez-faire have proven to be double-edged swords. The consequences were disastrous for most, if not all, African countries. What is the place of former colonies, caught in the neo-colonial net of their former colonizers – the CFA franc being an emblematic case of neo-colonial domination – in such an international system?

Without having to cut ties with former colonial powers, it is time to explore new spaces and times as well as distant and present connections with South America and Asia. Despite its current political crisis, Brazil, with the largest population of people of African descent outside Africa, will be a crucial partner in the years to come. In most American and Caribbean countries, people of African descent are fighting for their human and civil rights. The history of the African diaspora in the Indian Ocean, Asia and the South Pacific has to complement and dilute the dominant focus on the Atlantic world. China, already the first economic partner of Africa and the second largest economy in the world, has had multi-secular relationships with Africa (Li Anshan, 2005).

Past Chinese presence in Africa

It is not known precisely when Chinese goods reached Africa for the first time. Archaeological research provides a number of clues. An Austrian expedition excavating in Thebes, at Deir el-Madina, found the remains of silk in the hair of a 30-50 year-old female mummy discovered in the burial ground of the kings' workers. The burial is dated to the Hyksos period, belonging to the Twenty-First Dynasty, i.e. 1075-945 BCE (Li Anshan, 2005; Lubec et al., 1993). The silk industry certainly originated in China, where archaeologists have found textiles in a mysterious tomb dating back nearly 2,500 years in eastern Jiangxi Province, the oldest to be discovered in China's history. The silk industry,

trade and consequently the Silk Road, are thus much older than thought, and probably reached Egypt through Persia. Trade and cultural exchange between China and Egypt were well established during the Han dynasty (206 BCE – 220 CE) (Sun Tang, 1979 in Li Anshan, 2005). According to Li Anshan (2005, p. 60), Du Huan, a Chinese soldier of the Tang dynasty (618-907 CE) and war captive in Baghdad, where he spent several years, visited Africa in the eighth century, sometime around 762. His book, *Jingxingji* [经行记, *Record of My Travels*], was lost and is now known only through quotes in other books. It is therefore not known which part of Africa he may have visited, although Egypt and Northeast Africa appear to have been the most reachable.

In the first half of the fifteenth century, the Ming dynasty decided to project Chinese naval power all over the Indian Ocean. The Yongle emperor (1403-1424) appointed Zheng He as the Chief Admiral of a large fleet – the *Treasure Fleet*. The latter organized a total of seven expeditions, from 1405 to 1433, generally known as 'Zheng He's voyages' (Deng, 2005; Dreyer, 2006; Ferrand, 1919, 1922; Filesi, 1970; Levathes, 1997; Viviano, 2005). The *Treasure Fleet* sailed to the coast of East Africa on the fourth (1413-1415), fifth (1416-1419) and sixth (1421-1422) voyages, docking in Mogadishu, present-day Somalia, as well as Malindi and Mombasa, present-day Kenya. They exchanged Chinese goods for African ones, including live animals such as zebras and giraffes. Chinese celadon pottery of the kind produced in Longquan, found in the Limpopo valley on Mapungubwe Hill in the 1930s, is now firmly dated to the late Yuan (1279-1368) and early Ming (1368-1644) dynasties (Prinsloo et al., 2005). Such evidence is distributed over a large geographic zone in Eastern Africa, including Great Zimbabwe, the Swahili city-states, the Comoros and Madagascar (Beaujard, 2007). In addition, some of the descendants of Chinese sailors from Admiral Zheng He's fleet living on the small island of Pate were interviewed by Nicholas Kristof (1999) for *The New York Times*. In summary, there is scattered but significant evidence of the presence of Chinese goods and people in Africa's past. This interaction peaked in the fifteenth century and was cut short by the succeeding dynasty's imperial ban on foreign trade and naval expeditions.

Past African presence in China

Beyond the presence of surprising animals, such as zebras and giraffes (Chau Ju-Kua, 1911; Ferrand, 1919, 1922; Filesi, 1970; Wheatley, 1961; Talib and Samir, 1988), a number of Africans, through different indirect channels, ended up living in China as early as the first quarter of the eighth century. According to the *Chronicle of the Tang Dynasty*, in 724, the King of Srinijaya, from Palembang, Sumatra, offered a Zanj [black] girl, among other things, as tribute to the Emperor (Talib and Samir, 1988, p. 732; Ferrand, 1922). This practice was repeated several times during the following centuries, in 813, 818 and 976. In 813 and 818, the rulers from Kalinga, an Indonesian kingdom, offered several Zanj boys and girls in three successive missions to the Tang Emperor Hsien-Tsung. In 976, under the Sung dynasty, the Imperial court received 'a black K'un Lun slave with deep set eyes and black body' (Chau Ju-Kua, 1911) from an Arab trader (Talib and Samir, 1988, p. 732).

Although, indirectly and through Arab and Indonesian intermediaries, the slave trade reached China, mainly through the entry port and distribution hub of Guangzhou (Canton). The enslaved Africans were 'employed on shipboard to caulk leaky seams below the water-line from the outside as they were expert swimmers who do not close their eyes under water' (Chau Ju-Kua, 1911, pp. 31-2; Talib and Samir, 1988, p. 732; Wheatley, 1961, p. 55). Others were gate guards and household servants for the wealthy families in metropolitan areas. According to Chau Ju-Kua (1911, p. 32), 'many families buy black people to make gatekeepers of; they are called *kui-nu*, or "devil-slaves" or *hei siau ssi* (black slaves or servants)'. There is clearly much more research to be done in this direction, if oral histories and family archives can be collected systematically.

The great Moroccan world traveller and explorer Abu Abdullah Muhammad Ibn Abdullah al-Lawati al-Tanji Ibn Battuta – Ibn Battuta for short – visited China in the middle of the fourteenth century. He travelled all over the ancient world, covering some 120,000 kilometres in 29 years. Ibn Battuta arrived at Guangzhou (Canton) in China in 1345 (Ibn Battuta, 1982). He was particularly interested in local crafts, boat construction and porcelain making, and visited a number of places and towns. He travelled north to Hangzhou, which he described as the largest city he had ever seen. He could not reach Beijing and returned to Guangzhou in 1346 to sail to Sumatra.

It is also claimed that Admiral Zheng He's *Treasure Fleet* took some foreign dignitaries back to China to pay homage to the Ming emperors. It is not clear if

some Africans from the Swahili city-states of Mogadishu, Malindi or Mombasa were involved in these visits. In summary, from as early as the eighth century, Africans were present in Chinese imperial courts and in some wealthy families in southern China.

An exciting new conjuncture

A conjuncture is the convergence of independent factors that generates a new and unpredictable situation that lasts. The new and exciting conjuncture referred to here is made of four distinct developments: (1) a new institutional framework; (2) the improvement of the general economic and social outlook of Africa, despite persistent problems; (3) the expansion and acceleration of economic cooperation between Africa, Asia and South America; and (4) the development of a multipolar world.

A new institutional framework

The end of the twentieth and the beginning of the twenty-first century witnessed important changes in Africa's political map. After long wars of national liberation, the former Portuguese colonies became sovereign States in the 1970s: Guinea-Bissau and Cabo Verde celebrated their independence on 24 September 1973; Angola followed on 11 November 1974; and finally, Mozambique on 25 June 1975. It was the turn of Namibia and South Africa to go through profound changes in the 1990s. The former gained independence from South Africa's mandate on 21 March 1990. Nelson Mandela was freed from Robben Island jail on 11 February 1990 and was elected shortly after as the first post-apartheid South African president. Two new sovereign States entered the African political scene during the same time, after long and painful wars of liberation: Eritrea gained independence from Ethiopia on 24 May 1991, and South Sudan separated from the Republic of Sudan and celebrated its independence on 9 July 2011.

The establishment of the African Union in 1999 and the initiation of the regional integration process sparked a new momentum, challenging the divisions of the continent and the identity and nation construction model inherited from the colonial period. The major changes in the areas of economic cooperation and international relations that have influenced our globalized world since the end of the 1990s have paved the way for new opportunities as well as new

challenges and threats for Africa. Indeed, the accelerated pace of urbanization, Africa's wealth in terms of natural and strategic resources and the aspirations and creativity of young people pose new challenges for the people of Africa, thus emphasizing the need to take control of their destiny.

Moreover, people of African descent in South, Central and North America, the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean, the Middle East and elsewhere are attaching increasing importance to the links that tie them to Africa and African heritage. The countries in which people of African descent reside are increasingly recognizing the important contribution of these citizens to the construction of their societies. These countries are currently establishing public policies that aim to rectify historical distortions and combat racism, racial discrimination and the inequalities of the past, including positive discrimination measures. In that spirit, the initiatives taken by the Brazilian Government – in particular the adoption of a law on the mandatory teaching of the history of Africans and of Afrodescendants at all levels of education by using the GHA – set a standard in this regard. The preparation and publication of Volume IX of the GHA is a positive response to the above-mentioned trends and the requests formulated by Member States at the African Union summit held in Syrte, Libya, in 2009.

Africa's economic outlook

The economic outlook of the entire continent has shifted in the right direction during the last two decades, starting from the 2010s. There are significant variations between regions and countries, but on average, the situation has improved. Globally, major European weekly magazines, such as *Le Point* in France and *The Economist* in the United Kingdom, have praised Africa's economic performances. It is a far cry from the description of Africa as 'the hopeless continent', in the thundering headline of *The Economist* in 2000. The economic growth rate has been sustained for the last few years, averaging 5% per year, with double-digit rates in countries like Ethiopia and Ghana. The European-American financial crisis did not significantly affect Africa, partly because of its loose banks. There are still major obstacles to the freeing of all the potential creative energy, but many African entrepreneurs are more optimistic and less risk-averse. According to demographic projections, there are 500 million Africans of working age and there will be 1.1 billion in 2040, more than in China or India (*Le Point,* 9 August 2012). The potential for greener development is also higher in Africa than anywhere else in the world.

The expansion and acceleration of economic cooperation between Africa, Asia and South America

The multilateral cooperation between African countries and Asian and South American partners is on the increase. Most Asian economic powerhouses, whether large, like China, India and Japan, or smaller, like South Korea, are launching cooperation programmes with African countries in a broad range of domains. A new cooperation alliance, BRIC – including Brazil, Russia, India and China – working for an alternative to the Bretton Woods institutions (the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and the World Trade Organization) was formed in 2009. South Africa joined the alliance later, which changed its acronym to BRICS – Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa. BRICS financial institutions are being created and they are expected to affect international cooperation and financial systems in the years to come. Despite its current political crisis, Brazil, with the largest Afrodescendent population out of Africa, is positioned to play an important role in the cooperation with African countries.

The development of a multipolar world

The collapse of the Soviet empire, symbolized by the fall of the Berlin Wall on 9 November 1989, took all political commentators by surprise. Starting with *glasnost*, the attempted reform movement launched by President Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet empire unravelled within a few months (Sebestyen, 2010). The world was left with a single dominant imperial power that tried to impose its political views on the rest of the planet. Building on the collapse of the Soviet Union, viewed by some as the triumph over the 'evil empire' (Fukuyama, 1989, 1992; Huntington, 1993, 1996; Sebestyen, 2010), a power group of ideologues termed 'neoconservatives' took control of the foreign policy of the United States of America and devised a new doctrine of 'pre-emptive strikes' against whoever challenged the world domination of the United States. The first Gulf War, triggered by Iraq's invasion of Kuwait, took place in 1990-1991. The invading army was expelled by an international coalition led by the United States of America. The neoconservatives rose to full executive power with the election of G. W. Bush and Dick Cheney, respectively as President and Vice-President of the United States, in November 2000. During the chaotic rule of President Boris Yeltsin (1991-1999), the Russian Federation was totally absent from the international stage. On 11 September 2001, the attack on the

World Trade Center in New York unleashed the implementation of the new doctrine. The war in Afghanistan started on 7 October 2001 and continues today. Under the pretext of the presence of weapons of mass destruction, the Iraq War was launched on 20 March 2003 and lasted until 18 December 2011. Vladimir Putin replaced Boris Yeltsin as President of the Russian Federation on 31 December 1999, and was elected to that post a few months later in 2000. He initiated a series of reforms of Russian governing institutions and launched a ferocious war in Chechnya. A few years later, he restored the pride of the average Russian citizen and brought Russian diplomacy and military back on the world scene. The rise of China as the world's second economic powerhouse and its military build-up led to the emergence of a new multipolar world.

The new *General History of Africa*: an exponential growth

The Volume IX of the *General History of Africa* project is the third phase, launched in 2013, in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia. The impetus came from Brazil. The Brazilian parliament passed a law on the mandatory teaching of the history of Africans and of Afrodescendants at all levels of public education in the country. The Brazilian Government offered funding for an additional volume in the GHA series, a volume that would feature the history of African diasporas worldwide. The new project, anchored on the key concept of 'Global Africa', encourages literary and artistic approaches to gain better insight into certain aspects of the experiences of Africans and people of African descent. It advocates the use of concepts or notions in African languages, allowing people to think in African terms, realizes comparative studies in relation to South America and Asia, and offers a balanced and positive history of Africa and its diasporas.

The contributors were asked to think about writing history differently and to invent another way of portraying history. They were particularly encouraged to take into account the literary and artistic productions concerning historic African experiences as essential materials in the writing of the endogenous history of Africa and Africans. The contexts and their specific implementation of the concept of race would be central to understanding how Africans and people of African descent refer to themselves. It would also involve critical observation of the dynamics of the relationship between Africa and its diasporas, African 'globality', movements back and forth and the ways in which Africa could connect to the rest of the world.

An epistemic shift: Global Africa

This project implies writing a serene history of Africans and people of African descent on a global scale. That is what is subsumed under the concept of 'Global Africa'; in other words, taking into account the many dimensions of Africanness worldwide, from the initial expansion of humans from the African continent to the successive diasporas over time, right up to the present day (Harris, 1993; Hodgson and Byfield, 2017). The concept allows us to overcome the customary dichotomies and divisions between Africa and the African diasporas, enabling a balanced understanding of the African diasporas, in the long term and in their diversity. It equally allows us to reassess approaches to the period of enslavement, to study the relationship between pan-Africanism and the diasporas, and the enhancement of pan-Africanist thinking nurtured by contributions from different diasporic experiences. In other words, it allows us to address actively and transversally the different issues linking Africa and its diasporas.

The decolonization of concepts

The decolonization of the concepts, paradigms and categorizations used in social and human sciences, particularly in history, is regarded as an epistemological necessity throughout the scientific and intellectual communities in the former colonies and beyond (Mudimbe, 1988; Said, 1979) and as yet another component of the cultural and political emancipation of peoples who, not without difficulty, have thrown off the yoke of European colonization (Mignolo, 2011). Thanks to post-colonial studies, researchers in Latin America, Asia and Africa now select topics on the structural, protean remnants of colonial relations in the post-colonial era – a sort of 'coloniality' – that perpetuates age-old images and epistemological racism, disparaging non-Western cultural output. This inextinguishably burning issue somewhat informs the endogenous African approach taken in writing the *General History of Africa*. The approach to the decolonization of knowledge on Africa, providing an opportunity to write an innovative history from within and with a different outlook on the world, makes a crucial contribution to what the poet and thinker Aimé Césaire called the 'meeting place for giving and taking', a rearranged universal, a 'pluriversal', illustrating the great variety of human nature.

The current project, initially known as Volume IX of the *General History of Africa*, is consequently different from all the previous ones. It now comprises

three volumes – IX, X and XI – each with an editorial team consisting of section coordinators, co-editors and editors, with three main goals: (1) to update the *General History of Africa* and theories on human origins and the earliest human civilizations; (2) to explore and flesh out the formation process of 'Global Africa' and its consolidation in the rest of the world through its diasporas; and (3) to look at the opportunities and new challenges of 'Global Africa' in the contemporary world.

The General History of Africa Revisited

Volume IX, *The General History of Africa Revisited*, essentially aims to update the GHA. After four decades of intensive archaeological, historical and anthropological research, most of the content of the first three GHA volumes is partially or totally outdated. This updating is particularly challenging partly because of tightly limited space. It is divided into four sections, each under the editorial responsibility of coordinators.

Section 1, coordinated by Olabiyi B. Joseph Yaï and Martial Ze Belinga and entitled 'Writing History of Africans and their Diasporas Today' explores the epistemological and theoretical conditions for the production of historical narratives in the contemporary world. The concept of 'historical sources' is 'stretchable' ad infinitum. Objects, monuments, words, songs, poems and artefacts are historical sources depending on the purpose of the investigations being conducted. The assembled contributions interrogate the meaning and contribution to historical scholarship of such concepts as 'Africa', 'history' and 'oral traditions'. What is the translation of the word 'history' in African languages, in ancient Egyptian or in Yoruba? The authors discuss and explore the intricacies of long-term versus short-term histories, the possible contribution of native African writing systems, and the use and misuse of oral traditions in the chronicle of historical experiences of Africans and Afrodescendants.

Section 2, 'Review of the General History of Africa: Volumes I-VIII', is coordinated by Doulaye Konaté. It comprises the reviews of the contents of GHA volumes I to VIII, published between 1981 and 1999, in order to determine what needs to be updated.

Section 3, entitled 'The Initial History of Africa: An Update', is coordinated by Augustin F. C. Holl. The new formulation is a substitute for the term 'prehistory' that tends to be misread by an increasing number of people. Human history is a continuum from its remote hominid beginnings to the present.

Periodization is a necessity but it does not have to be constructed on a 'before' – prehistory – and a standard, genuine 'after' – history – viewed as a civilization threshold. The scheme suggested in this section is made of successive stages, as follows: initial, ancient, modern and contemporary history.

The update of the initial history of the continent is carried out in seven topical entries, each with two to four contributions. The first, 'general topics', deals with paleoenvironmental and paleoclimatological research, paleogenomics and African language classifications. Paleoanthropological research has completely changed our understanding of human origins and evolution. The speciation events and radiation episodes that resulted in the emergence of (1) the Ardipithecines – *Sahelanthropus tchadensis, Orrorin tugenensis, Ardipithecus ramidus* and *Ardipithecus kadabba* – dated to 7-4.5 million years ago, (2) the Australopithecines dated to 4.5-1.7 million years ago, (3) *Homo* dated to 2.5 million years ago and finally, (4) *Homo sapiens sapiens* dated to around 300,000 years ago, all took place in Africa. Three contributions under the second topic feature the oldest 7 million-year-old hominid from the Djurab desert in the Republic of Chad, an informed discussion on hominid subsistence and lifeways, and the presentation of the earliest stone tool complexes. Pleistocene hunting and gathering communities are dealt with under the third topic, in two chapters; and the emergence and expansion of food production is covered under the fourth topic, in three chapters. New directions in Egyptology are featured under the fifth topic, in four chapters. The discussions are evidence-based and serene, staying away from entrenched orthodoxies. Technological inventions and innovations are dealt with under the sixth topic, in two chapters, one on pottery and the other on metallurgies. Finally, the seventh topic explores the emergence of social complexity, in four chapters.

Section 4, coordinated by Doulaye Konaté and entitled 'Ancient and Modern History of Africa: An Update', features 12 contributions organized under four themes: (1) regional processes in the inland Niger delta, the Maghreb and Madagascar; (2) histories of religious systems; (3) trade diasporas in West and East Africa and the Indian Ocean; and finally, (4) enslavement and resistances.

Africa and Its Diasporas

Volume X, *Africa and Its Diasporas*, includes three sections. Section 1, coordinated by Carole Boyce-Davies and entitled 'Redefining Global Africanity and Blackness' includes 16 contributions, organized into two parts: (1) 'Race,

Location, Diaspora and Global Blackness', containing nine contributions; and (2) 'Global Africanity and the African Diaspora: New Epistemological Considerations', comprising seven chapters. The introduction by Boyce-Davies sets the stage, explores the origins of colour systematics in different settings and scholarly traditions, and traces the genealogies of the concept of 'Global Africa'.

Section 2, 'Mapping the African Diasporas', is coordinated by Vanicléia Silva Santos. The entire section deals with different aspects of the formation and resilience of African diasporas in different parts of the world. It comprises 36 contributions organized under six topics.

The first topic, geographies of the African diasporas, comprises four chapters tracing African presence in China, Australia, India and Iran. African revolutions and resistance to oppression, under the second topic, features revolts and resistances of enslaved peoples in North America, Brazil, Colombia and Madagascar. The third topic, African diasporic religions, includes six chapters ranging from Black brotherhoods in Angola, Portugal and Brazil, to Muslim resistance in North America and religious experiences of Africans in the Middle East. The fourth topic, oral genres, under the title 'Ties that bind: wisdom tales, orature and literature' are represented by three contributions on the Caribbean, Latin America and Brazil. The transfer of skills and knowledge is dealt with under the fifth topic, African diasporic knowledge and technologies, through four contributions featuring agriculture, foodways, navigation and mining. Finally, the sixth topic, the return to Africa, in three contributions, focuses on the returnees from Brazil to West Africa and India to East Africa. Cases from Liberia and Sierra Leone, not dealt with here, are relatively well-known.

Section 3, 'Life Stories and Freedom Narratives of Global Africa' is coordinated by Paul Lovejoy. It comprises 18 contributions featuring the life trajectories of enslaved individuals who were written about or who wrote autobiographies. The selected narratives range from the seventeenth to the early twentieth century, with the largest proportion dated to the nineteenth century. As can be expected in the present state of research, there are many more narratives from the Atlantic world, including the west coast of Africa, the Caribbean and the Americas. The situations in the Indian Ocean and mainland Asia, in this case during the Ottoman Empire, are featured in two contributions. The potential for new discoveries is particularly high in these parts of the African diasporas that are still underinvestigated. The narratives of 'returnees' feature the situations in nineteenth-century Sierra Leone, the Bight of Benin and Calabar. All the situations described in the narratives attest to the individual

agency, bargaining skills and resilience of those involved. They bring a direct textured human touch to past African diasporic experiences.

Global Africa Today

The end of the twentieth and beginning of the twenty-first century witnessed the complete liberation of Africa from direct colonialism. The newly launched African Union created a sixth region for 'Africans from the diaspora'. All these developments open new opportunities and pose difficult challenges. These are the issues dealt with in Volume XI, *Global Africa Today*. It is a very difficult foray into the 'history of present times' or 'immediate history'. The distancing that allows for a serene writing of history is missing from the picture. Historians have to write history while being involved in it.

The volume is divided into three sections. The first explores the current trends in contemporary historical scholarship and the theoretical and epistemological conditions for writing the history of Global Africa today, the second deals with the specific situation of Africa in the contemporary world and the third and last focuses on challenges to Global Africa at the turn of the third millennium.

Section 1, 'Global Africa Today', coordinated by Catherine Coquery-Vidrovitch comprises 26 chapters. The assembled contributions are organized under seven topics with two to six chapters each. The four chapters under the first topic address the new paradigms that shape historical research of contemporary Africa and its diasporas. The second topic, comprising six contributions, deals with emerging new approaches on previously neglected issues. What is the intellectual and cultural impact of the transatlantic slave trade in West African collective memories? How did gender relations shape the structures of African and diasporic societies? What does it mean to be poor? Is the current meaning, crafted by international organizations, applicable to African contexts? This is a sample of the issues addressed by the contributors to this topic. Religious factors are explored under the third topic through two chapters addressing the Africanization of Christianism through black churches, on the one hand, and the recent emergence of new religions, on the other. Issues of political renewal are discussed under the fourth topic. The contributors explore the rift between long-lasting African 'territorial-political' organization and the current 'national-territorial' State inherited from the colonial period. Some of the key questions addressed can be spelled out as follows: What is the relationship between nationality and nationalism? What does nationalism mean in African

multinationality States? What is the genesis of African contemporary chiefdoms and how do they fit in the contemporary State model? The fifth and sixth topics shift from continental Africa to a diasporic perspective. The fifth topic focuses on the concepts of 'Creolization', 'hybridization', and 'miscegenation' as they are relied upon in the Caribbean identity discourses, aesthetics and performing arts. The sixth topic consists of three contributions focusing on how Africa is viewed and conceptualized from the Caribbean. The exploration is carried out via the academic lenses and the development of African studies programmes, and the Caribbean revitalization movement. Lastly, the seventh topic explores present-day visions with a focus on blackness, race and representation, economics and African views on globalization.

Section 2, 'Africa in the Contemporary World', coordinated by Tayeb Chenntouf, comprises 29 contributions arranged in three rubrics. The first rubric features the permanence of the Global Africa project weaved through a broad range of topics, from political initiatives to the performing arts. The Global Africa project can be said to have started with the very deportation of Africans across the Atlantic Ocean. Music, technology, cuisine and religions were key elements of the survival kits of those who landed in the Americas and the Caribbean. The concept of pan-Africanism was coined and nurtured by intellectuals of the diaspora mostly in the nineteenth century. It expanded through a series of meetings in the early part of the twentieth century and became a mobilizing force in the movements for the liberation of the continent from colonial domination. The Organization of African Unity (OAU) and the African Union (AU) are, so far, the clearest political materialization of pan-Africanist ideas on the continent. The second rubric focuses on the challenges of current globalization and the new world geopolitics. What can be the role of Africa in this emerging new geopolitical world characterized by increasing connectivity through the Internet and faster air transportation? Africa, with its marginal 2% contribution to world trade, tends to witness a regression in its economic development. With very few exceptions, the continent is confined to the exportation of raw materials and unprocessed agricultural products. The influx of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) has destabilizing consequences on the operation of local governments. Political and military interference from former colonial powers and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) as well as peace-maintenance operations in Somalia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Mali preclude any pragmatic preparation of a future united, peaceful and prosperous Africa. The third rubric, exploring the role of culture and intellectuals, asks the programmatic question: 'What should be done?'.

Debates on the role of Africa in the expanding globalized world are taking shape in different cultural and intellectual contexts. With significant variations between countries, African institutions of higher education are generally underfunded and have been unable to play their rightful role as laboratories of ideas. Narrow State boundaries affect the nature and scope of the ideas explored in different forums. New positive developments are nonetheless taking place. Free movement of people and goods is now in place in West Africa. The Agreement Establishing the African Continental Free Trade Area was signed recently in Kigali, Rwanda, on 21 March 2018, by 44 heads of State and government.

Section 3, 'Africa at the Turn of the 3rd Millennium: Challenges and Dynamics', coordinated by Faranirina V. Rajaonah, comprises 22 contributions organized into four rubrics. The first rubric focuses on demography and urbanization. It explores the implications of African population growth in terms of economics, public health through the lenses of epidemiology, food security and urban growth, both in average-sized towns as well as megalopolises. The second rubric deals with issues of gender and generations. The assembled contributions discuss patterns of age and generation successions in sampled countries, the integration of African college graduates in Russia, social and economic landscapes, institutionalized social promotion as well as women in education and their increased roles and visibility in public affairs, both on national and international scenes. The third rubric, on partnership, envy and integration, explores different aspects of regional integration as well as new opportunities offered by cooperation between Africa and the BRICS alliance (Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa). Is this really an alternative to the predatory practices of dominant multinationals and the unilateral ukases of the Bretton Woods institutions? We will have to wait and see. Envy and the rush to African lands and the ensuing 'land-grabbing' are featured, and their implications assessed, along with an African perspective on migrations and development and the emerging new African financial hubs. Finally, the fourth rubric, 'Africa in Tempo with the World', delves into worldwide cultural circulations. These circulations are manifest in the emergence of new religious practices, such as Salafism and new Christianities, as well as in the worldwide appeal of black cosmopolitan aesthetics in African popular music, African cinema, fabrics and contemporary art.

The general picture that emerges from this volume is that of Global Africans and Afrodescendent communities on the move, slowly carving their paths and shaping their futures.

Conclusion

The project that has resulted in these three volumes was extraordinarily ambitious, original and inspiring. It aimed at setting a new way of writing history, taking into account current debates in social and human sciences, with epistemological ruptures and sustained reconceptualization. Competences and skills are available to move historical scholarship in new directions, in a multipolar world, rather than a closed relationship with the west. It is a fantastic challenge spelled out in the chapters of these three volumes.

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INTRODUCTION

History of Africa and its Diasporas

Vanicléia Silva Santos

Introduction

In 2003, the Brazilian Government responded positively to the country's educational institutions' clamour for teaching material on the history of Africa by collaborating with UNESCO. It financed the translation into, and publication in, Brazilian Portuguese of the eight volumes of the *General History of Africa* (GHA) and allowed free Internet access for both reading and downloading the GHA. In addition to this translation, educational guides for schools were produced. In 2013, taking a further step, Brazil decided to finance the new *General History of Africa* project, which comprises the history of Africa and its diasporas. This initiative should not surprise us, since over 3 million people from different parts of Africa were shipped across the Atlantic to Brazilian ports (see www.slavevoyages), and as a result, 56 per cent of today's Brazilian population of around 200 million define themselves as Afrodescendants. In the 1850s, after the transatlantic slave trade had been abolished for a second time, slave ships continued to unload on the Brazilian coast people illegally brought from Africa. In 1888, Brazil became the last nation in the Americas to abolish slavery.

The partnership between the Brazilian Education Ministry and UNESCO is strongly associated with the approval of Law 10.639/2003, which institutionalized the teaching of African and Afro-Brazilian history and culture in schools. This

partnership was essential to confronting political resistance to the law in Brazil. The law was accompanied by guidelines on how to equip schools with the necessary infrastructure. A new era was beginning: it was necessary to introduce new knowledge to promote a substantial change in the educational system. It was essential to break with the standard national narrative, which marginalized the African contribution to the formation of the Brazilian people and Brazilian society. The State recognized that teaching the history of Africa and the African diasporas was essential to combating racism and was an exercise in democracy. The law modified national legislation with regard to education (Gomes, 2011, p. 2). In sum, the institutionalization of the teaching of African history and Afro-Brazilian culture was part and parcel of a process to challenge the myth of racial democracy and overcome racism in Brazilian society. This struggle had as its main protagonists the black social movements, as well as numerous anti-racist organizations.

Despite the enormous African presence in Brazil and other nations, Eurocentric assumptions continued to downplay the contribution of African peoples to the formation of these societies. The production of these additional volumes on the history of Africa and its diasporas is a way of rescuing Africans and their descendants from invisibility or distorted histories in national narratives. These distorted histories tend to present the African continent as a homogeneous human and cultural territory.

The interest in producing this monumental work on African diasporas comes primarily from a demand from Afrodescendants all over the world. This book brings together old and new intellectual and political projects from outside and within the African continent. The central questions that guide us are: How do we build alternative historical knowledge about Africans and Afrodescendants in the diaspora? What are the specific roles of Africa in the history of African diasporas and the place of African diasporas in the history of Africa?

The concept of diaspora and its uses as intellectual capital in Black communities

At different points in history, from very early on, millions of Africans were part of the African diasporas. They were moved across the oceans to places in Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Oceania and, above all, the Americas. These diasporas are the result of various, usually forced, migratory waves that occurred over a long period. Most, but not all, of the people concerned were victims of

the slave trade. It is estimated that between the seventh and the nineteenth centuries, the trade in enslaved Africans across the Indian Ocean involved about 14.4 million persons who were taken to places in India, the Indian Ocean islands, the Middle East and China (Austen, 1979, p. 68). It has been estimated that about 12.5 million people were taken from Africa to the Americas between the beginning of the sixteenth century and the end of the nineteenth century (Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database). According to Joseph Inikori (1982, p. 20), this figure was probably much higher, reaching 15.4 million. Thus, in the Indian Ocean basin, the Middle East (Jayasuriya and Pankhurst, 2003) and the Americas, the African presence was significant. However, the production of knowledge about African peoples and their descendants has been marked by silence as to their contributions and by the erasure of their memory from national narratives as presented via textbooks, public monuments, national heroes, street names, museums and so on. In this volume, there are several examples of how silencing worked in Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Reunion Island, Iran and other nations. Ideas about the 'inexistence' of black people, their disappearance or miscegenation are still part of official national narratives to deny African heritage in different countries, independently of African demographic representation.

Whether because of their demographic significance or the role they have played in various spheres of economic, social and cultural life, Africans and Afrodescendants have been essential to global civilization. The concern with building a counter-hegemonic narrative was first prompted by black social movements and intellectuals. The first writings were produced by Africans in exile, outside and inside the continent of Africa. Victims of forced migration and enslavement, these individuals denounced their ordeals and established their humanity through writing.

There are early examples of Africans and Afrodescendants who wrote about their experience as captives. That is the case of Ahmad Baba al-Timbukti (1556-1627), a scholar in Timbuktu captured by the Moroccan army and forcibly resettled in Marrakesh, capital of the Saadam caliphate. In 1594, Ahmad Baba continued his work in the largest mosque and university of the Marrakech court. After 13 years of detention, he returned to Timbuktu. During his time in exile, Ahmad Baba wrote *Mi'raj al-Su'ud* (1616), which deals with religion, conversion, freedom and the legality of enslavement (Mota, 2018, pp. 270-271).

Across the Atlantic, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Afrodescendants also wrote about their experiences. For example, Olaudah Equiano (who came from West Africa to Barbados, then went to the United States of America and later moved on to England) and Mahommah Gardo

Baquaqua (who went from West Africa to Brazil and then to the United States and England, also making a visit to Haiti), whose autobiographies show the intellectual sophistication of enslaved Africans in the Americas. Both men are discussed in this volume. In the nineteenth century, writers of the African diaspora, including Harriet Tubman, Frederick Douglass and W. E. B. Du Bois in the United States, Anténor Firmin in Haiti, Henry Sylvester Williams in Trinidad, and Joaquim Maria Machado de Assis, Luis Gama and Maria Firmina dos Reis in Brazil, were among the many men and women who placed slavery, emancipation and post-emancipation at the centre of their concerns. In the twentieth century, intellectual production on these themes continued throughout the diaspora with key concerns such as pan-Africanism (all over the Americas), the Harlem Renaissance (United States), Negritude (French Caribbean), Negrismo (Cuba), Haitian Indigenism and Teatro Experimental do Negro (Brazil), in addition to decolonization in Africa and the civil rights movements in several places. African diaspora thinking was not born in the academy, but instead emerged from historical, cultural and political processes carried out by members of the African diaspora. Antecedents of this agency are covered by the authors in this volume.

Defining Global Africa beyond the Black Atlantic

In recent decades, scholars have been defining and redefining African diaspora studies in order to advance conceptual, geographic, temporal, methodological and thematic ideas (Du Bois, 1915; Shepperson, 1965; Asante, 1987; Wynter, 1995; Alpers, 2001; Manning, 2003; Hine and McLeod, 2001; Davies, 2003; Davies et al.; 1999; Zeleza, 2005). The concept of the African diaspora enables new approaches in order to rewrite the history and to change national narratives. A synthetic definition is offered by Joseph E. Harris, a pioneer in the field:

> 'The African diaspora concept subsumes the following: the global dispersion (voluntary and involuntary) of Africans throughout history; the emergence of a cultural identity abroad based on origin and social condition; and the psychological or physical return to the homeland, Africa. Thus viewed, the African diaspora assumes the character of a dynamic, continuous, and complex phenomenon stretching across time, geography, class, and gender' (Harris, 1982, p. 5).

In the 1990s, Colin Palmer offered a historically-based concept of the African diaspora:

> 'The modern African diaspora, at its core, consists of the millions of peoples of African descent living in various societies who are united by a past based significantly but not exclusively upon "racial" oppression and the struggles against it; and who, despite the cultural variations and political and other divisions among them, share an emotional bond with one another and with their ancestral continent; and who also, regardless of their location, face broadly similar problems in constructing and realizing themselves [...]
>
> Methodologically speaking, the study of the modern African diaspora should, in my opinion, begin with the study of Africa. The African continent - the ancestral homeland - must be central to any informed analysis and understanding of the dispersal of its peoples. Not only must the programs that are designed promote an understanding of the history and nature of the variegated African cultures, but it must be recognized that the peoples who left Africa and their ethnic group, coerced or otherwise, brought their cultures, ideas, and worldviews with them as well' (1998, p. 217).

Palmer places Africa as the starting point for understanding what happens with dislocated peoples inside and outside the African continent. He distances himself from perspectives centred on the United States of America and rejects the notions of homogeneity in the diaspora: 'scholars must resist any tendency to homogenize and conflate the histories of these variegated peoples whose memories are still haunted by an ocean that is associated with the travail of their ancestors' (1998, p. 218). This is one of the ideas in this project, which defines Global Africa with the inclusion of its diasporas.

In the last few decades, dozens of encyclopedias, collections and monographs have been published to cover African diasporas around the world. New research shows how Africans faced new environments using diverse strategies of adjustment. The research in this volume focuses on the trilogy of racism, domination and resistance. The chapters bring African cultures and societies to the centre stage in the discussion of African diasporas because we think it essential to start with Africa to understand the African diasporas and their transformations in time. Our authors point to historical, cultural and political connections with Africa without neglecting the importance of larger macroprocesses, particularly the evolving capitalist world system.

The chapters in this volume cover three main themes: (1) the various African diasporas, ancient and modern, their numerous contributions to the construction of modern societies, and their struggles for emancipation, independence and improvement; (2) the local dimensions of race/blackness, including racism and black identity movements; and (3) trajectories of individuals who survived the slave trade and slavery and became visible in the history of Global Africa.

We try to answer the associated questions on both a temporal and a spatial level. On a temporal level, the essays cover the transit of Africans within the continent and to the various regions of the Middle East, the Americas, Europe, the Pacific, the Indian Ocean region, China and Australia from the time of ancient Egypt to the modern period. They examine the mutual bonds between Africans and Afrodescendants on different continents as connected by trade, diplomacy, maritime crossings, slavery, emancipation and post-emancipation, colonialism and post-colonialism, internal migrations and the return of freed Africans and their children to the continent.

Although the majority of the African diaspora members were victims of the slave trade, it is essential to keep in mind that not all enslaved people were African. Therefore, slave communities, say in the Americas, should not be considered synonymous with African diasporic communities (Jayasuriya, 2008). In Goa, for example, between the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, manumission letters show that among the enslaved there were Indian and Chinese people. However, the majority of the manumitted wore 'Gatual', 'Curumbim' and 'Balagate' garb, which suggests that they were from India itself (Faria, 2020, p. 11). Even in Brazil, the term 'slave' was not synonymous with African, since the Indigenous populations, called '*negros da terra*' (blacks of the land), were largely enslaved during the colonial period.

To avoid generalizing and essentialist approaches, the authors were invited to use in their papers 'native' terms adopted by the groups and individuals themselves in their local or regional contexts. In this introduction and in the introduction to Section II, I have chosen the term 'Afrodescendants' to refer to the second generation onward because of the more common use of this term in several countries, along with the combination 'Afro-' or 'African-' + nationality (for example, Afro-Brazilian, Afro-Iranian, African-American, Afro-Indian, Afro-Sri Lankan, Afro-Pakistani (Jayasuriya, 2008), Afro-Portuguese, Afro-Malagasy and so on). However, these are not the only terms used by people on the ground to identify themselves or to identify others. In the following epistemological section of the book, several authors discuss concepts or definitions related to blackness. According to Agustín Laó-Montes' chapter, for example, 'both black and Afro-descendants flourish as positive signifiers of blackness and Africanity throughout Latin America'. He adds that the fact that the term 'Afrodescendant' is being incorporated into the languages of governments, transnational institutions and everyday use indicates a 'small political-cultural revolution against racism' as Afro-Latin Americans move from invisibility to public perception.

Far from being a compact mass of homogenizing narratives, each chapter is a product of original research or comprehensive synthesis that explores evidence regarding specific historical experiences in the diaspora. The chapters also reveal exercises of interdisciplinary dialogue as a tool for the study of Africa and the African diasporas, especially combining history, cultural anthropology, literature, linguistics, art, geography and archaeology, among other disciplines. Finally, the archives visited by our authors are located in different physical places of the global diaspora, as well as on virtual platforms.

Organization of Volume X

Volume X of the *General History of Africa* contains 68 chapters organized into three sections. The first section, *Redefining Global Africanity and blackness*, is coordinated by Carole Boyce-Davies. It is the result of an epistemological forum that addressed the different historical contexts where the concept of race emerged to understand how Africans and Afrodescendants perceive and refer to themselves, as well as how others have perceived and perceive them, from antiquity to contemporary times. The section is divided into two subsections. The first – *Race, location, diaspora and global blackness* – features contributions on different historical and contemporary realities concerning various fields of knowledge and various regions (United States, ancient Egypt, North Africa, Latin America, South Asia and China). The second – *Global Africanity and the African diaspora* – is dedicated to innovative epistemological efforts and new research on African transnationalisms and diasporas, feminist epistemologies in Global Africa, the black queer diaspora, discriminatory rhetoric in the Arab-Muslim world, and indigeneity.

The second section of the book, coordinated by Vanicléia Silva Santos, is structured around six themes: the formation of communities, resistance, spiritualities, languages, labour and technology, and returns to Africa. The first concerns the currents of voluntary and involuntary movements in the eastern and western Indian Ocean, as well as the creation of black communities in Europe, the Indian Ocean region, the west and east coasts of Africa, and the Americas. The second has to do with the various forms of resistance among Africans and those of their descendants who found themselves enslaved or under other forms of oppression and exploitation in and outside Africa. The theme of resistance is not limited to this part of the book. In the third thematic subsection, diasporic forms of religion are addressed from the standpoint of

cultural resistance and community formation. The fourth subsection focuses on the languages spoken in Africa and their presence in the lexicons of European languages and in music and other performance traditions. The fifth subsection deals with the different types of labour performed by Africans, besides work in mines and on plantations; it also discusses the technologies Africans brought from their places of origin to the New World. And, finally, the last subsection covers the return of Africans and their descendants from specific diaspora territories to specific locations in Africa.

The third and last section is coordinated by Paul Lovejoy. The focus is on the life stories of Africans and Afrodescendants victimized by slavery and the slave trade. The biographies of men and women present African diasporas in their most human and representative aspects. They cover a wide geographical area, including Brazil, Guadeloupe, Mexico, United States of America, Sierra Leone, Benin, Calabar, Angola, Mozambique, the Ottoman Empire, France and England. The section's collaborators narrate the experiences of Juan Correa (a baroque painter in Mexico); Joseph Bologne de Saint-Georges (a musician born in Guadeloupe and educated in France); Olaudah Equiano (an African-born sailor and abolitionist); Osifekunde of Ijebu (a domestic worker in Brazil and France); Ana Joaquina dos Santos e Silva (a slave trader in Angola); Nicholas Said (a soldier from Borno who worked in different cities in North Africa, the Middle East, Russia and the Americas); Nadir Agha (an Abyssinian eunuch in Istanbul); Gracia Maria da Conceição Magalhães, also known as Gracia Guiné (a manioc flour merchant in Rio de Janeiro); and others. These African diaspora figures played various roles that enabled them to enjoy a usually more rewarding life experience than most individuals of their ilk. This section highlights the study of these individuals and raises questions about the various paths that enslaved Africans followed while retaining and recreating in different ways, despite tremendous restraints, at least some of their cultural backgrounds.

Conclusion

I return to my initial words about how to build alternative knowledge regarding Africans and Afrodescendants from the knowledge produced in the diasporas: we should start with Africa and consider the multiple experiences of Africans and their capacity to adapt to new and adverse conditions. Although the place of Africa in the history of African diasporas is central to our understanding, the contributions in this volume confirm that the discussion today must go beyond the famous 'scale of intensity of Africanisms', in my paraphrase of Herskovits (1946, p. 346). African cultures were transformed by individuals and groups. Thus, the term 'Creolization' and other similar terms are applied in various chapters to identify the plasticity and competence of Africans and their descendants when it comes to transitioning between different cultural and political (often micropolitical) spaces.

Besides the academic personnel, there are other important actors contextualizing the production of this book. The new *General History of Africa* project was developed in the 2010s, a period that is far from the African independence movements of the 1950s to the 1970s. This project is marked by other debates, namely those around political inclusion, the struggle for equal opportunity and justice, which are usually restricted to the confines of academia, organized social movements and State institutions. At the global level, the first two decades of the twenty-first century were characterized by two phenomena which are far from traditional historical landmarks: the development of information technologies and the rapid popularization of social media, catapulted by smartphones and other easily handled devices. These two phenomena have brought onto the global scene other political actors that have redefined the agendas of universities, just as African independence movements had done for more than half a century. Around the world, the toppling of statues of slave traders, enslavers, conquistadors, and other men who, in their times, used their powers to hunt and oppress Africans and their descendants may lead to the writing of other histories about African diasporas.

Surely, narratives of history are no longer exclusively produced within closed academic circles, shaped by Eurocentric perspectives. Social movements have been instrumental in creating a new historical memory for the societies where they exist. In *The Wretched of the Earth*, Frantz Fanon asserted that after dismantling colonial institutions, our challenge should be to decolonize our minds; in the same vein, in 'Redemption Song', Bob Marley urged us to 'emancipate ourselves from mental slavery'. We hope that this book will be a useful, if modest, pedagogical tool for achieving these goals through the teaching of history in schools and universities.

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SECTION I

REDEFINING GLOBAL AFRICANITY AND BLACKNESS

INTRODUCTION

The Epistemological Basis for Claiming Black Identities

Carole Boyce-Davies

Introduction

In examining the issues of epistemology – the knowledge-production apparatus which informs representation – as it pertains to African peoples globally, we are faced with the reality that in every discipline, and in every location, one is confronted with the assumption of European historical timelines, theoretical formulations, and aesthetic principles as universal. The claim of western European scholarly enterprises to ownership of the universal has created a hierarchy of knowledge in which African peoples' contributions to human advancement remain at the bottom, if present at all, as such contributions are often totally erased from any intellectual consideration. This epistemological forum advances knowledge of African peoples globally and is divided into two key components, explained below.

Section 1 deals with race, location, diaspora and global blackness as historical and contemporary realities, covering a number of locational standpoints and knowledge fields. Section 2 addresses Global Africanity and the African diaspora and includes genealogies of current debate, fields excluded from prior consideration, concepts for which there is new discussion, and areas in which there is new research.

Considering institutionalized knowledge-production systems, as these pertain to African peoples, scholar Sylvia Wynter offered a relevant assessment according to which, with the rise of European modernity, there was created, simultaneously, a category of people whose epistemologies were rendered non-existent:

> The internment of the New World peoples would be followed by that of the African lineage groups, homogenized under the commercial trade name of "negro". … Soon the shift would be made to the humanist concept of Natural Causality … in which the African mode of cultural reason was seen as a non-reason; and his internment in the plantation system as slave labor, was being carried out for the purpose of rationalizing him/her as an inferior mode of being in need of rational human baptism (Wynter, 1984, p. 35).

The chapters in this section will address some key issues, such as the assumed equivalence between blackness and Africanity, the relationship between blackness and racialization, and global and local implications of black diasporic identity. While 'black' has been used as a descriptor and qualifier of history (black history), literature (black literature), art (Black Arts movement), political movements (Black Power or Black Lives movements), colleges and universities (historically black colleges and universities), and studies (black studies), among the most popular designations, its meaning is not always uniform. Contributors in this section will historicize the often-shifting meaning of blackness and provide geographical context for its application. The nature and meaning of Global African identity will be consistently part of these discussions, particularly since Africanity and, indeed, African identity are also constructs located temporally in certain social movements and economic and intellectual imperatives.

On the idea of race and blackness, Denise Ferreira da Silva, in her *Toward a Global Idea of Race* (2007), advanced what she called the 'analytics of raciality'. Her aim was to understand how the 'nineteenth-century scientific projects of knowledge produced the notion of the racial, which institutes the global as an ontoepistemological context'. Thus, for her, the 'whole field of modern representation' is already contaminated with the logic of racial subjection, which has global implications. In that context, any understanding of modern global blackness comes already configured with this discourse of subjection. In her chapter 'Outlining the Global/Historical Subject', the specifics of how one is racialized in various locations remain a subject of continuing salience, as she sees the 'national text' reconfiguring globality and historicity. In many ways, though, this work owes a certain amount to Sylvia Wynter's 'theory of the human' (Wynter, 2003), which argues that Western man instated himself as man and instituted all others as deselected others, in accordance with a biocentric

conception tying the human to *Homo economicus* and, therefore, to material possession, and linking the deselected others to dispossession.

It was precisely this conundrum of the racialization processes that was tackled by black intellectuals and activists in the assertion of pan-Africanism at the first such conference in London in 1900. There it was acknowledged that race remained salient for the ordering of Western and Western-derived societies. This continued throughout the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century. The interplay between the global and the local remains, with its varying permutations in different locations, but with some commonalities around subjection and the creation of racial hierarchies. Cedric J. Robinson refers to 'racial capitalism' in his classic *Black Marxism: The Making of the Black Radical Tradition* (1983) to describe the ways in which capitalism and racism evolved together to produce racial capitalism. Racialization was already taking place in Europe via internal colonization, with its economic corollaries, and the creation of hierarchies in which European ethnic minorities asserted ascendancy and subordination of those defined as racialized others (including Irish, Welsh, and Basques). Thus, according to Walter D. Mignolo, a coloniality of knowledge occurred in which the 'expansion of Western capitalism implied the expansion of Western epistemology in all its ramifications' (2002, p. 59).

Historicizing meanings of blackness

> What if blackness is the name that has been given to the social field and social life of an illicit alternative capacity to desire? Basically, that is precisely what I think blackness is. I want it to be my constant study. I listen for it everywhere (Moten, 2013, p. 778).

It is often quite a surprise to Africans in the diaspora when continental Africans say that, before coming to the United States of America or Europe, they never saw themselves as 'black'. Indeed, identities in various continental African locations were often constructed on their particular familial or kinship group, or ethnic or national identification. However, this was clearly not uniform, given the vastness of the continent, its varying ethnicities and political histories that included military operations, such as the Boer Wars, that were taking place in southern Africa as early as the nineteenth century.[1] Although many continental

1 Relatedly, the display in Europe of Sara Baartman (*c.*1790–1815), a southern African Khoisan woman, beginning in 1810 is one of the most glaring examples of racialized gender oppression.

Africans did not have close daily interactions with Europeans that could produce daily racial subordination, the structural elements of enslavement, from the fifteenth century onwards, and succeeding colonialism were already racialized. Works such as Jemima Pierre's 2012 book on racialization, decolonization, and the African postcolony, in this case dealing specifically with Ghana, indicate a high degree of racialization already taking place on the continent with the advent of the transatlantic slave trade and subsequent colonialism. Her chapter 'Of natives and Europeans: colonialism and the ethnicization of racial dominance' addresses this issue and develops the argument by exploring skin bleaching and popular racial and colour coding in the contemporary period.

Something similar occurs for Caribbeans and Latin Americans entering larger European or American metropolitan areas. Claims that people never experienced racism in the Caribbean or Latin America before coming to major European or American centres are blind to the varying patterns of locational racialization in which different racial codes continue to be applied in different contexts. For scholars such as Walter Rodney, both the Caribbean and the United States of America were laboratories for scientific and social racial experimentation: 'The West Indies and the American South share the dubious distinction of being the breeding ground for world racialism', he asserts in *The Groundings with My Brothers* (1969, p. 25). Boyce-Davies, in her chapter 'Caribbean GPS: compasses of racialization' (2013), indicates that, in the case of the United States of America, Jim Crow segregation and its markers epitomize the popular understanding of racism, rather than the superstructures of racism, which include race-based subordination manifested in various socioeconomic structures which still position black people at the bottom of a racial hierarchy.

It is important to repeat Paul Gilroy's assertion in the *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (1993) that, in the post-Columbian context, European modernity ushered in a series of systems equating racialization and subordination, whereby racism became a global phenomenon. Global racism operated as a feature of colonialism in which European domination carried a series of patterns of creating racialized others, often violently instituted at the corporeal level and on the cultural, institutional, economic and definitely epistemic levels. The Williams thesis as advanced in *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944) established a direct relationship between the rise and end of the transatlantic slave trade and capitalism and subsequent Industrial Revolution decisions that ended plantation slavery. Walter Rodney's *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (1972) describes how Africa was on its own equivalent development trajectory until the European imposition of a set of alternative oppressive and extractive economies.

In the more direct assignment of race and the alignment of blackness semantically with negativity, the issue of interpellation, or being singled out and located into a subordinated identity as one enters the Euro-American context, is documented well in the famous Fanonian experience: Look, a nigger! Look, a nigger - I am frightened! By these means, according to Frantz Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks* (1967), the human subject of African ancestry is forcibly fixed into an already-subordinated identitarian position. For Fanon, this is where racial displacement and the fracturing of the self into several other identities, including one of self-loathing, begins.

The descriptor 'black', then, which gives us the noun 'blackness' as one of the primary vectors of racialization, has a long trajectory, particularly in the New World context. Following transatlantic slavery, Africans displaced from their varying locations and transplanted into a variety of New World locations were described in terms that cast aside their historical self-definitions and placed in a category of, first, 'cargo', then 'enslaved', 'negroes', and 'niggers' in the most offensive representations. These same subordinated subjects began to claim a continental identity as Africans. In early self-representations, for example, in the poetry of Phillis Wheatley (*c.* 1753–1784), black people in the United States of America consistently referred to themselves as either African or Ethiopian. Black churches founded before the end of slavery in the United States and as early as 1816 self-describe as African, as in the founding of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, when black people left the Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia in 1787 to form their own Christian denomination. In the Caribbean, African peoples have continued to refer to themselves using their pre-enslavement African nation identities up to the contemporary period.[2]

The languaging of formal and global self-redefinition is significant, as it indicates shifting political realities and knowledge acquisition. Names and terms for self-naming have moved through a variety of rejections and reclamations. One such repudiation is to be found in Richard B. Moore's *The Name 'Negro': Its Origin and Evil Use* (1960). He indicates that 'the same word "negroes" was used for both meanings in Portuguese and Spanish', the former being the first to enslave African peoples and to call them 'negroes' (initially an adjective which means 'black'), 'whereas in English "negroes" was generally used for *slaves*

2 Anthropologists identified the "nation dance" in places such as Carriacou in the Caribbean where Africans were identified by their nations. Today's quasi-scientific DNA projects using genealogy websites, such as Ancestry.com, have assigned African ethnic identities to participants, indicating that the desire to discover one's pre-enslavement belonging has yet to subside.

and "blacks" for *simple color designation*' (p. 39). The adjective 'Negro' became a noun to refer to now-enslaved people. Still, black people in the anglophone world would move through a series of terms, from 'coloured' to 'negro' to 'black' to 'African' to the ubiquitous 'Afro-' as a pre-hyphen descriptor of various particular national identities. Claude McKay, during the Harlem Renaissance, is documented as using the conjoined term 'Aframericans'.

As a result of post-civil rights activism in the United States of America in the 1960s, 'black' and 'blackness' became terms of empowerment and were resemanticized to move away from their connotations of abjection, discrimination and subordination. Likewise, Black Power and Black Aesthetics were also terms used at the time to reclaim black subjectivity for political and creative use. Earlier still, the Rastafari in Jamaica, influenced by Marcus Garvey (1887–1940) through his Universal Negro Improvement and Conservation Association and African Communities League (UNIA), founded in 1914, reclaimed and resemanticized Africa and African identity. By these means, black as a concept was also used to rewrite, with the power of a political movement, the sense of abjection built into the word 'Negro'. Blackness thus became a 'membership norm' (Cambridge, 1996, p. 163) in which one is located positively through political self-definition. Studying the black British experience, Alrick Cambridge in 'The beauty of valuing black cultures' indicates that '"black" describes the constituency of those who have suffered anti-black racial discrimination and who accordingly employ it as a term of political self-description and cultural counter-assertion' (1996, p. 163). Thus, in the context of the arrival in the United Kingdom of a number of formerly colonized subjects from various locations (Africa, Asia, and the Caribbean, in particular), 'black' became a unifying self-description for all those people of colour, 'groupings of Asian and Afro-Caribbean constituencies' defined negatively by the dominant racist context as unwanted, 'who assert their blackness against whatever is anti-black' (p. 163).

Black as an assertion and as a descriptor created a 'transnational motion […] mobilized as such a powerful unifying concept full of layers and different temporalities' (Crawford, 2015, p. 23). Blackness then became also operational strategically in the context of the overarching construction of whiteness. Ta-Nehisi Coates provides examples in his *Between the World and Me* (2015) when he describes people 'who think they are white' as operating with historical privilege and his black identity as therefore contestatory, but with little hope for transcendence. Bell hooks had earlier attempted, in the rise of postmodern discourse, to complicate the meaning of blackness to allow room for 'multiple black identities' and 'varied black experience' and any 'colonial imperialist

paradigms of black identity which represent blackness one-dimensionally'.[3] Subsequently, Manning Marable (2008) would define a 'transnational blackness' and a 'global color line', advancing W. E. B. Du Bois' 'color line' demarcation, which the latter had asserted at the 1900 pan-African conference in London. For Marable, transnational political-economic inequities have created a kind of 'global apartheid', but simultaneously there is a blackness which operates beyond boundaries as a 'social site for resistance only within transnational and Pan-African contexts' (p. 3).

Nevertheless, in view of racial superstructures, particular definitions are often applied by State authority beyond personal self-definitions in order to exclude identification. The 2017 case of athlete Tiger Woods, famous for his excellence in the game of golf, is illustrative. Even though throughout his life Woods had resisted being defined as 'black', when arrested for driving while intoxicated, the State via the police booking system fixed the racial descriptor 'black' as his identity. Ibram X. Kendi's *Stamped from the Beginning: The Definitive History of Racist Ideas in America* (2016) offers a panoramic view of the development of racism throughout North American history and is a good source for examining this question in the context of the United States of America, particularly when the rise to power in 2008 of a black president, Barack Obama, failed to halt the practices of extreme racism. Instead, this claim to black political empowerment actually exacerbated virulent forms of racism, culminating in a new reassertion of white nationalism and racism with a president who, in 2016, ran for office precisely on a disparagement of a series of racial groups.

In the continental African case, in situations of extreme racism, as was apartheid, significantly, black counter-assertion was tied to political activism also in a movement for Black Power. In the African context, it would be linked to processes of decolonization and heightened consciousness, as articulated by Steve Biko in the formation of the Black Consciousness Movement in South Africa in the 1970s, to reclaim blackness in the face of apartheid's overt oppressive practices.

Nonetheless, there is another permutation in this regard, as offered by Wole Soyinka, who indicates in 'The African world and the ethnocultural debate' (1985) that there existed in African cultures positive languaging and associations for describing black peoples (*enia dudu*), including in his own Yoruba culture, as well as in other West African language groups. For him, blackness as an identity

3 https://www.pomoculture.org/2013/09/26/postmodern-blackness/

is thus older than Black Power movements and did not breed racism and was not associated with negativity. In his understanding, '[t]hose, in any corner of the continent or elsewhere, who experience a cultural affinity with any groups which have organized themselves as "black peoples", that is as *enia dudu*, are indeed black peoples and this autonomous sense of being cannot be denied us by others' (p. 17). These encounters, he indicates, filled him with a 'sense of community being which transcends the boundaries of my tribe, the geographical nation, or the continental shelf' (p. 31). This argument is pretty much in line with Alrick Cambridge's argument that 'unless cultural critics pay serious and explicit heed both to the values which animate black cultures and to their own values, the arena of forms of black life will remain the province of hyperbole and unsubstantiated generalizations' (p. 179).

In the Caribbean field, blackness as advanced by Walter Rodney unified black and Indian peoples under a more expansive definition: 'The black people of whom I speak, therefore, are non-whites – the hundreds of millions of people whose homelands are in Asia and Africa, with another few million in the Americas' (1969, pp. 16–17). The specificities of these definitional issues in contemporary terms are addressed by writers as indicated in the following section.

Race, location and global blackness

The layered meanings of race as expressed by the applications of blackness have a variety of locational permutations. The current volume of the *General History of Africa* on the diaspora has addressed these permutations in detail, offering recent research and thinking on the economies of blackness on individual subjects, bodies, and nations. Minkah Makalani, in his introduction to 'Diaspora and the localities of race' (2009), offers an important frame for discussions on 'how to think about the local in understanding race in the African diaspora' (pp. 3–4). He indicates how the essays in his project 'turn to the places inhabited by race, where the local occurs, to draw attention to the divergent racializations that constitute the African diaspora […] The difference that race makes in diaspora is precisely through its instantiation of difference; place and local structures become the nodes of diaspora, an ongoing construction and elaboration carried out at the same time within and against the nation' (p. 4).

The essays in this section thus offer ways of concretely addressing the localities of blackness from different lived realities. In *Blackness beyond the United States: understanding new diasporic definitions*, Michelle M. Wright begins her

discussion by asserting that 'blackness is neither a scientific nor a biological discovery, nor is it the creation of black peoples'. She locates its origins in the ideas of eighteenth-century white European politicians and philosophers who, as they created these categories, simultaneously created equivalences between blackness and inferiority. She pursues some of the historical ways in which scholars and movements have contested these definitions over time and have sought consistently to redefine blackness for positive application. Her discussion takes us through the ideas of those who showed how the black body has been racialized, from W. E. B. Du Bois to Frantz Fanon to Hortense Spillers, the latter also locating the black female body as a site of contestation. Wright examines and challenges the logic of 'post-blackness' in its short-lived 'post-racial' articulation and concludes that blackness today exceeds all definitions.

Earlier historical permutations of racialization are addressed by Amon Saba Saakana in *Conceptualizing colour representation in antiquity: from Kmt and the Greco-Roman world to the Middle Ages*. Here, the research reveals that Kemites defined themselves in their iconography through a range of representations, not limited to the dichotomous blackness and whiteness paradigms which came to dominate modern forms of racism. Instead, reddish-brown seemed to dominate and, at the same time, '[f]or the Kemites, the colour black expressed goodness, fertility and beauty, and the colour red related to the desert and the foreigner. White represented spiritual purity, not ethnic purity; for the purpose of depicting clothing, it was the colour which best represented transparency'. Capturing a later historical period, Jesse Benjamin's *North Africa and the origins of epistemic blackness* actually pinpoints the origins of the meanings of race and blackness in and around Northern Africa and continuing into the present. Significantly, for Benjamin, 'categories of blackness clearly already existed in Jewish, Muslim, and Christian cultural, theological and juridical thinking, well before the Atlantic passage. However, blackness was not yet regularized as having negative connotations, though it may have been trending in that direction in some of the Mediterranean regions; nor was blackness a fixed category with a stable meaning or definite geographic ascription'.

This brings us then to what happened in the Americas following transatlantic slavery. Agustín Laó-Montes, in *What's in a name? Complications of blackness and Afrodescendant definitions in Latin America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean*, uses a category he refers to as 'ethnic-racial' to 'conceptualize the entanglement of the cultural and phenotypical dimensions of racial classifications and stratifications', and hence the 'necessary, yet complex, relationship between race and ethnicity as historical categories and as markers of identity and difference'.

For Laó-Montes, the term 'Africana' refers to African peoples both on the continent and in the diaspora and is understood as a 'global translocal […] space of multiple exchanges and travels back and forth'. Laó-Montes also assigns racial categorization to a much earlier period, indicating that when they were conceived as continents, Africa, the Americas, Asia and Europe became equivalent to the four principal racial classifications of black, Indian, oriental, and white. These 'ethnic-racial' categories, he indicates, are part of the long-term process of globalization and took off in the fifteenth century as capitalist modernity began consolidating power. Current racial classifications and representations are, in a sense, derivative. Variations on the meanings of 'negro' or *afrocubano* as signifiers of Afro-Cuban difference show a consciousness of specificity within the national constellation of cultures and ethnic-racial identities. While the denominator 'negro' has longstanding significance as an imposed category in Latin America, in many locations it has become the descriptive equivalent of 'black'. The more recent descriptor *afrodescendiente* also has a variety of contradictory meanings, as it can be applied easily to people self-defining as *blanco-mestizo*. Categories also overlap and prove the racial illogic in their creation. Indeed, both 'negro' and *afrodescendiente* flourish as positive signifiers of blackness and Africanity across Latin America. Further, for Laó-Montes, the fact that *afrodescendiente* is becoming a staple of the language of governments, transnational institutions and everyday use indicates a 'small political-cultural revolution […] against racism' as Afro-Latin Americans move from invisibility to presence.

The varying meanings of blackness in Brazil are addressed in Elaine Pereira Rocha's *Becoming black: Brazil's long search for racial identity*, which focuses on the historical construction of racial identity in Brazil, the various ways it appears in language and its definitions in connection with physical and cultural *blanqueamiento* (whitening) and the more recent 'back to black' movement. Even though, for many years, Afro-Brazilians lacked representation at the public and state levels, a continuing and dynamic process circulating around conceptual debates in militant, academic and government circles culminated in Law 10.639 of 2003, which established the compulsory teaching of the history of Africa and African descendants at all school levels as a tool for educating a new generation against racism and racialism.

Moving the lens from the Atlantic to the Indian Ocean has become possible thanks to new research, including that of Françoise Vergès, who argues that the 'Indian Ocean as a diasporic field' is often overlooked in diasporic studies. The research indicates that '[f]or centuries, Africans, Indians, Chinese, Jews, Malays

and Arabs have circulated across the Indian Ocean' as 'migrants, traders, merchants, pirates, explorers, missionaries, pilgrims and captives'. This large demographic scope presents a range of diasporic threads and formations, with the Indian Ocean still remaining 'a space of interwoven experiences and multidimensional memories, reconfigured networks of capital and trade, and new nodes of geopolitical conflict'. Using the language of Global Africa, Vergès addresses the need for new work that rewrites 'the magnitude of diasporic movements in the Indian Ocean', thus building, as Gilroy did with the United States and Britain, a similar counter-narrative of modernity, but this time in relation to African-Asian connections. 'The history of Global Africa, past and present', she asserts, 'will be written by tracing the multiple and complex itineraries and routes taken by Africans across water towards islands and continents'.

A great deal of that research was conducted by Shihan de Silva Jayasuriya, Senior Fellow at the Institute of Commonwealth Studies of the University of London and one of the pioneers in this field. Here, in her chapter entitled *The African diaspora in South Asia: A theoretical perspective*, she examines the '[d]ispersed communities of Africans in Asia […] both historic and contemporary', through which she sees a triadic relationship between Africa as homeland, Africans and their descendants and an adopted residence or home abroad. Identifying migration streams and points of origin and destination is fundamental to this study. Scholarship on the communities of Sidis, or Afro-Indians, throughout India has advanced in recent years. For the author, the migration, diaspora and identity of Afro-Asians are entangled and should be considered together. While the lack of Afro-Asian voices and the disenfranchised status of Afro-Asians have led to 'the assumption that diasporic consciousness was lacking', field research and conferences, such as that of The African Diaspora in Asia (TADIA) Society (2006), are breaking with this tradition and revealing a desire to connect. Thus, she concludes that 'Afrodescendants are claiming their heritage and negotiating a new identity as they emerge from the peripheries'.

Beyond speculative work on and occasional glimpses of Africans in China, Li Anshan's *Blacks/Africans in China: historical process and diasporic experience* provides a study of the African presence in China from antiquity to the present. The author spends some time looking at how the various identities, such as *Kunlun* or *Sengzhi*, have been languaged and indicates that ethnocentrism has been a constant throughout human existence. His discussion covers the African presence in China, from the Han dynasty (206 BCE – 220 CE) to the current time. First, he looks at the ways in which Africans have been represented in archaeological evidence that suggests the possibility of contact between

Africa and China even before the Han dynasty. He examines some of these representations in arts, such as wall paintings, throughout the other dynasties, including those of Ming and Tang. He identifies *Kunlun* represented as positive figures in some collections of tales. Forms of employment and status are also a significant source of inquiry, with evidence pointing to the existence of blacks as merchants, businessmen, actors, musicians, porters, soldiers, and animal trainers, as well as enslaved persons. During the Ming dynasty (1368–1644), African soldiers were captured in a battle against the Portuguese occupation of Macao and were among the Chinese army led by Commander Zheng Chenggong. Turning to the contemporary period, he deals with the diasporans working in China, including artists, traders, students, and diplomats, and even working on a television show. A number of communities have developed, especially in cities such as Guangzhou (formerly Canton), an international port since ancient times. He concludes by stating that the African diaspora should be put in the context of economic globalization and transnational migration. 'The diasporic economy has a dual character, high mobility and diversity and a high possibility of residential segregation'. The most recent group in China consists of African students who are not classified as immigrants, although some do become residents. Naturally, the focus on Chinese sports following the Olympic Games of 2008 led to further interest in black representation.

Moving further around the globe to Australia and the Pacific, we are presented with another set of realities. *Being black in Australia*, by Karina Smith and colleagues from Victoria University in Melbourne, Australia, discusses 'contested and changing meanings of blackness through the history, politics and social formation of the Australian context in which the term "black" has been used as an instrument of coloniality and, at the same time, as a way of resisting and challenging the hegemony of whiteness'. The essay examines the construction of Australia as a white nation based on the *terra nullius* concept, the colliding definitions of blackness of the Aboriginal Australians and the more recent African and African-descent migrants who also define themselves as black, namely the Caribbean community 'rediasporized' from Europe and the Caribbean. The authors conclude that 'blackness is bound up with resisting whiteness, asserting a presence in Australian society, and creating positive black spaces'. At the same time, solidarity is not automatic, as each community has a different historical trajectory and significant cultural differences, and Aboriginal Australians, though Indigenous people, 'do not yet have sovereignty as the traditional owners of the land'.

Global africanity and the African diaspora: epistemological considerations

In an essay entitled "From Pax Africana to Global Africa" in *The Global African: A Portrait of Ali A. Mazrui* (1998), Darryl C. Thomas demonstrates that "Global Africa" starts to arise for Mazrui in 1974, when he reaffirmed the clarion call by Du Bois for African and Third World peoples 'to escape death and isolation, and to nurture the latent African genius' (p. 84). According to Locksley Edmondson's personal communication, Mazrui coined the term even earlier, during their days together (1967-1970) at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, as they sought to build an African international relations project from their location in East Africa. Here, the idea of Global Africa encounters the theoretics of pan-Africanism, of which Mazrui identified five dimensions: sub-Saharan, trans-Saharan, transatlantic, Western hemispheric and global (p. 85). According to Thomas, Mazrui would continuously refine the scope of Global Africa and go on to use it as a framework for his television series *The Africans: A Triple Heritage* (1986).[4] Mazrui would subsequently define Global African identity to include Africa and its diaspora in his 'Africans and African Americans in changing world trends: globalizing the black experience'.

Thus, the definition of Global Africa can be attributed to Ali A. Mazrui, in his attempt to find theoretical language to address issues of diasporization arising from the Howard University school, which had always been a site for the study and articulation of the concept of the African diaspora. While African studies at Howard University were initially spearheaded by William Leo Hansberry, other scholars, such as Joseph E. Harris at Howard's History Department also subsequently worked on the African diaspora in Asia. 'Global Africa' and 'African diaspora' were therefore terms used simultaneously from the start, or used at times dialectically, the former specific to political science and international relations, the latter used more in the humanities and in anthropology. Before Mazrui, the idea of building a global freedom struggle preoccupied all early pan-Africanists, who would actually use the language of globality. It is also possible, at this point, to cite David Walker, who wrote *Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World, but in Particular, and Very Expressly, to Those*

4 Significantly, Ali A. Mazrui was editor of UNESCO's *General History of Africa, Vol. VIII, Africa since 1935* (Heinemann/UNESCO 1993). This volume, in its section on pan-Africanism, contains essays by Joseph E. Harris, "Africa and its diaspora since 1935" (pp. 705–23), and by Locksley Edmondson, 'Africa and the developing regions' (pp. 829–70).

of the United States of America (1829), which technically had a Global African framework, even though it did not use current language.

Likewise, it is important to note that African-centred scholarship, such as that carried out in collaboration with Ivan Van Sertima also used the Global Africa framework. Van Sertima's *They Came Before Columbus: The African Presence in Ancient America* (1976) and Edward Scobie's *Global African Presence* (1994) are two such examples. P. Chike Onwuachi, Director of African Studies at Howard University in the 1970s, defined the African world as a scholarly paradigm to capture a global African presence. In that same Howard University community was Chancellor Williams, author of *The Destruction of Black Civilization: Great Issues of a Race from 4500 B.C. to 2000 A.D.* (1976). The definition of globalization as it pertains to African peoples in their relationships with Asia was renewed during twentieth-century debate, particularly following the Bandung Conference, a large-scale meeting of Afro-Asian states held in Bandung, Indonesia, in 1955. In effect, there was therefore a definitional shift from the political intent of pan-Africanism to that of global diaspora, to refer to the Global African now living diasporically.[5] According to Darryl C. Thomas, a graduate student of Mazrui at the University of Michigan in the 1980s (interview with author in 2017), Mazrui referred to this concept more frequently from 2000 with the increased migration of Africans to North and South America including the Caribbean, as well as to Europe, Asia, Australia and New Zealand.

Michael O. West's *Global Africa: the emergence and evolution of an idea* (2005), though dated in its assertions of what constituted the African diaspora, refers to a relationship between the two constructs – Global Africa and African diaspora – and offers the following definition:

> the Global Africa idea holds that Africans and people of African descent worldwide share a common set of historical experiences, most notably, slavery, colonialism, racial oppression, and their many consequences. Politically, the global Africa idea assumes that these shared ordeals constitute a template on which Africans – at home and abroad, on the African continent and in the diaspora – should unite to effect their mutual liberation (pp. 86–87).

While West was unable to move beyond a definition limited to enslavement, he offers a periodization beginning with the Haitian Revolution (1791-1804)

5 In *Bye-Bye Babar*, writer Taiye Selasi floated the term "Afropolitan" to refer to a more mobile generation of Africans with the skills and resources to travel and work in a variety of global centres and to interact culturally with a number of African and African diaspora sectors (Selasi, 2005). This essay generated a great deal of discussion (see for example Dabiri, 2014).

and culminating with the first pan-African Conference of 1900; a second moment, from 1900 to 1945, which was fuelled by World War I and which centred on denouncing colonial projects on the continent; a third moment, from 1945 to 1963, which was the major push towards independence; and a fourth moment beginning in 1963 and reaching up to the time of his writing, when a series of Black Power movements sprang up across the globe and would include a series of congresses in order to assert black empowerment. The problem with periodizations such as the ones offered by West is that, while convenient for historians, they miss the overlapping tendencies and a variety of other uncontainable permutations. Above all, they have to be continued into the present day, by, *inter alia*, accounting for the twenty-first century political assertion of the Black Lives movements in the wake of the extrajudicial police killing of young black men and women (Taylor, 2016).

Joseph Harris, who provided one of the first mappings of the African diaspora, insisted that, among other things, the African diaspora has to be studied in its global dimensions. His essay "Africa and its diaspora since 1935" in the *General History of Africa, Vol. VIII* (Mazrui, ed. 1993), and his *Global Dimensions of the African Diaspora* (1982), the product of a Howard University conference on the subject, are some of his contributions to the field of African diaspora studies.[6] In this regard, contemporary scholars, such as Michael A. Gomez, who edited the first conference papers of the Association for the Study of the Worldwide African Diaspora (ASWAD), as well as *Diasporic Africa: A Reader* (2006), and has also authored a number of works, including *Reversing Sail: A History of the African Diaspora* (2004), have contributed towards a massive body of work covering a range of fields, geographies and disciplines, some of which are represented here. While initially, anthropologists did much of the documentation of the cultural existence of African diaspora communities, historians such as Gomez have been central to delineating the nature of these movements and their local and global histories. Fields such as political science and economics have not been as substantially represented in this largely interdisciplinary project but are represented in this volume.

6 On the Howard School of International Relations, see Susan Pedersen's review "Destined to Disappear". Howard University and scholars in the African diaspora continued the focus on diaspora studies and it re-emerged as a critical factor once the area studies African project disappeared. Eric Williams and Ralph Bunche, among others, were important contributors. Black internationalism also re-emerged as a critical factor and, with the publication of Samuel P. Huntington's *The Clash of Civilizations* and *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity,* it was becoming clear to Ali that the prospect of a shared humanity and empathy of people in the North towards the South was becoming increasingly untenable, with the new focus on civilization and culture reinforcing the racial hierarchy.

Developing future diasporic paradigms

The need to clarify the conceptual differences between the keywords 'diaspora' and 'transnationalism' occupies Harry Goulbourne's "Transnationalism, diasporas and the African diaspora: some theoretical considerations". In his chapter, Goulbourne examines these differences and provides figures that describe the transnational continuum and apex. He addresses how 'attempts to understand the growth of transnational communities across the globe are often interspersed with aspects of, or overlap with, our understanding of what constitutes the African diaspora'. He uses the Atlantic African diaspora as a case study for delineating the overlapping communities, asserting that, 'while there may be numerous transnational communities – both historical and contemporary – not all develop into diasporas, and while all diasporas are transnational communities, not all transnational communities are diasporas'.

The *Economics of the transatlantic African diaspora*, by Joseph E. Inikori, co-editor of *The Atlantic Slave Trade: Effects on Economies, Societies and Peoples in Africa, the Americas, and Europe* (1992), demonstrates the impact that transatlantic slavery had on the economies of Africa, besides its large demographic shifting of African populations to the Americas. In other words, the 'employment of enslaved Africans in the Americas to produce commodities for Atlantic markets, in competition with West Africa's economies, raised the competitiveness of the Americas at the expense of West Africa […] By the time transatlantic export of captives ended in [the] mid-nineteenth century, West African economies had fallen considerably behind those of the Americas'. The continued impact of enslavement is expressed in the ongoing economic difficulties for continental African nations and African-American families across the diaspora. These constitute the 'continuing legacy of slavery' and 'post-slavery institutionalized racial discrimination'.

While voluntary, forced, and induced migrations of Africans (Boyce-Davies, 2008) have created communities of African-descended populations everywhere in the world, the study of their histories, survivals, cultural formations, reinterpretations, transformations, current economic and social realities, commonalities and differences continues to fuel the field of African diaspora studies. Central to all of these examinations, although less a focus historically, is how blackness and/or Africanity is defined. Contemporary theoretical discussions are moving beyond any overarching definition of blackness and Africanity, even as the search for commonalities and relationships continues as

a series of political projects. The research is revealing specificities of place, ethnic variations, linguistic variability and meaning, and continuing intersections with other related identities, thereby producing new formations. A few trends are observable in the recent scholarship, among them: how race and ethnicity inflect diasporas; the shifting meanings of blackness historically and in the contemporary period; and the ways gender, class and sexuality intersect and thereby expand and redefine our understandings of diaspora.

Various newer approaches to the study of diasporas have begun to proliferate. Kim D. Butler (2005), though a historian, eschewed the idea of carrying out the large chronological schematizing attempted by historians of a prior generation, such as Colin Palmer. She proposed shifting the defining element of diaspora studies away from the group itself and instead taking a methodological and theoretical approach to the study of the phenomenon of diaspora in human history. In other words, rather than being viewed as ethnic relationships, alternatively, diaspora may be considered as a framework for the study of a specific process of community formation, by addressing the following: (1) reasons for, and conditions of, the dispersal; (2) relationship with the homeland; (3) relationship with host lands; (4) interrelationships within communities of the diaspora; and (5) comparative studies of different diasporas. This kind of refining and redefining of a discourse allows us to see the different genealogies of African diaspora scholarship and how they manifest in various fields, but above all, how they appear in interdisciplinary African diaspora scholarship.

Recent thinking on diaspora is beginning to fill a number of exclusionary gaps relating to gender and sexualities, thus expanding the dimensions of how we think about diaspora and our consideration of who is left out. Nevertheless, there remains space for not yet fully explored subjects, such as diaspora and indigeneity, an important yet under-theorized discussion that is also addressed here and that promises to be a growing area of scholarship in the foreseeable future.

What about the possibility of studying indigeneity and blackness relationally in the Americas? Shona N. Jackson's *Reflections on Indigeneity and African belonging in the Caribbean and the Americas* argues that, ironically, blackness was instituted in the New World with the assumption of native absence. Thus, we are faced with a conundrum, namely, that 'the presumed lack of Indigenous presence in the Caribbean islands allows blacks an unquestioned native status, while in North, South and Central America the considerable presence of Indigenous Peoples has precluded formal discussion of black native status, except where the intersections of black and Indigenous lives during and after slavery force the issue'. Still, according to Wynter, black people's presence in the landscape

of the Americas, through labour, has both transformed their relationship to the land and indigenized it, but has also 'transformed the condition of forced diasporization into a new, native status'. For Jackson, therefore, it is a 'modern labour episteme that undergirds black belonging'. And significantly, 'the well-being of the white/Northern/First World is fundamentally predicated upon the death and privation of blacks and Indigenous Peoples'. This for her requires an 'epistemological turn' to understand how 'peoples coercively brought into a territory in which Indigenous Peoples existed now hold identities through which settler colonial power works' effectively to 'extend the colonial subordination of Indigenous Peoples'.

In this regard, a study of the genealogies of scholarship which attempt to account for and clarify the black experience has been undertaken in *Black studies epistemologies in the United States of America* by Charisse Burden-Stelly. As indicated at the start of this introduction, in terms of academic projects, black studies in the United States was a launching point for these discussions and remains a site where this discussion continues to be formally held. Black studies epistemologies are thus the intellectual space from which the advancement of knowledge of related fields emanates. The epistemological movements have moved through cultural nationalism and pan-Africanism, through black feminism and Afro-pessimism, and now Afro-futurism, which, though science fiction-oriented, has provided a necessary imagining of future possibilities. Major moments have included the widespread dynamization brought about by the Ryan Coogler film *Black Panther* (Marvel Entertainment, 2018), which combined both Afro-futuristic and traditional representations of Africa. The problem with Afro-pessimism, as Greg Thomas (2018) indicates, is that it remains unable to advance a discourse which makes more visible the 'blackness of blackness or the transvaluations of manifold black liberation movements' (pp. 291–92).

One of these important epistemological turns has been offered through a variety of black feminist assertions, ideas and political movements outlined in *Transnational feminist epistemologies for Global Africa* by Amina Mama, a former co-editor of *Feminist Africa*, which is based in South Africa and publishes gender studies scholarship relating to the continent and to the African diaspora. She asserts that African scholarship has to 'go global' in two ways: 'In addition to including the diasporas, it must also include women in a manner that redresses the neglect of African women's involvement in all aspects of history and the distortion of histories of sex and gender relations in all African societies'. To accomplish this, she examines gender in African history, pan-Africanism and

feminism, transnational feminist links and new questions for feminist research in Africa. She concludes that 'the iterations of global feminist epistemologies across Africa and diaspora have led to exemplary post-independence historical studies that demystify the manifestations of gender and sexuality in African communities around the globe'. While gendering the African diaspora is a project yet to be fully explored and remains a vibrant area of inquiry, work tentatively pursuing these questions has been carried out, including that done by Tina Campt and Deborah A. Thomas in *Gendering diaspora: transnational feminism, diaspora and its hegemonies* (2008).

An important new strand of scholarship complicating conventional gender distinctions and the normatively heterosexual vision of sexuality is captured in *Black/queer/diaspora at the current conjuncture* by Jafari S. Allen, an editor of the special issue on the diaspora of *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies*, and in Thomas Glave's *Our Caribbean: A Gathering of Gay and Lesbian Writing from the Antilles* (2008). Allen's 'Intellectual genealogies of black/queer/diaspora studies' asserts very early that 'while actual migration, whether forced, chosen or coerced, continues to be a major factor in making the black world, the diaspora is so deeply constitutive of the fabric of blackness that it is also experienced among individuals who will never leave their own town, but who nevertheless powerfully imagine their own black/queer "other" identity'. Sokari Ekine's and Hakima Abbas' *Queer African Reader* (2013) provides the continental side of a conversation on this issue with African diasporan writers in the Americas. Thus, the black queer diaspora constitutes an important strand of contemporary African diaspora scholarship. Allen provides both genealogical matrices and current inflections that define black queer subjectivity and futurity.

Finally, the need to provide new readings of racializations in the Arab-Muslim world, which are often unavailable for comparative analysis, is addressed here by Salah Trabelsi in *Genealogy of a discriminatory rhetoric in the classical Arab-Muslim world*. His main objective is to answer the question: How did classical Arab writers describe the African world and what descriptions did they produce about the black man?

Trabelsi makes a significant contribution to the field by showing how the construction of the blackness-enslaved nexus of the Atlantic had been previously articulated, with *aswad* (black) coming to replace the noun '*abd* (slave). Likewise, he shows how, combined with the ethnic referent of *Zendjī*, (plural *Zunūdj* and feminine *Zendjiyyāt*), ethnic identity began signifying enslavement. His articulations of the economic nature of Arab slavery are also worth noting, as they link to other African diaspora texts, such as Eric

Williams' *Capitalism and Slavery* (1944), thus describing a global systemic order of dehumanization of the black subject for economic interests. Trabelsi discusses the primary texts supplying the material for his analyses, beginning with the writings of a tenth-century (CE) Arab geographer who travelled the world to locations including the Maghreb, the Sahara, Egypt, and southern Africa. His taxonomies began by distinguishing 'people by their customs and modes of governance', but 'ended with territories inhabited by blacks being seen as the representation and quintessence of the most radical kind of otherness'. These negative representations would be challenged by classical poet and scientist al-Jāḥiẓ (*c.* 776–868, Basra, Iraq). He is identified as having developed a theory of evolution before Charles Darwin and expressing viewpoints in defence of black people that were deemed scandalous, even though he was himself of African descent. Trabelsi here fills an important research gap in terms of pejorative identifications of blackness in the period preceding fifteenth-century transatlantic slavery. It is important to put this work in conversation with essays in the first section, specifically, Jesse Benjamin's 'North Africa and the origins of epistemic blackness' and Amon Saba Saakana's *Conceptualizing colour representation in antiquity: from Kmt and the Greco-Roman world to the Middle Ages*. It definitely also provides an important historical backstory to the twentieth-century definitions of blackness in the Americas, as offered by Michelle M. Wright and Agustín Laó-Montes. Common ground is the economic benefit for those who construct these definitions of otherness and the ways in which resources (physical and natural) were appropriated.

Debates and discussion on global or transnational blackness and genealogies of epistemological readings of these realities have the function of challenging older paradigms, such as those relating to: the necessity, or possibility, of physical or emotional return to Africa minus the historical romantic trappings; the relationships between the African diaspora and the continent; the socioeconomic realities and inequities experienced by black communities; the unaddressed relationships with Indigenous communities; and the historical resonances of the definitions of blackness itself. For Fred Moten (2013), blackness is not wretchedness, damnation, absence or nothingness, but radical rejection of these, along with a parallel capacity to live and desire, away from 'social death' to life and, therefore, a preference for 'black optimism' (p. 742).

Epistemological lessons for the future

'What if blackness is the name that has been given to the social field and social life of an illicit alternative capacity to desire? Basically, that is precisely what I think blackness is. I want it to be my constant study. I listen for it everywhere' (Moten, 2013, p. 778).

Conducting a range of new and continued research projects in connection with the following is suggested:

- The layered meanings of race as expressed by the study of blackness in Australia, Latin America, and the Mediterranean
- A forum on the history of the identification of racialization in the period preceding transatlantic enslavement, including an examination of the nature of the relationships between North Africa and the southern Sahelian regions
- Continued studies of the economies of blackness in corporeal, national, and transnational terms
- Advancement of new paradigms addressing the Indian Ocean, the black Mediterranean and the black Pacific as diasporic fields
- The permutations of raciality and racialization in various historical periods and locations
- New conceptual and global fields to account for and continue the study of marginal others, especially in relation to the diaspora
- The relationships between indigeneity and diaspora using relations other than absence/presence and in a variety of locations
- The emerging diasporas on the African continent itself and how these redefine singular ethnic-racial and national identities

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CHAPTER 1

BLACKNESS BEYOND THE UNITED STATES

Understanding New Diasporic Definitions

Michelle M. Wright

Introduction: new definitions

When discussing 'new definitions' or different definitions of blackness, we must first dispense with one long-standing myth: that blackness is a biological determination. While the members of any human collective from one geographical region may share some physiological characteristics, these markers quickly become obsolete once we move from a small collective to the much larger category of race. There is no one physical (or cultural) trait shared by all black people, whether we are speaking of skin colour, facial features, body type, hair type, or a propensity towards a particular medical condition.

Indeed, blackness is neither a scientific nor a biological discovery, nor is it the creation of black peoples. With the rise of the transatlantic slave trade in the sixteenth century, those white Europeans employed by or profiting from the trade often wrote or spoke about black Africans as a repugnant, inferior breed of human being. The racial category of blackness (or of the 'Negro', as it was first termed) was formally codified towards the beginning of the eighteenth century by white European and American politicians and philosophers. As I have argued in *Becoming Black: Creating Identity in the African Diaspora* (2004), and as Emmanuel Chukwudi Eze and Henry Louis Gates, Jr. have detailed in *Race and the Enlightenment: A Reader* (1997) and *Figures in Black: Words, Signs*

and the "Racial" Self (1987) respectively, otherwise respected thinkers such as Thomas Jefferson, Immanuel Kant and G. W. F. Hegel made a number of outrageous and fantastical pronouncements on black inferiority and the lack of civilized history in Africa under the guise of 'objective observation' – and this despite the fact that none of those authors ever visited the continent.[1]

'New' definitions of blackness, therefore, in many ways must still respond to these originary myths of biological inferiority and incapability because they are still often believed (and applied) by powerful individuals and institutions that enjoy a global reach – and can thus deeply affect black lives and black communities across the globe. These new definitions are thus steeped in a rich tangle of intellectual genealogies that must be discussed alongside them to explain *when*, *where* and *why* these definitions came into being and why they enjoy such favour or disfavour among black diasporic and black African communities, institutions, activists, artists, academics – and even some politicians – the world over.

Black in time: defining blackness through modernity

One of the most influential texts to successfully challenge the prevailing white view of black inferiority was written by American sociologist, activist, journalist and editor W. E. B. Du Bois. For over 100 years, *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) has been and remains a canonical text that has influenced black thinkers not only in the Americas, but also in West and East Africa and Europe. In it, Du Bois famously argues that the 'problem of the twentieth century is the problem of the color line', thus moving what was considered a marginal problem specific only to a handful of nations onto the global stage. Above all else, Du Bois opines that the oppressive and degraded circumstances under which so-called objective white observers see blacks living in the West and in Africa are not in fact the result of an inferior biology, but of white prejudice and exploitation. In one of the most famous anecdotes from *Souls,* Du Bois relates how, as a little schoolboy in a majority white school in New England, he was a happy, successful and engaged participant until a white newcomer rejected his friendship, thus introducing him to a world in which a black person's comportment and ability can be overshadowed by the white obsession with skin colour. Through this recollection, Du Bois subverts a belief long held by anti-black racists that blackness is antithetical to progress and the modern world.

1 Aimé Césaire offers a cogent critique of these deeply illogical racisms and the devastating consequences they have had on Africa, Asia and Europe in his classic long essay *Discourse on Colonialism.*

This relationship between blackness and modernity (education being one of the foundations of progressive white civilizations, according to Jefferson, Kant, Hegel and many other eighteenth- and nineteenth-century 'Enlightenment' thinkers) informs a number of new definitions of blackness, including those developed through Afrofuturism and Afropessimism, which are perhaps the two most recognized ideologies in the activist, academic and artistic worlds of the black and African diaspora today. The formative link between black identities and the 'modern world' reached public recognition in the early twentieth century through a concept elaborated by black American educator Alain Locke, namely that of the New Negro (an idea to which many black Caribbean thinkers contributed, including Jamaican novelist and poet Claude McKay), and through the artistic and activist movement dubbed Negritude. This movement, which began in the 1920s and reached its heyday in the 1930s, was founded by Senegalese poet, World War II veteran and future President of Senegal Léopold Sédar Senghor, Martinican poet and later President of the Regional Council of Martinique (as well as World War II veteran) Aimé Césaire, Martinican essayist, poet and novelist Édouard Glissant, and French Guianese poet and politician Léon Damas. While crediting the Harlem Renaissance (especially writers like the modernist American poet Langston Hughes) for much of its inspiration, these four founders nonetheless differed greatly in their definition and exploration of the term, which, at its heart, insisted on black pride over shame and on the right of all black men to claim their birthright as citizens and active participants in the 'modern' world.

While he never labelled himself a Pan-Africanist, Senghor had a vision of Negritude which often coincided with the earlier but still vibrant and powerful ideology of Pan-Africanism, which was founded in the late nineteenth century by Liberian educator and diplomat Edward Blyden. For both men believed (as did the American physician and journalist Martin Delany and clergyman Alexander Crummell) that Africa was the true homeland for all black Africans and peoples of African descent, united by a common ancestral culture and languages that were at least equal to, if not superior to, those of white Western civilization. Interestingly, this concept of a shared cultural homeland was first attributed to the white German anthropologist Johann Herder, but unlike Herder, one-time Pan-Africanist W. E. B. Du Bois elaborated on it with a dynamic anti-colonialist and/or anti-imperialist agenda taken up in the Pan-African Congresses of 1919, 1921, 1923 and 1945 (and then carried on, after his death, in the 1974 and 1994 gatherings) seeking to provide black African nations with political and economic independence.

Success or failure? Defining blackness through Afropessimism

This view of blacks in the diaspora having more in common with Africa than their compatriots of different ancestries strongly informs Afropessimist thought, which also has some roots in the theories of Martinican psychoanalyst and intellectual Frantz Fanon. In *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) and *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), Fanon argues that the culture and, especially, the language of the colonizer can only lead to further oppression, not liberation, when employed and deployed by the colonized. The term 'Afropessimism' gained prominence in the late 1980s and early 1990s when it was used by intellectuals such as Ghanaian economist George B. N. Ayittey (*Africa Betrayed*, 1992) as a way to critique and emphasize the weakness and corruption riddling postcolonial African nations and pointing to a bleak future. Unfortunately, within the realms of economics and political science, this critique, aimed at discussing the material obstacles postcolonial African nations faced, also became an opportunity for some white critics, such as Paul Johnson, to return to the worn stereotypes of black Africans' biological inferiority rendering them incapable of self-governance (*Colonialism's Back – And Not a Moment Too Soon*, 1993). For contemporary figures such as the American academics Frank Wilderson (*Incognegro*, 2008) and Jared Sexton (*Amalgamation Schemes: Antiblackness and the Critique of Multiculturalism*, 2008), the work of Fanon, Ayittey, and other early Afropessimists is an important touchstone towards arguing that blackness will always find itself exploited and oppressed by whiteness and thus always hindered from progressing.

While Sexton and Wilderson do not address Fanon's strict gender politics, wherein black men are the normative representatives of blackness whom black women must always follow and support (Dubey, 1998; Wright, 2004), in her essay *Mama's Baby, Papa's Maybe: An American Grammar Book* (1987), American academic Hortense Spillers famously produces the black female body as the normative body that is the "natural" target for the colonizer's discourse and anti-progressive exploitation. According to Spillers, because the black female body is the literal biological source of the black race, it is the most frequent target of attack. In making this claim, Spillers does not rebut or reject Fanon's or any Afropessimist scholar's masculinist logic, but simply makes a case for the centrality of the black female (heterosexual) body.

Trinidadian and American academic and activist Carole Boyce-Davies also presents the black female body as normative to blackness, but in her scholarship (*Black Women, Writing and Identity*, 1994, and *Moving Beyond Boundaries: Black Women's Diasporas*, edited with Molara Ogundipe-Leslie, 1995) produces a vision of diaspora in which black women, queer and straight, are linked to communities all over the globe through shared cultural practices, political beliefs and intellectual concerns. Davies, like American and Caribbean activist and poet Audre Lorde, cannot be linked with an Afropessimist tradition, however, even though both intellectuals' assessment of the power of white racism and its effects is unstinting. Instead, Lorde and Davies both point to a black feminist cultural history of resistance and of sustaining practices within hostile racist environments that enable the survival of black diasporic communities. Dutch and Surinamese scholar and activist Gloria Wekker has argued (*The Politics of Passion: Women's Sexual Culture in the Afro-Surinamese Diaspora*, 2006) even further that black women across the diaspora can and do make their own communities, communities that, while not rejecting men, nonetheless possess their own uniquely gendered characteristics. Similarly, black German scholar, filmmaker and activist Fatima El-Tayeb argues (*European Others: Queering Ethnicity in Postnational Europe*, 2011) that black Europeans, straight and gay, can and should make common political cause with other racial minorities in Western Europe because they are all defined as 'Other', or wholly foreign and hostile to dominant white European mores.

White European governments (especially those in Western Europe, which from time to time have been forced, by sheer force of numbers, to acknowledge the presence of black denizens within their borders) are still loath to acknowledge the need to address Western Europe's founding role in the transatlantic slave trade, its invention of anti-black racist ideologies, the racist political, social and economic violence and damage wreaked during its colonial rule in Africa, and the ongoing presence of right-wing racist groups and sentiments within its political centres. The study and representation of black Europeans in academic and political institutions are so scarce as to be taboo, yet acts of violence against black Europeans are a growing constant in the quotidian, as are negrophobic and negrophilic representations of blackness in Western European mass media.

The importance of place: defining blackness in Europe and Africa

Perhaps because of their diverse roots, anti-racist activists in Europe do not wholly agree in their aims or analyses. After all, black Europeans can claim a broad range of familial, historical and cultural influences: North African, West African, East African and Caribbean origins; Christian, Jewish, Muslim and Africanist religions; leftist, centrist and conservative political orientations – as well as a broad variety of European, African and Caribbean languages and dialects. As one can imagine, Maghrebi populations in France, for example, can feel more immediately threatened by Europe's long-standing Islamophobia than black Britons who hail from the Anglophone Caribbean. The black German movement is notable for scholars such as Peggy Piesche and Maureen Eggers (*Mythen, Masken und Subjekte Kritische Weisssein Forschung in Deutschland*, or *Myths, Masks and Subjects in Critical Whiteness Studies,* 2009), whose scholarship compellingly links anti-black racism to misogyny, Islamophobia, homophobia and class prejudice. At the same time, this 'large umbrella' approach is relatively rare in activist politics as a whole, much less within the black and African diasporas.

Further along the spectrum of definitions of blackness, where blackness is defined through its global, non-race-specific intersections, we find Black Cosmopolitanism, which is also an umbrella concept, and subsequently developed to very fine degrees by a variety of contemporary thinkers and writers. For example, Ghanaian academic and novelist Kwame Anthony Appiah argues in *Cosmopolitanism: Ethics in a World of Strangers* (2006) that all black communities and individuals must understand themselves as 'global citizens' who, while distinct in their cultures, religions, ethnicities and nationalities, are nonetheless linked by a common ancestry and history – even while some are admittedly less empowered than others. In a slightly different vein, the novels of Nigerian novelist and feminist Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, especially *Purple Hibiscus* (2003), *Half of a Yellow Sun* (2006) and *Americanah* (2013), focus on how black Africans at this moment in the late twentieth and early twenty-first century must inevitably navigate between their local African ancestral homes, their national cultures and the long economic and political arm of global 'superpowers' in order to survive. Strikingly, Appiah and Adichie tend to locate black cosmopolitans almost wholly in urban areas, as does American academic Bennetta Jules-Rosette. In *Black Paris* (1998), Jules-Rosette argues that certain black diaspora literatures written from and focusing on the black experience

within large urban centres must be analysed within their own paradigm (such as 'Parisianism'), because defining blackness outside of the richly complex multicultural space of major cities is at best distorting, if not impossible.

From place to space: defining blackness through shared geographies

In fact, defining black identities in Europe has spawned a wholly separate subfield which argues that shared histories and geographies create shared communities that can legitimately be understood as nations in their own right. While the most influential theoretical work is *The Black Atlantic* (1992) by British professor Paul Gilroy, which argues that the 'Black Atlantic' is a black community-cum-nation composed of African American, black British and anglophone black Caribbean communities that are linked through their shared border of the Atlantic Ocean and its attendant history of enslavement and resistance.[2]

While a vast number of cultural and scholarly projects inspired by *The Black Atlantic* have followed, and continue to follow, Gilroy's project has been critiqued from a range of viewpoints, shedding some light on the different ways black identities in the diaspora are understood and defined by artists, activists and scholars (and thus worthy of an expanded discussion in this article). In *The Black Atlantic: Exploring Gilroy's Legacy*, British scholar Lucy Evans neatly summarizes the three main types of critic: (1) those who seek to 'broaden the borders' of the Black Atlantic to include not only more black communities in nations that border the Atlantic, but also communities found nearer to the Pacific Ocean and Indian Ocean (see *Beyond the Black Atlantic: Relocating Modernization and Technology*, edited by Walter Goebel and Saskia Schabio); (2) those, such as Simon Gikandi and Natasha Barnes (both located in the United States of America, although Gikandi is an Africanist born and raised in Kenya), who voice concern over Gilroy's emphasis on the Atlantic slave trade as the sole foundational event linking and defining Black Atlantic cultures and consciousness (see their special issue of the journal *Research in*

2 Logically speaking, Gilroy's focus on a shared Atlantic border and history of slavery should also incorporate the Lusophone and Hispanophone black communities of the Caribbean, as well as of Central and South America. However, although he does not explicitly reject this possibility, neither does Gilroy include those communities, whether implicitly or explicitly.

African Literatures); and finally, (3) those, such as the Africanist scholars Charles Piot (*Atlantic Aporias: Africa and Gilroy's Black Atlantic*, 2001) and Dagmawi Woubshet (*The Calendar of Loss: Race, Sexuality and Mourning in the Early Era of AIDS*, 2015), who question the logic of Gilroy's use of Africa as a space forever locked in the past and ignored in its present incarnations despite its continuing, vibrant engagement with and influence on contemporary black diasporic communities.

While the contributors to *Problematizing Blackness* (2003), edited by Percy Hintzen and Jean Muteba Rahier, also seek to expand and subvert dominant definitions of blackness in the United States, they would not define themselves as part of the 'post-black' movement. Instead, like Hintzen (born in Guyana) and Rahier (born in what is now the Democratic Republic of the Congo and raised in Brussels), these scholars, all of whom teach in the United States of America but were born in Africa and raised either there or in Europe, relate how they had to learn what 'blackness' meant to African Americans in the United States; this is an ironic state of affairs, considering that so many definitions of black American identity almost always point to Africa as the originary 'source' of their culture, rituals and social practices (what one of the contributors, Carolle Charles, dubs 'being black twice'). Yet the point that is made by contributors such as Olúfémi Táíwò (*This Prison Called My Skin*), Sarah Manyika (*Oyinbo*), and Carolle Charles (*Being Black Twice*) is that, far from having a universal definition, Middle Passage blackness carries many assumptions that are tied to the history of the transatlantic slave trade, or Middle Passage. At the other end of the spectrum, American and Caribbean anthropologist Jemima Pierre argues in *The Predicament of Blackness: Postcolonial Ghana and the Politics of Race* (2012) that, far from being a 'nonracialized space', Europe's African colonies were racialized to such a degree that postcolonial Africans are actually familiar with a similar, if not the same, paradigm of blackness that operates in the 'Black Atlantic'.

While the role of and relationship to Africa inform many debates on defining black diasporic identities, Gilroy's book and the volumes that followed in its wake have also given rise to a new discussion on defining blackness in the West. Specifically, many scholars question the tendency to focus on Middle Passage blackness (see James Smethurst's '*Internationally Known': The Black Arts Movement and U.S. Poetry in the Age of Hip Hop*, 2011, and my essay *Middle Passage Blackness and Its Diasporic Discontents*, 2013). These articles, among others, also criticize those who define blackness as the product of Atlantic slavery and the struggle for civil rights – thus ignoring an increasing number

of black people in the West who were either born and raised in Africa or born in the West to two black African parents who emigrated there long after the slave trade. The debate over these definitions of blackness largely boils down to which history one is using to define blackness – or whether one is using a history at all, as is the case in some discussions on post-blackness and Afrofuturism.

Looking beyond in the present moment: defining blackness through Afrofuturism

While many conservative intellectuals and politicians in the West have seized upon the term 'post-blackness' to claim that we are living in a 'post-racial era' (that is, in a time where racism and racial discrimination no longer exist in any meaningful way, or only exist in the paranoid minds of minorities), the earliest and most famous use of the term, by American art curator and art historian Thelma Golden, had quite different connotations. In the exhibition catalogue for the show *Freestyle* hosted by Golden's Studio Museum in Harlem in 2001, Golden argued that the black artists exhibiting wanted to be understood first and foremost as *artists* who worked in and through black paradigms. Honing this definition further, in *Post Black: How a New Generation is Redefining African American Identity* (2010), American journalist Ytasha Womack argues that twenty-first-century African Americans have expanded their cultural expressions and politics 'beyond' those of the previous generation and, contrary to conservative claims that post-blackness means the end of race and racism, are not seeking to eliminate previous definitions of blackness, but instead to expand on them.

Defining blackness beyond the Middle Passage (or, put another way, to include those whose ancestors were not enslaved in the Americas) is the quest of Afrofuturism. Afrofuturism is a decades-old vision of blackness first developed by American jazz musician Sun Ra; it constructs blackness within and beyond world histories, thus defining blackness outside of its more immediate histories of slavery, colonialism and postcolonial political oppression and economic exploitation by drawing on images of interplanetary travel by 'Afronauts' (black space travellers), ancient Egypt (especially under the Nubian pharaohs) and alien encounters. The term itself was coined by the white American journalist and writer Mark Dery in his essay *Black to the Future* (1994), in which he noted the explosion of African American fiction using futuristic and time-travelling tropes. Expanding Dery's definition by engaging with the creative work of

musicians such as George Clinton, Parliament Funkadelic and Janelle Monáe and of visual artists such as Rashid Johnson and Jean-Michel Basquiat, leading American Afrofuturist scholar Alondra Nelson memorably defined the central tenet of Afrofuturism as a 'utopic striving' for a better future in the here and now (*Afrofuturism: Past-Future Visions*, 2000). Although the work of Kenyan artist Wangechi Mutu and of British-Ghanaian filmmaker and theorist Kodwo Eshun is not explicitly located as part of this movement, their artistic creations have nonetheless been described as Afrofuturist and/or Afrosurrealist, which defines blackness as a surreal state of being, especially within dominant white (European) environments.

Left to the margins in many of these definitions, from Pan-Africanism to Afrosurrealism, are black queer individuals who in fact share the same socioeconomic spaces and are of course part of these communities. While, as noted above, black feminists have consistently and successfully carved out spaces that define blackness outside of masculinist norms, most scholars, artists and activists still tend to seek to explore and define blackness through heterosexual black bodies. Indeed, two of the few thinkers and writers on the African/black diasporas to explore queerness apart from Peggy Piesche and Fatima El-Tayeb are black Scottish poet, novelist and short-story writer Jackie Kay (*Trumpet*, 1998) and black Jamaican poet and short-story writer Thomas Glave (*The Torturer's Wife,* 2008).

In striking contrast to this impressive array of theorizations, the sciences, specifically biology and genetics, have moved 'backwards' in time (or perhaps not moved at all since the invention of "race science" in the eighteenth century). As analysed and explained by American scholar Dorothy Roberts in *Killing the Black Body* (1997), not only is there a common misconception in scientific communities (which assume that racial difference was a scientific discovery) that race is biologically and/or genetically determined, but also the sale of certain medications as racially specific or the offer of a genetic ancestral profile can reap impressive profits – despite the lack of any evidence that 'race genes' exist. Equally frightening, this biological essentialism appears to be informing State policy – as revealed in remarks by President George W. Bush on 28 February 2002 at the National Summit on Retirement Savings, when he argued that fewer resources could be spent on African American communities because African Americans were genetically predisposed to die at much younger ages than their white counterparts.

Conclusion: finding the when and where of blackness for inclusive definitions

In *Physics of Blackness: Beyond the Middle Passage Epistemology* (2015), I argue that the increasing diversification of black communities in Africa and throughout the globe makes it all the more important that scholars, politicians and activists develop more accurate and inclusive ways to analyse and represent black identities. West, North and East African immigration to Western Europe, China, the United States of America, Canada and Australia, for example, remains largely ignored in dominant discourses on blackness that imagine blackness as located only in Africa (implying that black Africans who settle outside of Africa cannot be considered denizens, much less citizens) or the United States. At the moment, the specific needs of these communities, their religious beliefs and cultural practices, political aspirations and health needs are either lumped in together with those of 'African Americans' (i.e., blacks in the United States who trace their African ancestry through transatlantic slavery) or those associated with a random stereotype of black Africans.

So what is there to gain from theorizing blackness as homogenous, with no respect for these crucial differences across Africa and within the black/African diasporas? In her 1988 essay *Subaltern Studies: Deconstructing Historiography*, Gayatri Spivak offers the term 'strategic essentialism' to explain why a relatively diverse socioeconomic and/or political minority might represent and analyse itself as homogeneous. Spivak argues that because this group is homogenized by bigoted discourses, there is a shared experience of oppression best combated with an organized, unified response.

Yet the conceptualization of unity is hardly a neutral action uninformed by common assumptions – most especially the assumption that cisgender men are more naturally suited for leadership and resistance than women.[3] Indeed, most collectives that understand themselves as racially/ethnically, religiously and/or nationally comprised tend to equate unity and independence for their collective with a heteropatriarchal order. From a practical standpoint, this type of unity disempowers more than half of the adult collective (cisgender women and, often, queer members of the collective) and thus reduces the likelihood

3 The term 'cisgender' was developed by transgender activists who seek to remind us that, like race, gender is far from a fixed biological fact that is easily defined and discerned. 'Cisgender' refers to those bodies that maintain and still identify with the gender they were accorded at birth, as opposed to those that have chosen another gender, or no gender at all.

of successful and lasting outcomes. While considerably more difficult, elective affinities (not in the sense used in Goethe's famous novel, but in the sense of the term in chemistry) in which individuals and collectives are encouraged to build alliances around a shared concern for certain issues (rather than a shared racial, ethnic, religious or national identity) offer the opportunity for those peoples to truly and authentically express and act on their beliefs, as well as build impressive coalitions to effect change – whether that be around poverty, judicial and/or economic reform, political corruption, education, civil rights, citizenship, or so forth.

At heart, what is at stake here is understanding blackness as a complex identity that carries different meanings depending on its time and place. Rather than attempting to determine exactly who possesses an "authentically black" socioeconomic and/or political background, for example, we can and should address differences between different black individuals with an eye to aggregating around shared concerns and causes. In other words, we might all be better off changing the question from 'What is blackness?' to 'When and where is blackness?'

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CHAPTER 2

CONCEPTUALISING COLOUR REPRESENTATION IN ANTIQUITY

From Kmt, The Greco-Roman World to The Middle Ages

Amon Saba Saakana

From Greek to Latin: the Moor in perspective

In this essay I apply a linear approach to the understanding of ethnic identification based upon historical documents. I rely upon the records of the literature to define identity. Thus ancient Egypt is a colonial invention herein ejected in favour of Kmt (the State) and Kmtan/Kemite/Kmtu (the people). I utilise both the historical and art history approaches, as iconographic evidence is abundant and the artists testify to their perception of the subject of their art. Any other approach is a translation, subjected to personal interpretation, and thus prejudiced.

The popularity of key adjectival words in the history of African representation locks the reader's perceptions into specific mental spaces. In relation to the African Moor, cultural theorists have offered explanations of specific instances of representation, but very few have provided a holistic perspective which located and derived key meanings from them. In order to better understand the meaning applied to the word 'Moor', one must begin by tracing its etymology. I begin with the Middle Ages and the presence of the African Moors in popular discussion of their expulsion from Christian Spain.

Barthelemy (1987, p. 8), a cultural theorist, locates the etymology of the word 'Moor' in the Greek *maupos*, 'a proper noun that identifies the inhabitants

of ancient Mauretania, the area that now makes up Morocco and Algeria [...] the fact [is] that *maupos* was used as a synonym for black' (1987, p. 8). He links the Greek word with the Latin *maurus*, which he says also 'came to mean black' (1987, p. 9). Further, quoting an author who says that although the word and its derivatives meant 'dark' or 'black', Barthelemy says that '[i]t was, therefore, not possible to mistake a Negro and a Mauretanian', and that this confusion arose from the author of *Mandeville's Travels*, who 'spoke of the Moors as black' (1987, p. 9). In a scholarly analysis of the historical development of the word 'Moor', Snowden (1970, p. 259, footnote 12) refers to Juvenal 5.53, Isidore 14.5.10, the translation of which reads: 'Mauretania derives its name from the color of its people, for the Greeks render *nigrum* as *μαυοον* [...] *Maurus* appears at times to have been a poetical equivalent of *Aethiops*'. The latter statement appears tautological, as the etymology of the word, Greek in origin, literally means 'burnt face', a designation of blackness, which is certainly not poetical. Based on all the associations cited by Snowden, the word 'Moor' would appear to have been derived from the Greek root *maupos*, from which developed the Latin *maurus*. It should be noted here that black-skinned people were frequently found in Greece in the sixth, fifth and fourth centuries BCE, and that numerous icons were made of them, in ceramic and other materials. According to Snowden,

> the ancients recognized that these peoples differed in pigmentation and took considerable pains to record observed differences. Ethiopians may have looked alike to Philostratus but not to most Greeks and Romans. Even Philostratus himself described Memnon as not really black because the pure black of his skin showed a trace of ruddiness. When Statius spoke of red Ethiopians, he was perhaps revealing the accuracy of the Roman's knowledge of the Ethiopian type. Negroes of red, copper-colored complexion are known among African tribes (1970, p. 3).

This summarizes the historical intrusion of the word 'Moor' and its derivations (*moreau*, *morien*, Maurice, *morisco*, etc.) into European vocabulary before and after 1492, when the Moors were expelled from Christian Spain, which came to identify the African as a black or tawny Moor. The word 'tawny' implies a lighter colour, although some scholars associate this word with whiteness. Interestingly, as early as the sixteenth century, both secular and religious public festivals re-enacted the Reconquest by Christian Spain, particularly during Christmas, by portraying the Moors as black in Tortosa, and using the terms 'Moor' and 'black' interchangeably (Ruiz, 2012, pp. 38-39).

It is thus recognized that people have skin colour of differing gradations which can be described as black, brown, dark brown, light brown, dark, and so

on. Just as there is a preponderance of adjectival descriptions for the variously hued skin of people today called European; indeed, the word 'Mediterranean' now simply means, roughly, 'permanently suntanned, with various degrees of pigmentation', with all those of darker complexion assumed to be inhabitants of southern Spain, Cyprus, Greece, southern Italy, or Hungary, for instance. The term 'Moor' indisputably expresses a 'black' origin stemming from the African presence in Greece from the sixth to the fourth centuries BCE. Before that, the first generation of Greek writers all referred to the Kemites as *aethiopes*, meaning 'burnt-faced' or 'black-faced'. Far too many Greek gods are described as Ethiopian or Egyptian in origin: Athena, Memnon, Andromeda, Cepheus, Perseus and others were recognized by Greeks in antiquity as having African-Asian origin and complexions that were variations of black (Snowden, 1970, pp. 144–153).

Founding fathers of Kemetology paint Kemites as mixed or white

Sir William Flinders Petrie, the foremost nineteenth-century Egyptologist and archaeologist, was the first to assign, simultaneously, an outside origin and a mixed African-Libyan origin to Kemet: 'The Egyptians were largely formed from Libyan immigrants to begin with; the basis of the race apparently being a mulatto of Libyan-negro mixture, judging from the earliest skeletons at Medum' (Flinders Petrie, 1974*a*, p. 63). In another work, Petrie ascribed each new introduction of ceramic design styles to the 'entry of a *fresh civilisation*, and probably a *fresh race*' (Flinders Petrie, 1974*b*, p. 16; emphasis added). This monumental imagining of a 'fresh race', 'a dynastic race', 'a new race' – in short, a non-African 'race' – is too ubiquitous to warrant detailing (Wilkinson, 1996; Maspero, 1920; etc.). Wallis Budge, Keeper of Egyptian and Assyrian Antiquities at the British Museum in the earlier part of the last century, clearly showed the development of his thinking as he gained wider access to records and cultures as his research progressed. In an 1893 publication, he repeated the dogma laid down by ethnologists and anthropologists according to which the *Egyptians belong to the Caucasian race* (Wallis Budge, 1893, p. 51). In the same publication, however, he soon goes on to compare the Kushites to descendants of the biblical Ham (Kem) and says that their 'bodily appearance is the same, though their skin is a little darker, and at the outset they appear to have had a *religion and speech akin to that of the Egyptians*' (Wallis Budge, 1893, p. 52; emphasis added). Though this dispels any notion of a Caucasian

'race' having any central role in the genesis of intellectual history in Kmt at the predynastic or dynastic stages, it nevertheless attempts to perpetuate the historical hoax which invents a Hamitic race whose complexion is dark but whose noses are aquiline, and so forth. This European-invented 'race' caused Iris Berger (1980, p. 68) to observe that '[t]his highly racist view credited all achievements of African civilizations to light-skinned northern outsiders'. As Wallis Budge progressed in his educational development, he was able to make cultural comparisons with Kmt and the rest of Africa, where he found comparable living customs at the time he conducted his research (1890s–1920s) (Wallis Budge, 1893, p. 52). James Henry Breasted (1909, p. 25) went one step further, locating a 'composite' origin of Nile Valley civilization in North Africa/Libya (peopled by fair-skinned Caucasians) and East Africa (peopled by the Galla, Somali and Bega).

The turning tide: another view

After reconstructing the historiographical reflection of European apprehension towards the black African, presented only as a marginal figure in the historical records of the last quarter of the nineteenth century, in the last 20 years we have arrived at the developmental stage. In this stage, the reinterpretation of sites, iconography, and material and ideological conditions influencing the times is being brought to bear to distinguish reality from ideological invention. Thus Dietrich Raue (2008, pp. 2-4) asks a question that is far from rhetorical, under the subheading 'How Nubian can a Naqada culture be to be still called Naqada culture?'. He challenges the need to make arbitrary distinctions between what is Kmtan and what is Nubian at the first cataract at Elephantine. He also insists that the 'full publication of old excavation finds from Shellal and Qubaniya is urgently needed, since the description of the finds of the region as "A Group" or "Naqada" remains unsatisfying'. 'Naqada' and 'A Group' are archaeo-anthropological markers used to define an unknown quantity, to intentionally dissociate black African Nubians from the genesis of the cultures resident in their territory. Thankfully, the work of Dagnell, Gatto, Hendrickx and others has dispelled this long-held delusion.

The narcissism of some Europeans with regard to ethnic identification should not obscure the fact that they identified key facts about and stages in the development and growth of the Kmtan State: its date of origin and chronology, scientific achievements, scholastic precedents, judicial system, gender equity, and so on. In the continuing development of enlightened consciousness regarding

not only the European/Mediterranean/African origin debate, but also the nature of cultural contacts and the specific phenomenon of colonialism, Maria Carmela Gatto, using logic to confront static cultural paradigms, has shifted her theoretical position to accommodate cultural and social complexity. This is not a new phenomenon: sound theorists from the politico-anthropological to psychoanalytical schools, such as Antonio Gramsci, Cheikh Anta Diop, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Frantz Fanon and Wilhelm Reich, devised alternative theoretical paradigms to combat the dominant traditional colonialist view, but the phenomenon is new to Egyptology. Because of its peculiar history, the South American school, with its ideological and methodological approach, is far more liberated in terms of ideological grounding. To close this segment, I quote Gatto extensively below:

> The definition of frontiers was for a long time based on a colonialist viewpoint with the expectation of sharp boundaries visible in cultural markers. Moreover, the colonists were seen as cultural innovators and the natives as passive recipients (Lightfoot and Martinez, 1995). This is often still the way we define the frontier between Egypt and Nubia and interpret the interaction between Egyptians and Nubians.
>
> The reconceptualization of frontiers as zones of cultural interface and fluidity in group affiliations is a new perspective in anthropological theory (Lightfoot and Martinez, 1995). The assumption is that frontiers are socially charged places where innovative cultural constructs are created and transformed. The fluidity of group affiliation in boundary areas may thus produce integrated new entities. In the present case, we should expect that the Egyptian and Nubian groups modified, created and syncretized emblemic elements, or cultural markers, to produce an integrated new entity in their culture contact situation (Gatto, 2009, pp. 124–127).

Reconceptualizing cross-cultural influences: Kmt and Greece

The highly skilled Kmtan artists used living human models to create enduring images which stare at us; these images serve as primary evidence for evaluating the specific ethnicities and nationalities with which the people of Kmt came into contact from the predynastic to the Pharaonic period. The characteristic costumes, hair styles, type and texture of hair, shape of nose, and so on are presented with such an eye for detail that we are left with no doubt that these outstanding artists were portraying phenotypical features that

they had observed. Before delving further into this arena, however, we should examine the report of an ancient eyewitness and compare it with one of the rapidly amassing modern scientific revelations about the technical, aesthetic and established canonical traditions which produced the variety of art in the ancient political entity called Kmt.

Diodorus Siculus, who lived during the first century BCE, wrote and published a book on ancient Egypt. By then, Egypt was a country which had been colonized, principally by the Greeks in a process initiated by the multiculturalist Alexander of Macedonia in 332 BCE. However, Kmt's reputation as a centre of science, religion and the arts had not been dimmed, and, according to Davis (1979, footnote 3; emphasis added), '*The journey to Egypt is a central theme in the ancient biographies of several Greek philosophers and men of culture*. References to this abound in the classical literature.' Diodorus lists 13 prominent figures in Greek intellectual and political history (including Homer, Solon and Plato) as having visited and/or studied in Kmt (Diodorus, 1985, p. 125). He goes further by naming two famous Greek sculptors:

> Telecles and Theodoros, the sons of Rhoecos, who were the most renowned of the ancient sculptors, are also reputed to have spent time with the Egyptians. [Beyond inserting this information which can be dismissed at the level of rumour, Diodorus goes on to supply precious information of practice which certainly authenticates his claim.] They carved the wooden statue of Pythian Apollo for the Samians, of which it is reported that half of the image was fabricated by Telecles in Samos, and the other *half was completed by his brother Theodoros at Ephesus* [...] *Now this way of working is never practiced by the Greeks, but it is the rule of the Egyptians*, for among them the proportions of the statues are not determined by the appearance of the eye, as among the Greeks, rather [...] they determine all the relative proportions, from the smallest to the largest, by dividing the scale of the complete body into twenty-one and a quarter units, *whereby they derive the entire symmetry of the image* (Davis, 1979; emphasis added).

It is important to comment in passing that the accuracy of many writers of antiquity has been doubted by modern scholars for a variety of reasons, which are probably underpinned by considerations of 'race'. Moret (1927, p. 432), for example, dismissed Diodorus' eyewitness account as exaggerated. But the period of relevance for Greek art was the period of its cultural contact with Kmt from the eighth century BCE, when Greeks were used as mercenaries in the State army and when they were also involved in trade, although confined to one particular location, Naukratis. Over successive epochs, the grid system for determining proportions varied: in the Old Kingdom it consisted of 18 squares

based on horizontal lines; this became 20 during the New Kingdom Amarna period, 24 during Kushite rule, and, ultimately, 21 in the first century BCE, as Diodorus testified. Referring to the grid system during the Amarna period, Robins says, 'there are 20 squares instead of the traditional 18 squares [...] The height of 20 squares is confirmed by measurements on the figure in the tomb of Mahu that preserves some grid traces' (Robins, 1994, p. 123). Elsewhere, she states that the artists' primary concern was to use 'established conventions to encode the information about the world that they wished to convey' (1994, p. 3).

Although there is no doubt as to the status of Telecles and Theodoros as great Greek artists, the Roman Pliny stated that the Athenian Apollodorus 'was the first to give his figures the appearance of reality' (Davis, 1979, p. 125), drawing from the same Egyptian source. Verification of the reputed knowledge of the Kemites is supplied by Plato (1977, p. 132): ancient Greeks were an 'unlettered mountain race' (i.e., they had no writing); Solon, one of the great Greek sages (seventh and sixth centuries BCE), who were defined as men of politics and not of wisdom, went to Kemet to learn about ancient Greek history from the Kemite priests. In a manuscript Plato inherited from his own father, he equates the attempt at the reformation of the Greek State with the 'infliction of exile and death' (1973, p. 122). To these nascent Greek philosophers, Kemet thus appeared a miraculous State.

Self-representation in Kemite art

Interestingly, this grid system was scientifically devised by the Kemites in pursuit of a symmetry which is perfectly represented by a circle in two dimensions and by a sphere in three dimensions. Conceived thus, with pi (π) as a universal constant associated with all perfectly circled objects, it becomes apparent that this operating concept was certainly functional in the Kemites' grid system, which went from 18 squares in the Old Kingdom (2600–2137 BCE) to 20 in the New Kingdom to 24 under Nubian rule. What connects all the grid systems is the numerator 3; thus, since the Kemites were the first to square a circle and the first to postulate pi (π) (Obenga, 1990), it can be inferred that Plato's notion that art is number perfectly corresponds to the Kmtan model. The Kemites were concerned with harmony and symmetry probably because they understood the creation of the universe (the *sep tepy*, or 'first occasion') as an issuing from one source of energy; in other words, for the Kemites, the universe was kept in balance by one force. The use of the grid system can therefore be assumed to have been based on

this universalizing concept. By squaring a circle, the grid system was thus invented (Dada Imarogbe, personal communication, 1 December 1995).

Conceptualizing the artistic standards, conventions and traditions according to which the ancient Kmtan artists developed their genius and extended it to the rest of the world, Wolff states that the intention of his book was 'to point continually to artistic experiments, to peculiarities of form, and to certain motifs that spread from Egypt and Mesopotamia to the West' (Wolff, 1972, p. 5). According to Bogoslovsky's description, the Kmtu took a methodical and clinical approach to the creation of a work of art, considering the following before initiating its actual creation:

> 1 – general dimensions of the tomb as a whole and the dimensions of its chambers and passages; 2 – the purpose of separate chambers and passages, their names and their corresponding shapes; 3 – the subjects of the pictures and their composition in general. The purely artistic decoration works were minutely planned (Bogoslovsky, 1980, p. 91).

Bogoslovsky also shows that the lead draughtsman demonstrated his thorough understanding and knowledge of the work to be carried out by stopping and correcting the artists when the work went wrong. Because of the draughtsman's involvement in the minute and effective execution of works of art, Bogoslovsky asserts, '[s]uch organisation of work of the draughtsmen *makes it appear that all decorations of a tomb are made by one single artist*' (p. 93; emphasis added).

Here it becomes apparent that the artists of Kmt must have undergone rigorous and systematic training in order to attain the required level of professionalism. In this extract from his reflections, one such professional artist makes plain his knowledge of anatomy, motion, and portraiture:

> I know the attitude of a man's statue, the gait of a woman [motion], the carriage of ... the bent (altitude) of one being beaten ... I can make an eye look at another [portraiture]; I know the frightened look of men being awakened, the swing of the (spear) throwing arm [anatomy], and the stoop of the runner... This has been revealed to no one, except to myself alone and my eldest son, when the God (the King) ordered that there should be someone (?) to whom it should be revealed. I have seen things produced by his hand [while] in the post of Director of Works, in every precious stone, from silver and gold to ivory and ebony (Moret, 1927, p. 436).

The artist clearly stated his knowledge of three important elements of the basis of education. He also asserted that he received not only instructions but also practical examples from his king. From the outset, a royal or noble patron supported the artist. In addition, the Kemite priest held the function of chief

craftsman and tutor (Aldred, 1980, p. 23). By the Middle Kingdom (from 2050 BCE), for instance, the sculptor Irtisen immortalized himself through the writings in his tomb, extolling his knowledge of traditional methods of art (Aldred, ibid.). Irtisen also alluded to being privy to information only he and his eldest son shared. Traditionally, throughout Africa, from antiquity to the present, certain professions are passed down from father to eldest son and from mother to eldest daughter. Thus, educating a son as an artist was dependent not only on formal schooling, but also on hereditary systems of transmission.

The Other as seen by the Kemite in literature

It is therefore interesting to compare Kmt's perception of the Western Asiatic within this framework. The hieroglyphic sign for 'highland' and 'desert' was the same; the mountain in Kmt which surrounded the valley was of red soil – desert – and the Western Asian was viewed as coming from the desert. Thus, according to John Wilson (2000, p. 65), 'the Egyptian pictorially grouped the foreigner with the beast of the desert and pictorially denied the foreigner the blessings of fertility and uniformity'. This is not to say, however, that the Kemites denied settlement to these peoples; rather, they restricted them, like they did all foreigners, to certain settlements. Libyans were settled in the western desert and Western Asians, in the delta region and the eastern desert.

The association of topographical descriptions with human characteristics does not enter a people's consciousness and language without some basis; in Kmt's clear-cut philosophical view of the world, the belligerence and semi-impoverishment of Western Asian peoples were features which conformed to its description of them. The Western Asian was seen as a beast of the desert because of his hostile attacks upon the land of Kmt. (The Amarna Letters illustrate the political validity and consequence of Kmt's relations and the resultant evolution of Kmt's protective colonial policies: royal intermarriage of the Asian king's daughter with Kmt's king in a system of plural wives, and assimilationist colonial policies pursued by Kmt which ultimately terminated in Asian revolt and plunder.)

Thus with the persistence of these attacks, the desert inhabitant was characterized as beastly. This is reflected in the writings of Merikare, who perceived the Asian as a nomadic plunderer: 'He does not live in a single place, but his feet wander. He has been fighting since the time of Horus, but he conquers not, nor is he conquered [...] He may plunder a lonely settlement, but

he will not take a single city [...] Trouble thyself not about him: he is (only) an Asiatic' (Wilson, 1977, p. 39). Unfortunately, Merikare could not have foreseen the Asian will to conquer Kmt completely in 640 CE However, associating the desert with the foreigner/beast is not set in stone; Wosir (Osiris), upon his death, as the personification of the peace of the desert may appear both contradictory and non-exclusive.

The literary and artistic attestations to the apprehension of ethnicity and nationality are fully supported by the evidence reproduced here. The Kemites were familiar with a variety of human types and had the precision and training to reproduce them pictorially and in writing. In Akhenaten's Great Hymn to the Aten (Lichtheim, 1976, p. 98), the king poignantly, through the unification theology of a One God, describes humanity's variety of ethnic identities and of skin pigmentations:

> Their tongues *differ* in speech,
> Their characters *likewise*
> Their skins are *distinct*
> For you [Aten] *distinguished* the peoples
> (emphasis added).

In deconstructing the above lines, one must take note of precise definitions and use of vocabulary. Akhenaten uses the word 'tongue' to reflect the variety of languages which are spoken by different peoples. He recognizes the basis of national character; he recognizes that there are distinguishing features of a personality which stem from the specific social histories, climate and development which have shaped and moulded a particular national group. This does not presume that national character is static and unchanging, but it is an allusion to a nebulous, perhaps subtle differentiation between peoples of different nationalities based upon notionally observable idiosyncratic traits. Not satisfied with defining these attributes as perhaps subservient to the major distinguishing feature of skin pigmentation, Akhenaten acknowledges the phenotypical differences in humanity while also accepting their genotypical origin in an Almighty Source, here defined as the Aten.

It should come as no surprise that Akhenaten observed these differences so accurately. He is known as the king who introduced the innovation of portraying the royal family in human situations. Aldred (1991, p. 303; emphasis added) states that "[h]is family life with his chief queen, Nefertiti, and her daughters, has been disclosed with an *intimacy and a humanity that is hardly found again*

[*anywhere*] *in antique art*'. Akhenaten's overriding philosophical orientation moves towards the irreducible plane of cosmic philosophy. There is a recognition that since the source of energy is the source of life, all matter is interrelated and that all the various life forms (whether plant, animal or human) which emerge from the one cosmic source share a common origin (De Lubicz, 1985, p. 6) in the Aten. Perhaps for a variety of reasons, however, the king's monotheism led him to commit acts of intolerance and destruction against any other proclamation of a sole God as creator.

It is nevertheless interesting that in Akhenaten's scientific understanding of the universe, the light of the sun was the source of God, even though he had inherited a tradition which taught that the creation of the world, which included the sun, came from a source antecedent to the sun, Nun. We can thus infer that Akhenaten waged a battle against the inherited theology perhaps for selfish reasons, since he promoted himself as the means through which God is mediated. This status is only partially acknowledged in the position of the *per aah* (pharaoh), particularly in his role as titular chief priest in specific temple rituals.

In view of Akhenaten's Great Hymn to the Aten, in which ethnic differences are clearly affirmed, it is pertinent to raise the question of the colour scheme which the Kemites used in their statuary and paintings. The general opinion is that the people of Kmt were of a reddish complexion, which usually implies separation from the indigenous African populations resident in the black land for more than 25,000 years, who would be characterized as uniformly black in complexion. Before exploring this comparison further, we might look at the way different societies see themselves and others. The colour red is the most precious for Chinese peoples, who ascribe devilish connotations to the colours white and black. These connotations are not poetic or romantic; they actually relate to human beings. For the dominant Europeans, white was the colour both of purity and of precedence, while black had the connotation of being devilish. This also related to people and not to simple colour schemes unrelated to material reality. For the Kemites, the colour black expressed goodness, fertility and beauty, and the colour red related to the desert and the foreigner. White represented spiritual purity, not ethnic purity; for the purpose of depicting clothing, it was the colour which best represented transparency.

Conclusion: epistemological lessons

The dominant view is that where colours were used in iconography and the representation of the name of Kmt, black did not refer to people as a phenomenon, but to an abstract principle related to the fertility of the black alluvial soil. However, as scientists and technicians, the Kemites would have known, through their contact with other African and Asian societies, that red earth also produced abundant agricultural harvests, so this notion can theoretically be abandoned. If we are to use the dominant mode of theorizing, then we can legitimately ask: since the colour red was specifically assigned to real people, why should it be different for the colour black? The answer perhaps lies in the political hegemony slowly gained by the red and white peoples of the earth after the colonization of Kmt by the Greeks in the fourth century BCE and in the history of colonialism which has marked Kmt's subsequent evolution into a vassal State as Egypt from the seventh century CE.

Without pursuing this notion to its most logical conclusion, it is comparatively easy to state that the Kmtu would have portrayed the aboriginal peoples of South Africa collectively known as the Khoisan as reddish-brown in colour. If we look, for example, at the picture of Nebamun hunting birds in the marshes (British Museum number 37977), it is obvious that the artist painted what he saw: a man of a reddish-brown complexion accompanied perhaps by his wife and child, painted in dark brown. The important mediating factor, however, is that facially, and thus ethnically, they all appear to be of the same stock. This is like assigning a single colour to Arabs or Muslims today, even though the persons in either group have skin which is, variously, white, black, brown, light brown, red-brown, and so on. These kinds of artificial dichotomies serve no purpose other than to perpetuate the notion that the origin of Kmt's civilization lies in a mythic or, at best, dubious 'race'.

The most enduring representation of the Kemites' conceptualization of colour and nationality can be found on the walls of the tombs of Seti I and Rameses III. Here, the four races of humankind are represented: Semites and Asians are both portrayed as white-skinned, while Nubians and Kemites are portrayed as having jet black skin (cf. Diop, 1991, p. 66; Grantham, 2004). Grantham rehearses the story that Champollion's work was falsified by his older brother, Champollion-Figeac, who censored the former's letters posthumously. Breasted and Yurco maintained the fiction of the images under review by rearranging their order, changing the colour and, most significantly, intentionally translating

'Nahasi' (a Nubian national identity) as 'Negroes', thus linking modern, formerly enslaved Africans to the Nahasi. The only area of contestation of these depictions is whether they were painted in the New Kingdom. But there are far too many iconographic representations from the predynastic period (5000 BCE) to the dynastic (3150 BCE) period for this assertion to be dismissed. Since Diop's anthro-archaeological and craniological science postulations of 1974, and through the development, study and publication of modern genome science, it has been possible to locate the ethnicity of the Kmtu at various times throughout the predynastic and dynastic (3100–332 BCE) periods.

The results of dental morphological studies of 996 samples by Professor Joel Irish (2006) show greater affinity with 'those populations from greater North Africa and, to a lesser extent, western Asia and Europe'. The revised perspective of Frank Yurco reveals a reverse opinion on Kmt's people: 'Certainly there was some foreign admixture [in Egypt] but basically a homogeneous African population had lived in the Nile Valley from ancient to modern times' (1996, p. 65). Kalanzi reports (*Daily Monitor*, 24 May 2016) that the results of DNA tests on Rameses III and his son genetically linked him to the Y-chromosome (passed from father to son) group E1b1a, a classification directly related to Niger-Congo speakers. In the city of Amarna, famous for the reign of its founder, Akhenaten, whose facial features unambiguously expressed African prototypes, royal mummies were DNA-tested to reveal an origin in the Great Lakes region (East and Central Africa) (Kalanzi, 2016). These tests not only confirm the findings of Cheikh Anta Diop, who separately argued in defence of the indigenous origins of the civilization, but also confirm the consistent assertion of the literature of the Kemites that they came from the South (i.e., south of their borders). As in all new sciences, there are areas of contestation regarding scientific method and approaches, but the scientific principles of DNA science represent a monumental breakthrough for the biological identification of the ruling elite of Kmt throughout its history.

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CHAPTER 3

NORTH AFRICA AND THE ORIGINS OF EPISTEMIC BLACKNESS

Jesse Benjamin

Introduction: North Africa in the relational vortex of modernity

The conventional Eurocentric story of the origins of modernity, and its entire racial epistemology, is generally decontextualized and stripped of its relationality with North African cultures and civilizations and the entire world system to which said cultures and civilizations were fused. Just as Walter Rodney encapsulated both relationality and agency in the title of his landmark volume *How Europe Underdeveloped Africa* (1972), the emergence of white, Christian Europe and its hegemonic Western epistemology must be approached relationally, and with attention to agency and power (Césaire, 1955; Diop, 1987; Du Bois, 1935 [1992]; Fanon, 1966; Said, 1978). North Africa was far more central to the rise of the fundamental concepts of modernity and their development and proliferation than most narratives concede. The cultures, societies and States of northern Africa were historically important and deserve renewed attention in their own right (Carew, 1995). In relation to nascent European city-States, they represented one of several key conduits of social and economic connection into a worldwide system of contiguous regions and civilizations encompassing all of Africa and Asia and beyond: in other words, the 'Old World'.

In the early thirteenth century, for example, Ibn Battuta travelled the entire world from his home base in Tangier, Morocco, including multiple hajjes to Mecca, circumnavigations of West Africa, the Red Sea and Arabia, the entire Swahili Coast, the Levant, the Indian Ocean, most of South and Central Asia, and China (Hamdun and King, 1994). He also travelled through Iberian Al-Andalus, shortly before his fabled trip to Timbuktu and the Empire of Mali. There was an inherent and widely generalized fluidity in the construction of social identity and culture in the millennia leading up to the point of colonial disruption and reorganization (Ahmad, 2006; Mudimbe, 1988; Said, 1978), which allowed travellers like Benjamin of Tudela, Ibn Battuta and thousands of others involved in commerce, trade, the production of knowledge, and myriad other interchanges to negotiate their identities and occupy multiple layers and cultural inflections simultaneously. Designations such as 'Moor'/'Moorish', 'Habesha', 'Zanj' (Benjamin, 2008), 'Abyssinian' or 'Sud'/'Sudan' all indicated multivalent, geographically dispersed, and flexible yet regionally associated identities epitomizing what de Moraes Farias (1985) explained were the normative 'mobile classificatory labels' of non-Western epistemologies. However, the rigid fixing of identities around invented boundaries produced by reductive Manichaean binaries, and the intense suppression of its own interrelatedness outwards to the rest of the world, are fundamental to Western thought and appear consistently. This spatio-temporal regime then allows multiple seemingly immaculate conceptions of thought, industry and state to emerge in its likeness, as if without history or created whole, thus confirming its own greatness through discovery/invention/industry/virility/rationality. The suppression of African and all non-Western histories is central to this epistemology, as is the imagined unilineal evolutionary grid underpinning it – creating manifold volatilities that persist in culture and politics today.

In the minds of the conquering crusaders of the Reconquista, North Africa and the contiguous 'Middle East' occupied central roles in the earliest formulations of what was to become Western epistemology, and thus in the subsequent proliferation of meanings of blackness globally. At the dawn of modernity, North Africa and its peoples were represented as primary forms of an emergent notion of racial otherness, constituted in relational differentiation from proto-European, Christian whiteness – a formulation that has fluctuated and deepened, but remained axial until the present. The initial disruption of the societal norms of North African and wider African/Old World civilizations by the violent dispossessions of the Iberian Reconquista culminated in the late fifteenth century (Shohat, 1992; Wynter, 1995). Coupled

with a newly emerging monocultural theocentric epistemology and the rise of modern biocentric racial categories and 'coordinates' in the world, these conceptualizations played a crucial role in the later rise of Europe both as an entity and a concept (Mignolo, 1995). Mediterranean and Afro-Asian societal concepts and practices were denied, suppressed, appropriated and incorporated into this new colonizing society, and extended, formalized, transformed and intensified into what rapidly became transatlantic and global concepts of modern racism, centred on plantation-based racial chattel slavery and other extractive capitalist relations (Galeano, 1973; Shohat, 1992). Shortly after the Reconquista and the rise of the Spanish and Portuguese global empires, northern Africa found itself to be one of many fast-proliferating zones of contact between the growing capitalist empires of Western Europe and the places they were 'discovering' and trying to plunder or colonize.

Moorish North Africa and the rise of Western epistemology

Significant advances in understanding the origins of modern concepts of race have been made in recent decades, with a growing consensus locating their origins in the Iberian Reconquista and the almost simultaneous conquest of the New World using the same emergent epistemic concepts (Shohat, 1992; Wynter, 1995; Carew, 1995; Mignolo, 1995). Islamic Iberia and contiguous North Africa, both with close ties to the vast system of Old World civilizations, were important cultural confluence zones between the Mediterranean and Africa, and soon, too, was the Atlantic world. Using *geniza* and other historical documents from Jewish Mediterranean communities, Schorsch (2004) shows that categories of blackness clearly already existed in Jewish, Muslim, and Christian cultural, theological and juridical thinking, well before the Atlantic passage. However, blackness was not yet regularized as having negative connotations, though it may have been trending in that direction in some of the Mediterranean regions; nor was blackness a fixed category with a stable meaning or definite geographic ascription. Rather, it was a highly variable category, to the extent that it surfaced in writing or discourse at all, and was more often ascribed positive attributes than negative attributes (Muhammed, 1985). De Moraes Farias (1985) helps explain that pre-Western and non-Western epistemic categories conceived of identities more as mobile classificatory units of analysis that shift over time and appear in multiple places, alongside other fluid and changing categories. Terms such as 'Moor' in North

Africa or 'Zanj' in East Africa and the Indian Ocean were neither routinely given negative or positive associations, nor entirely tied to specific places; and frequently those categories overlapped across the enormous expanse of the African continent, southern Asia, and throughout the Indian Ocean.

Great care must still be taken by scholars to remove later anti-black accretions, most of which originated in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, to the meaning of terms associated with black and African peoples and cultures. These more recent, colonial layers of meaning are anachronistically projected and historiographically written back into the past by modern societies presenting themselves as normative. For example, while it is common in late modernity to speak of the Judeo-Christian tradition, the Judeo-Islamic tradition was in fact far more historically substantial across both space and time, but mostly developed in an African context that has come to symbolize the conceptual opposite of Western society and its version of civilization, one of its core legitimating pillars. The societies that span southern - especially Iberian - Europe, the Mediterranean and North Africa, reaching south into and beyond the Sahara, constitute a sort of fluctuating grid of hierarchical relational racial points in a system that is itself immersed in a similarly fluid and interactive global system of parallel coordinates. During the time of the kingdom of Al-Andalus, the grid was largely non-hierarchical, and it tilted toward what we now call Africa and blackness, towards the southern Sahara and the empires of Central Africa, the Indian Ocean and southern Asia. With the Reconquista and the rise of Europe and its empires, identities were epistemically/conceptually frozen, ordered in an increasingly extreme hierarchy of race and class, and their orientation was inverted. Imperial Spain and Portugal, and later Holland and its neighbours, claimed centripetal primacy, with the strata to the south at a proportional disadvantage. Eventually, even southern Europe and its immigrants were racialized by their northern European heirs. North Africa continued to reflect a border of "otherness", even as it was pulled north, and designated separate from the rest of Africa by virtue of attachment to the equally colonial conception of a distinct 'Middle East' and by its supposedly whiter racial location vis-à-vis 'black' or sub-Saharan Africa. Thus, contemporary use of the term 'North Africa' cannot be fully extricated from the coloniality of its racial/geographic origins and significations. It is therefore used here provisionally, in the service of deconstruction.

Rise of the self/other matrix of relational difference

As European feudalism and the aristocracy receded, its *limpieza de sangre* (purity of blood) concept shifted from justifying a supposedly divinely ordained blue-blooded landed gentry to the more familiar, modern biocentric concept of race, fixed in and on the body, and almost immediately signifying blackness and relational non-Whiteness specifically. Thus was set in motion the grid of modern "ethno-racial coordinates" to which Cheikh Anta Diop referred (1981 [1991]): a matrix of possible racial locations along a black/white continuum into which other non-white people could be figured, usually closer to the black end of the spectrum, always differentiated in a multivalent way (Wynter, 1979). This grid has operated in incredibly complex and varied ways across the ensuing five centuries, but the basic Manichaean schema has remained remarkably stable and powerful to the present day. During the Reconquista, a kind of monoculturalism was conceptually and conscientiously imposed for perhaps the first time, in the modern sense of a fixed hierarchical grid of relational identifications. It became so normalized that today only multiculturalism and diversity, which are factually closer to the historic and human norm, need to be explained and defended (Lorde, 1984), or in many cases are rejected outright (the 'culture wars' in the United States of America, for example), while – literally – Aryan-inflected monocultural aberrations remain largely invisible and unnamed and are the discursive norm against which the literal Other is identified and defined.

As Shohat (1992) relates, the list of the Holy Inquisition's enemies/Others at the birth of modernity's conceptual apparatus consisted of a broad and profoundly dehumanizing theological category, the 'agents of Satan,' i.e., Jews, Muslims, Moors, women, witches, infidels, heretics, even the left-handed (the 'sinister'). These became the original Others of modernity, drawn from existing internal and external terminologies of relational differentiation and dehumanization, geopolitical anxieties and failed Crusader grudges. While the dominant "self" identities of Western thought now militated in favour of invented fixity and reductively Manichaean polarities, the Others were by definition overlapping and interchangeable, these very properties serving to further corroborate their difference. Most witches were women deemed dangerous because they possessed knowledge or were independent of male kin; most Jews and Muslims were theologically rendered proto-racially different at the level of blood and the body; and the vast majority of Jews and Muslims were also deeply socialized into and indistinguishable from Moorish, in other words African, cultures.

Under the Inquisition, individuals might appear to be 'agents of Satan' along several axes of difference at the same time. The mobile categorial flexibility of the Other signified its dangerous alterity and non-humanity, as a literal holdover from the prior system, a threatening presence alternative to the new order if it could not be rendered savage and uncivilized to the point of expendability. Thus, fifteenth- and sixteenth-century conquistadors in the Americas 'found' and persecuted varieties of peoples they deemed Moors, and the Moors were also broadly identified as the obstacle to finding their mythic representative in Ethiopia, Prester John.

The West was founded under a Christian theological epistemology that believed in a hierarchical Great Chain of Being, Lost Tribes, the Curse of Ham and Cush, Original Sin, and a host of narratives that could be teleologically bent to the new bourgeois, racial, colonial agenda. This became the template and vehicle for the first 300 years of modern Western epistemology until it was displaced by the still hegemonic secular, scientific rational epistemology, but it has never really diminished in terms of its significance on the world stage. Because even the fixed dominant categories in this new matrix of difference fluctuated and were arbitrarily socially constructed and subject to the whims of power, relying on essentialized physiognomic criteria along invented axes of relational self/other difference, evasions of, and resistances to, this whole system have been ubiquitous, constituting literal and figurative maroon spaces, internal ruptures and destabilizations.

North Africa in a pan-African world historical perspective

Although Iberian city-States were able to dislodge Al-Andalus from southern Europe, the ancient African civilization to which it was connected continued to persist and generally flourish, even in the face of belligerent new northern neighbours (Carew, 1995). So too did the worldwide network of nations and civilizations of which it was an integral part, to a large extent at least: until the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries for the bulk of the African continent, when the tripod-mounted machine gun was deployed, and the early to mid-twentieth century for most of the so-called Middle East and much of Asia during the late colonial inter-war years (with exceptions that included the much longer colonization of the Indian subcontinent). While the Mediterranean, Atlantic and American worlds experienced a colonial rupture of immense epistemic and politico-economic proportions in the late fifteenth

and sixteenth centuries, in most of Africa and Asia this rupture was more episodic, indirect or ephemeral for the first 300 years of modernity (despite the devastating disruptions of chattel slavery on the continent) and only began to take fuller hold in the past century or two in the Middle East, East and Central Africa, and the Indian Ocean/Asian worlds (Rodney, 1972). Northern Africa represents a zone of confluence between these two broad patterns in which elements of both may be discerned, but where the general tendency is more in line with the latter than the former, albeit with the key exception of Algeria.

The Ottoman Empire in south-western Asia; Berber and Arab civilizations across northern Africa; the vast connected Swahili civilizations of the East African littoral; Aksum, Lalibela, Amhara, the Oromo and the many other nations and States in Ethiopia; other regional State and empire formations in contiguous regions such as Egypt, Sudan, and Mali: all buttressed resistance to immersion and encapsulation within the growing capitalist world economies of the New World and the Atlantic. We must be careful not to impose hegemonic European outcomes retroactively, dating them back to the advent of the European presence in Africa and the Indian Ocean, as even some of our best critical scholars sometimes do. The incursions of early colonial expansion certainly caused occasional disruptions throughout parts of the Old World, but rarely the kind of total, hegemonic colonial reorganization at the level of gnosis described in Mudimbe's *The Invention of Africa*, which is generally a product of the past one or two centuries in most regions of the Old World, though sometimes less.

This is significant, as it means that the depth of colonial reorganization and destruction and any critical attempts to 'return to the source' as a form of resistance and affirmation are within closer reach than many realize. Non-Western, non-biocentric, non-racial societal formulations that parallel contemporary concepts of multiculturalism and diversity-positivity are therefore not that far removed from contemporary languages, institutions, memories, and imaginations. Nevertheless, the totality of colonial reorganization, even if 'only' between 60 and 200 years old throughout the majority of the region under discussion here, was devastating and disruptive, and should not be underestimated. One of the tasks of decolonization at this stage is to rewrite more thoroughly the colonial historiographies and their popular cultural and discursive corollaries, and to insist on more accurate historic break points in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, replacing the widespread assumption that the ruptures occurred in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In this way, the scale of recovery and decolonization is properly attenuated, and we do not

inadvertently naturalize more recent phenomena and histories and amplify their power and their hold on the present.

The Spanish and Portuguese empires were based on classic 'primitive accumulation', theft and expropriation of people, labour and resources, and especially of indigenous American and African societies. The Spanish were more successful in disrupting and colonizing core States in the New World than the Portuguese were in most of Africa and the Indian Ocean. The Dutch, together with their numerous contemporary European city-States and burgeoning empires, codified slavery and plantation capitalism as the core of the international capitalist economy, instituted the first stock exchange, and cultivated insurance industries and other modern banking practices. Throughout the expanding global capitalist system, Africanity and especially blackness were consolidated as the basis of racial chattel slave status in both Dutch and other imperial realms. This remained true and even intensified during the combined British and French imperial periods, which saw the extremes of the transatlantic chattel slave system. Later in this combined period, with partial and self-interested abolition under way in the Atlantic to make way for the more economically efficient exploitative system of colonialism, chattel slavery was still expanding under European proxies into eastern and some northern and north-eastern parts of the African continent. After a brief and devastating period of expanded racial/chattel slavery throughout the nineteenth century, the so-called 'scramble for Africa' laid the groundwork for colonization at the turn of the century, and for subsequent 'scrambles' for southwest Asia (at Sèvres) and the rest of hitherto uncolonized Asia.

Shared anti-colonial struggles can also be traced back to each of these imperial eras, culminating in the twentieth century with massive anti-colonial wars and collective transnational efforts, among them the 1955 Afro-Asian conference in Bandung, Indonesia, and the Non-Aligned Movement that peaked in the 1970s. This anti-colonial solidarity has generated numerous intersections of peoples and struggles, and North Africa has often played a prominent role, from hosting the Black Panther Party, the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO)/Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) and other radical forces (Daulatzai, 2012; Feldman, 2015) to symbolizing resistance in its highest forms, as in the case of the actual and filmic Battle of Algiers. Algeria, in parallel with Haiti and India, was a white settler colony of the greatest material and symbolic significance to its hegemonic occupier, France, and its liberation – followed by massive counterinsurgent imperial reprisals – had worldwide systemic consequences still felt today (Mamdani, 2004).

At some point in middle and later colonial history, with the colonization of historiography itself at its height, and concomitant with the post-nineteenth-century rise of secular science as the hegemonic basis of late-modern Western epistemology, Africa's presence was rigidly demarcated and reduced. It was in both the topographical and the discursive senses cut off from adjacent and contiguous continents and oceans (the Mediterranean and Red Seas, Arabia, the whole Middle East and Asia, the Indian Ocean, southern Europe, and the Atlantic world). This process ran parallel with the axiomatic goal of Hegel and others to deny African history and deny Africa rationality and agency in world history (Eze, 1997), in order to relationally bolster and enable the colonial-imperial basis of the supposedly civilized and superior West. Further, whole portions of territorially African space, according to the new concept of planetarily discrete continents, were also excised by being redefined as externally oriented or originated. Ethiopia became Arab-derived, as did Egypt, Sudan and the whole of North Africa, now sectioned off as parts of the 'Middle East'; Somalis in this context claimed or were ascribed more Arab origins. The Swahili Coast was reoriented toward its numerous real external Indian Ocean origins and identities (Shirazi, Omani, Hadrami, Arab, and so on) during the post-1830s rise of racialized European-governed plantation chattel slavery, contributing to the erasure of its more prodigious African points of origin and connection. Internal contradictions that were either wholly manufactured or hardened and exploited were a mainstay of colonial practice, in the well-known and broadly applied tactic of 'divide and rule', and also in what Mamdani (2012) has described as the invention of two profoundly asymmetric juridical and administrative spheres that demarcated citizenship, rights and power in the middle and high colonial periods and their aftermath.

Thus, North African societies and societies in contiguous portions of West and north-eastern Africa are plagued with ethno-racial hierarchies, invented or heightened, and often central to the dynamics of specific colonial occupations. As pastoralists whose mode of production is based on desert or semi-desert animal husbandry usually supplemented with small agricultural practices, water harvesting and trade, Berbers, Tuareg, and Bedouin usually find themselves statically codified and racialized as uncivilized and racially inferior, even though they can often articulate some of the lengthiest regional and cultural genealogies. Everyone in North Africa is sandwiched within racial continua that are central to, but still exceed, their fields of existence. Institutionalized forms of anti-blackness in Libya, both before and then at significantly heightened levels after the 2011 invasion by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), have

been documented. Anti-blackness is found alive and well in all of northern Africa, under the most preponderant epistemology in human history, though it is heavily contested, as it is almost everywhere in the world today. Egyptian society exhibits virulently racialized anti-Nubian, anti-Sudanese (especially migrant labour), and anti-Bedouin repression and oppression, among other prominent instances of socially produced difference-based inequality. Similar issues exist within American-empire-friendly Morocco, and its occupation-like relationship with the Western Sahara.

Today, every country in the region shows evidence of deep manifestations of Wynter's 'bourgeois mode of being' (1979, 1995), which is inherently race- and class- based. Every country exhibits substantial degrees of racialized behaviour toward peoples living to the (real or figurative) south, both within their national borders, and between their borders and neighbours in the Sahara and in West and southern Africa. Phenotype and regional perception, language and culture play major roles in these manifestations of racialized hierarchy – formulations of North/South unevenness are far from being abstractions here. Each of these countries have citizens and non-citizens who are almost universally racialized to varying but almost inescapable degrees, by the vast majority of those living to their (real and/or figurative) north, both within their territories in most cases, and especially between their national borders and those of Europe as a whole. Across centuries of structured political-economic inequality and epistemic colonization are laid the incendiary contemporary racial realities and discourses surrounding forced and coerced migrations, statelessness, refugees fleeing wars, transborder flows of people – what the language of Western epistemology juridically fashions on a transatlantic basis as 'illegal aliens', 'illegals', 'terrorists', 'non-citizens', with an endless linguistic litany of dehumanizing racial terminologies across all idioms and vernaculars. Race and anti-blackness remain central 500 years later with an alarming degree of consistency, even when account is taken of the constant variations, spatio-temporal re-articulations and seemingly omnipresent resistances.

Sankofa/resistance: the persistence of blackness and Islam as definitive of Otherness

These conflicts, proliferating in almost all countries as the nation-State structure itself wavers and is challenged (as in the Arab Spring and African Spring movements), continue to call into question the efficacy and legitimacy of the West as a concept. The resulting population transfers, coupled with

historically unprecedented extremes of inequality and impoverishment, and the broader issue of African and Asian refugees and migratory displacements into Europe that have undeniably reached full-blown crisis levels for the world system all reveal the continued centrality and importance of these regions as border zones, and as primary sites of relational identity formation for white imperial subjects in various locations and for the whole Western order writ large. This region's ancient and illustrious Judeo-Islamic tradition remains largely suppressed, almost tacitly illicit in the racialized Western epistemological order of the past half millennium, even though it is of far greater global historical consequence than the now vaunted Judeo-Christian edifice upon which current world powers claim to stand. Though universalized as ancient and natural, the recently hegemonic Judeo-Christian concept can be traced to post-World-War-II American geopolitics and empire building, with minor, earlier origins in nineteenth-century British and French oriental/imperial politics and discourse.

The ethnic codification of alterity that launched Western epistemic constructions of the white/black, as well as the more generalized, always asymmetric Self/Other infrastructure of the colonial difference machine, is still very much in play, as we can see from a quick review of changes in the past century. Some of the longest-suffering Others of the modern racial system (whose suffering was concurrent with the suffering of black persons at the Iberian root of the modern epistemological order) were, after the Holocaust, largely and hegemonically accorded white status when Jews (constituting a core leveraged component of the fourth major capitalist empire) in the United States of America and, generally, in the West suddenly became predominantly white (Kaye-Kantrowitz, 2007; Benjamin, 2014, and forthcoming). Meanwhile, after achieving tenuous federal status in the United States of America as white after inter-war legal battles, several overlapping and loosely identified Arab, 'Syrian', Berber, North African and Levantine immigrant populations there nevertheless continued to experience racism and racial terror both in the south and the United States of America more broadly (Gualtieri, 2009). These populations in the United States, in Europe and the West more generally are examples of the partial acquisition, and subsequent loss, of whiteness and white subjectivity, due to the vagaries of the transnational political economic order, and its discursive/representational grids of being. Especially since the 1970s, particularly around the Israel-Palestine conflict, Arabs and North Africans everywhere have been increasingly racialized and dehumanized within the world system. Cataclysmically so since the terrorist attacks of 11 September 2001 and the subsequent rise of anti-Western terrorist cells (though Mamdani, 1994

shows that most have deep Western financial/cultural ties and training), when Islamophobia has risen at a quantifiably faster rate than perhaps any other xenophobic impulse of the difference-phobic Western world order (Bulkin and Nevel, 2014). The current racial state of North Africa and North Africans is symptomatic of the lack of epistemological decolonization, and the extent to which contemporary fault lines remain drawn between an always-changing version of 'civilization'/'the West' and everyone else.

Conclusion

Far from being marginal in the emergence and arc of our modern world, North Africa and its contiguous regions were central to the initial formation of modern conceptions of alterity, as well as to resistance against this emergent world system and its structures of difference and inequality. While the fixedness and relentlessly hierarchical organization of modern identity categories is axiomatic, paradoxically the fluidity within these structures remains a central axis of contestation and negotiation. Western epistemology, built on fundamentally oppositional categories such as civilization and savagery, whiteness and blackness, continues to draw from the deep well of African, Arab and Islamic alterity to construct not only its Other, but also its relational self-conception. These underlying structures explain the longevity of these categories, opportunistically used in myriad ways, always contested, and always indicative of both power and the extent of subaltern agency.

Simply inverting these tyrannical systems is insufficient, as Fanon (1961 [1966]) made plain, though such impulses spring from a very comprehensible place in the context that produces them. Western demagogues continuously, and resurgently in recent electoral cycles, return to the conception of an inherently colonial civilizational model that pits the entire Western edifice, real and/or imagined, against the rest of humanity. Powerful elements within the West are also busier than ever inventing, supporting and funding non-Western agents who share this falsely antagonistic formula and gladly play the part of the Other, the false doppelganger that helps legitimize the whole relationship and the systems of hegemonic power and thought (Mamdani, 2004). Similar dynamics are seen in the internally colonized domestic populations of Western nations. As Wynter explains, this reflects the 'Era of Man', in which some men designate themselves superior to, and therefore rulers over, other men, women, and even nature itself – over all that they literally and figuratively survey. Reconfiguring

and decolonizing the ways we think about history, identity and epistemology may be central to helping us return to a new but familiar non-Western-centric 'Era of the Human', in which such false and reductive dichotomies no longer make sense and fall by the wayside (Benjamin and Lundy, 2014; Fanon, 1961 [1966]; Gualtieri, 2009; Kaye-Kantrowitz, 2007; Lorde, 1984; Rodney, 1972; Shohat and Stam, 1994; Wynter, 1979, 1998).

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CHAPTER 4

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Complications of Blackness and Afrodescendant Definitions in Latin America and the Spanish-Speaking Caribbean

Agustín Laó-Montes

Introduction

Language intending to ascribe meaning to the bodies, cultures, territories and skin colour of people of African descent is a central device for racial signification and, hence, central to the very constitution of constellations of power and knowledge in the modern/colonial capitalist world-system. These ethnic-racial grammars are composed of categories that mark modes of domination while they orient the dynamics of resistance, struggle, and self-affirmation of Africana subjects.

I use the category 'ethnic-racial' to conceptualize the entanglement of the cultural and phenotypical dimensions of racial classifications and stratifications. This implies a necessary, yet complex, relationship between race and ethnicity as historical categories and as markers of identity and difference, insofar as there are cultural dimensions to race, while ethnic ascriptions tend to be racialized. I will also use the terms 'racial' and 'race' on their own, as they were the first to appear historically, they still have cultural dimensions, and they call attention more unambiguously to the key problem of racism. I also use the term 'Africana', which refers to African peoples both on the continent and in the diaspora – itself understood as a

global translocal formation and as a space of multiple exchanges and travels back and forth with regard to the continent.[1]

In the light of their ubiquity and importance in modern/colonial regimes of power and knowledge, signifiers for ethnic-racial classifications and stratifications have always been polyvalent, contested, ambiguous and unstable. Their historical locations are global at the same time as they are local and contingent. Genealogies of signifiers such as *negro, morena, mulata, preto,* and *zambo*, coined and used as integral parts of processes to establish and maintain ethnic-racial hierarchies, demonstrate their potency as world-historical devices of power, as well as their historicity and, therefore, performativity and specificity in time and space or place.

A solid line of research makes a compelling argument that the very category of race can be traced to the Iberian Peninsula of the Christian Middle Ages, where different religious groups, namely Christian, Jewish, and Muslim, came into intercultural contact with one another.[2] The southern region of the peninsula, known as Al-Andalus, was a border zone between the Maghreb (a region of north and north-western Africa) and southern Europe and was a central gate in the Mediterranean world. Evidence shows that the kind of discursive practices of hierarchical naturalization of difference that we now call racial had existed in the Iberian Peninsula since the fifteenth century (Nirenberg, Hering Torres, and Martínez, 2012). The accusations of a lack of blood purity levelled by the Inquisition against Jews and Moors and the sentences subsequently imposed on them in order to consolidate Christian power were a key component of this process of racialization.[3] The year 1492 was a crucial moment, not only because of Columbus' so-called discovery, but also because the Spanish conquest of Granada established Spain as the first absolutist state for which the mass expulsion of Sephardic Jews and Muslims was a foundational act.[4]

1 I elaborate these arguments in Laó-Montes (2007). For analytical explorations of the interplay of biological and cultural elements in racial significations and the interweaved meanings of race and ethnicity see, among others, de la Cadena, Goldberg, Hall, Poole, Stoler, and Wade.

2 There is a large body of scholarly literature on the Iberian Peninsula as a key site for the invention of race as a historical category and, therefore, of racial discourses and racism as regimes of power and knowledge in late medieval and early modern times. See, in particular, Eliav-Feldon et al. (2009), Fredrickson (2003), and Hering Torres and Nirenberg (2012). For the concept of 'contact zone', see Buscaglia (2003), Laó-Montes, and Pratts (1992).

3 The imputations of blood impurity against Jews and Muslims on the Iberian Peninsula during late medieval times have been interpreted in numerous ways. See, in particular, Martínez (2008).

4 For a particularly deep analysis of the world-historical significance of 1492, see Dussel (1992). A more celebrated analysis of 1492 as a pillar of the modern self is that of Todorov (1999). See Coronil's critique (1997) of Todorov's occidentalist logic.

Thus, genealogies of significations of 'Africanity' and 'blackness' in countries which were former colonies of the Spanish and Portuguese empires, and which form the region we now know as Latin America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean, should begin by addressing late medieval to early modern racial discourses in the Iberian Peninsula.[5] This entails analysing how racial discourses and categories were exported, modified, and reshaped through the processes of conquest, colonization, and enslavement of the Atlantic world as the main locus of capitalist modernity beginning in the long sixteenth century. State-building came along with empire-building; for this reason, the conquest and colonization of the vast territory that came to be known as the Americas, the transatlantic slave trade and the institution of chattel slavery, whereby millions of sub-Saharan Africans were enslaved, framed the historical conditions for the establishment of modern racial discourses.[6]

The principal racial categories we use today, such as *negro*, *indio*, and *blanco*, were conceived and defined at the very inception of the long-term process of globalization beginning in the long sixteenth century (Forbes, 1993; Quijano, 2000; Chaves, 2009; Maldonado). The process of the sea-change that we call modernity included the emergence of the planetary dominance of capitalism, the rise of European empires and their will to become lords of all the world, and the creation of discourses relating to history, geography, politics, culture and the self, corresponding to such structures of power and knowledge. A major component of the regimes of power and knowledge in the evolving historical totality that we term the modern/colonial capitalist world-system is the hierarchical division of the world into continents and regions that correspond to civilizations, races, and eventually to nations and ethnicities.[7] With the invention of Africa, the Americas, Asia, and Europe as continents came their equating with the four principal racial classifications: black, Indian, oriental, and white; in turn came the establishment of the idea of Western civilization as superior and dynamic

5 I make the distinction between Latin America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean because, even though they are part of the same region, the three Spanish-speaking Antilles (Cuba, Dominican Republic, and Puerto Rico) and the continental Caribbean in Central America and South America are also part of the Caribbean region. For the sake of style, I mostly use the term 'Latin America' to refer to the three subregions it comprises, namely, Central America, North America, South America, and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean.

6 On early modern colonization and slavery as foundations for the establishment of racial discourses and racist regimes, see Quijano, Rabasa, Trouillot.

7 On capitalist modernity as a long-term process of globalization, see Dussel, Santiago-Valles, and Trouillot; and, for its theoretical representation as a modern/colonial world-system, see Quijano, Laó-Montes, Mignolo, and Wallerstein.

and of oriental civilizations as stagnant, in contrast to the supposed barbarism of indigenous and African 'peoples without history'.[8] Hence, the definitions of self (humanity, personhood, identity, community) have a long history based on occidentalist geohistorical categories that are historically specific in time and space yet intertwined through global processes of power, praxis, and signification. Racial categories are part of what Trouillot calls 'North Atlantic Universals' at the same time as they have specific significations in particular historical scenarios.[9]

The signifiers *negro* (in Spanish and Portuguese) and 'black' (in English) are much older than their racial significations, which are products of the invention of racial classification and stratification and the establishment of racist regimes as keystones of the modern/colonial capitalist world-system and the ensuing process of globalization starting in the long sixteenth century.[10] In a careful historical and philological review of the meanings and uses of labels and categories to name and classify peoples in the Iberian Peninsula and the Americas, Forbes (1993) shows how, in the Middle Ages, *negro* was often equivalent to *moro* (Moor, in English), and in the Americas became a racial category along with *indio*.[11] In turn, Hering Torres in a genealogy of the meanings of *negro* and *negritud* develops a well-documented and analytically sound argument that, before modernity, dark skin colour tended to have more positive meanings than light skin colour, and that the negrophobic significations linked to anti-black racisms emerged in the context of the conquest and colonization of the Americas.

The first societal laboratories for the historical production of ethnic-racial categories were the territories, peoples, and bodies colonized by the Spanish and European empires that now comprise the regions of the Caribbean and Latin America. The lumping together of dozens of diverse cultural communities under single racial rubrics, such as *indio* and *negro*, resulted from the enormous

8 On these intertwined inventions and their significance for modern/colonial regimes of power and knowledge, see, among others, Lewis and Wigen, Lowe, Mudimbe, O'Gorman, Pagden, Rabasa, and Said. On the concept of peoples without history, see Hegel and, for a critique, Wolf.

9 For a critique of occidentalist geohistorical categories, see Coronil, Balibar, and Trouillot.

10 The question of whether anti-black racism existed before capitalist modernity has been subject to debate, especially since the work of Senegalese scholar Cheik Antia Diop. It is beyond the scope of this chapter to contribute to such debate. I will argue that racial discourse, race as a category, and racism as a system of domination are modern phenomena. For arguments on both sides of the debate see, among others, Diop, Du Bois, Fredrickson, Smedley, Lott, Martínez, Moore, Quijano.

11 Forbes explores different significations of blackness in a variety of European languages in the late medieval and early modern periods.

physical and epistemic violence of the great Amerindian and African colonial holocausts that included the uprooting of peoples, exploitation of labour and resources, and attempts to eradicate vernacular cultures. We understand these ethnic-racial signifiers as key categories of the modern self and to have been constituted through a dialectical process between two articulated axes. On the one hand, how racial-colonial subjects are labelled or interpellated by hegemonic discourses and, on the other hand, as modes of self-definition based on the enactment of struggles and strategies of community-making by subaltern peoples. Hence, even though the label *negro* was born out of the stigma of enslavement, dehumanization, denial of being, and attributions of savagery, the signifier *negro* has also been invested by people of African descent with positive meaning as a form of collective definition of self through their everyday resistances, political and social movements, cultural creations, and intellectual currents. Aimé Césaire contends that the Haitian Revolution was a landmark in the constitution of Negritude as a historical identity linked to a project of decolonization and liberation (Césaire, 2000). Much earlier in modern history, in sixteenth-century Spain, the writings of formerly enslaved African professor and poet Juan Latino demonstrate a historical record of positive significations of *negro* as a self-descriptor for people of African descent and with dark skin.[12]

Latin America is a richly diverse 'contact zone' (Buscaglia, 2003; Laó-Montes; Pratts, 1992) of cultural and sexual connections wherein, from the sixteenth century, ethnic-racial labels and classifications proliferated, maturing by the eighteenth century to what came to be known as the *casta* system, a classificatory scheme serving as a framework for the development of a diverse, yet not entirely consistent, repertoire of human types based on different mixtures or paths of *mestizaje*.[13] Common nomenclatures seen in eighteenth-century *casta* paintings, especially in colonial viceroyal centres, such as Peru and Mexico, were *mulato*, used to refer to a person of mixed *negra* and *blanco* parentage, *mestizo*, used to refer to a person of mixed *india* and *blanco* parentage, and *zambo*, used to refer to a person of mixed *negro* and *india* parentage. The combinations and permutations of *casta* classifications became much more diverse, the plurality of types yielding a relatively large variety of ethnic-racial labels that developed

12 The fascinating story of Juan Latino, a formerly enslaved subject born in Ethiopia who eventually became professor of Latin grammar and poetry at the University of Granada in the mid-sixteenth century, has been the subject of much research. See, in particular, Molinari's work.

13 The Spanish word *mestizaje* denotes a concept that suggests positive ways of understanding ethnic-racial mixtures. We cannot explore its multiple meanings and diverse political and epistemic values here. Two particularly helpful accounts are provided by Miller and de la Cadena.

across the region. The abundance of labels should not be thought to indicate the existence of an equally large number of ethnic-racial categories; the latter are, in fact, much fewer in number, as demonstrated in the scholarly literature. For instance, even though Marvin Harris found 138 ethnic-racial labels in his study in Brazil in 1963, most scholarship points to the existence of three categories between black and white, namely, *branco* (white), *pardo* (mulatto), and *negro* (black).[14]

By the nineteenth century, the term *negro* had become a positive signifier of identity within the Africana world, as people "living behind the veil" became black positively through cultural expression, collective actions and political interventions throughout Spanish-speaking America.[15] In the literature of the formerly enslaved Juan Francisco Manzano in Cuba and in the poetry of Candelario Obeso in Colombia, there are racial self-affirmations of *negro*.[16] Likewise, black and *mulato* generals in the independence wars, such as Jose Prudencio Padilla in New Granada, as well as Antonio Maceo and Quintín Banderas in Cuba, positively identified as *negro*, *mulato* or *pardo*. In the nineteenth century, the hegemonic ethnic-racial discourse of the *casta* system shifted to that of scientific racism, which continued until around the 1920s, when discourses of *mestizaje* and racial democracy gained prominence. These served as a foundation for official articulations of nation, race, and ethnicity wherein the purported black and Indian problems were to be solved through whitening strategies, that is, Afrodescendants and indigenous peoples were subordinately integrated into the national self.[17]

In the long sixteenth century, from the very beginnings of modern chattel slavery, zones known as *cumbes*, *quilombos*, or *palenques*, which had been liberated from slave regimes and created primarily by enslaved peoples who had escaped

14 There is a vast body of literature on labels and categories of racial classification and stratification in Brazil. See, in particular, Hanzelbalg, Harris, Paixao, and Telles.

15 W. E. B. Du Bois uses the metaphor of "living behind the veil" to signify the specificity of black worlds in modernity, where black folk are seen as a problem and oppressed by white supremacist regimes, in terms of life, labour, government and representation.

16 Juan Francisco Manzano (1797-1854) is mostly known for his autobiography, *The Autobiography of a Slave*, which was translated into English and published in 1840 and which was to became an important abolitionist text. He was also a prolific writer of poetry and drama. Poet Candelario Obeso lived a short life (1849-1884), but left behind a very important legacy for Afro-Colombian culture, identity, and politics. See Branche, Cosme, Luis, Prescott.

17 *Casta* laws prohibiting interracial marriages, excluding *negros* and *pardos* from positions of power and segregating entertainment, did not began to be repealed until independence and definitely not until the rise of the populist state (see Andrews). On the paths from *casta* to scientific racism to *mestizaje* as hegemonic ethnic-racial discourses in Latin America, see Graham, Stepan, Andrews.

from plantations, were crucial for the rise of Afro-American identities, cultures and politics. These historical spaces — which some scholars call 'maroon societies', derived from the Spanish word *cimarrón*, which was originally used to stigmatize those who ran away from slavery — proliferated and constituted a threat to the stability of slave regimes. *Palenques* became beacons of hope for the achievement of freedom, as well as ideological inspiration for identification with Africanity and blackness. This memory is still alive, as exemplified in our current identification with leaders such as Benkos Biohó, head of an early seventeenth-century maroon society, the territory of which is now a Colombian town named San Basilio de Palenque. In Colombia, Benkos is often invoked as the founding figure of Afro-Colombian history.[18]

Concerning the political-epistemic implications of maroonage, the noun *cimarrón* and the verb *cimarronear* are now often used to signify everyday practices of resistance and self-affirmation of people of African descent. They became political-epistemic categories for the types of Africana critical theory that constructs knowledge from within the race and against the tools of the master.[19] In 1998, a march celebrating the 100 years since the abolition of slavery in Brazil was named after Zumbí. He was the last leader of the *quilombo* of Palmares, a kingdom of maroons in north-eastern Brazil that existed for almost a century, from 1605 to 1694, when the Portuguese finally dismantled the settlement, but not its legacy.

Brazil is home to the largest black community in the Americas, comprising more than 100 million people who, in the last census, accounted for the majority of the overall population. In the nineteenth century, many people of African descent identified as *negro* and *pardo* and, by the early 1930s, a national political organization, Frente Negra Brasileira, had been formed. Likewise, another independent political organization, the Movimento Negro Unificado was founded in 1979, while still in times of dictatorship. *Negro* and *africano* are often used interchangeably and in complementary ways, as in the work of Abdias do Nascimento, a leading Afro-Brazilian intellectual who founded the Teatro Negro Brasileiro in the 1940s, the same period in which he wrote a book titled *Africans in Brazil*. The term *afrodescendiente* was coined in Brazil

18 For historical accounts of Benkos Biohó and San Basilio de Palenque, see Daza et al. and, for their memory, see Burgos.

19 The debate as to the historical, linguistic, political and epistemic value of maroonage, *cimarronaje* or *quilombismo* has been ongoing since at least the 1940s. See Césaire, Franco, Glissant, Nascimento, Quintero Rivera, and Roberts. On theorizing imploding while replacing the master's tools with a strategy of double critique, see Bogues, Farred, Gordon, Laó-Montes, and Lorde.

in the late 1980s by Afro-Brazilian feminist intellectual-activists, such as Lélia Gonzalez, Sueli Carneiro, and Edna Roland. They were seeking to create a political identity to unite first the black feminist movement that was emerging as a powerful force in Latin America, and later, the networks of Afro-Latin American social movements that had been booming since the mid-1990s throughout the region.

The Red de Mujeres Afrolatinoamericanas, Afrocaribeñas y de la Diáspora (Network of Afro-Latin American, Afro-Caribbean and Diaspora Women) was founded in 1992. The Alianza Estratégica Afrodescendiente (Strategic Afrodescendent Alliance), founded in 2000 in Santiago de Chile, convened to create a platform for the third World Conference against Racism (WCAR) held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001. Romero Rodríguez, a black intellectual activist from Uruguay, titled an article *Entramos negros y salimos afrodescendientes* ("we went in black and came out Afrodescendants"), arguing that the Santiago conference was crucial for the establishment of the term *afrodescendiente* as a strategic political identity that united black movements throughout Latin America and eventually across the global African diaspora. The proclamation by the General Assembly of the United Nations of 2011 as International Year for People of African Descent and 2015 as the beginning of the International Decade for People of African Descent demonstrates the global dissemination of the terms 'Afrodescendent' and 'Afrodescendant'. Their widespread use has also contributed to their appropriation by agencies of transnational capital, such as the World Bank, and branches of the American imperial State, including the United States Agency for International Development.

Use of the term *afrodescendiente* is continuously debated across Latin America, as is the identifier *negro*. Some argue that *afrodescendiente* denies blackness and thus prefer to call themselves *negros*. In contrast, others contend that to identify as *negro* is to use the language of the colonizer, that is, a label created and rooted in slavery in order to deny humanity to African peoples. To describe themselves, yet others are in favour of the 'Afro-' prefix, as in 'Afro-Uruguayan' and 'Afro-Venezuelan'. I contend that the politics of self-naming will always be a contested terrain and that the relative value of these signifiers depends on how we invest their political and epistemic meanings as categories. *Afrodescendiente* is here to stay and an increasing number of people identify as such, in tune with the discourses of current movements and cultures and governmental language. At the same time, *negro* remains the most common term which black folk use to name themselves. It is important to recognize that people positively identify with

many of these terms and it is therefore imperative to include them all in our critical vocabulary of Africana studies.

By the end of the nineteenth century in Cuba, home to one of the largest and most vibrant black populations in the Americas, people of African descent were organized into a national network, the Directorio de las Sociedades de Color (Directory of Societies of Colour). The adoption of the expression *gente de color* (people of colour) reveals a coalition between *negros* and *mulatos* and between enslaved and free blacks, in what was one of the last societies to abolish slavery in the Americas.[20] The multiple meanings of *negro* have a long history in Cuba and Puerto Rico, where the signifier has historically been used as a racial slur through such expressions as *negro sucio* (equivalent to 'dirty nigger') and the diminutive *negrito*, a form of infantilization that could now signal familiarity or even affection, without recognition of its racist underpinnings. *Negro* can also be used by dark-skinned people and people of colour as an expression of self-pride and as a marker of community. The book *El Negro en Cuba 1902–1958: Apuntes para la historia de la lucha contra la discriminación racial*, by Afro-Cuban intellectual Tomás Fernández Robaina, recounts the historical construction of such a sense of community through collective actions. Cuba is also a place of historical importance for the prefix 'Afro-', signifying 'of African descent', as demonstrated in the formation of the Sociedad de Estudios Afro-Cubanos (Society for Afro-Cuban Studies) in the early twentieth century.[21] A recently edited volume recasting Cuban history through the lens and agency of black women titled *Afrocubanas: Historia, Pensamiento y Prácticas Culturales* reveals the hidden history of *Cubanía* ('Cubanness') through the herstory of Afro-Cuban women, looking back to the nineteenth century. The use of both *afrocubano* and *negro* as signifiers of black Cubanness shows consciousness of Afro-Cuban specificity within the national constellation of cultural practices and ethnic-racial identities.

Throughout Cuban history, the recognition of Afro-Cuban difference has been expressed through various dimensions of the national stage: slave revolts and conspiracies in the colonial period; black generals in the struggle for Cuban independence in the nineteenth century; the brief but memorable existence of the Partido Independiente de Color (Independent Party of Colour), which

20 The last three societies to abolish slavery in the Americas were Puerto Rico in 1873, Cuba in 1883, and Brazil in 1888. The last ship that brought enslaved Africans to the Americas arrived in Cuba in 1873. See Iglesias.

21 There is a relatively large body of scholarship in the emergence of languages of *afrocubanidad* and *negritud* in Cuba. See especially de la Fuente, Fernández Robaina, and Ortiz.

was founded in 1908 and which disappeared with the massacre of 1912; a plurality of expressions in the arts, music and dance, literature, cinema, theatre, and performance. In regard to cultural expressions of Afro-Cuban history and identity, let us highlight *afrocubanismo*, an aesthetic movement of the 1930s that should be considered together with the Harlem Renaissance and Negritude as pillars of the black modernism that had repercussions during the wave of antisystemic movements of the period.[22] In this context, it is germane to remember Arturo Alfonsho Schomburg, an Afro-Puerto Rican who founded what is still the principal archive of the African diaspora and who was a key figure in the Harlem Renaissance, serving as a bridge between the diaspora in the North and the South.[23] In sum, the use of a variety of signifiers for blackness, such as *negro*, *mulata*, *sociedades de color* and *afrocubana*, demonstrates the plurality of racial labels which exists in Cuba, which resembles the rest of Latin America, but has its own particular force.

Brazil and Cuba, the Americas' last two destinations of a massive influx of Africans, even after the British slave trade was officially abolished in 1807, have clearer connections with the African continent in terms of cultural and religious practices, living memories and even of people returning to Africa. Both countries also maintain active governmental relations (geopolitical, economic, and cultural) with African states that continue to nurture identifications with Africanity.[24]

The tendency to associate the term 'African-American' with the United States of America unwittingly reproduces the imperial edge exercised in the reduction of the whole western hemisphere to the United States when singularly labelled as 'America'. A more positive move would be to trace the increasing significance of the term 'African-American' in the United States of America to the moment when Malcolm X's organization was named the Organization of Afro-American Unity. Malcolm X named his last organization Afro-American in the context of his critique of the 'so-called Negro'[25] as the sold-out Uncle Tom. This shift

22 Some key references on Afro-Cuban history are Barcia Zequeira, Fernández Robaina, Ferrer, Helg, Luciano Franco, Dechaumpx Chapeaux. For *afrocubanismo*, see Moore.

23 On Schomburg, see Sinnette. This intense moment of collective actions in the 1930s, characterized by C.L.R. James as 'the great pan-African revolt', was composed of powerful cultural, political, and intellectual movements that gave shape to the global African diaspora.

24 For these aspects of Brazil and Cuba from different angles see, among others, Bastide, Gleijeses, Scott, Matory, and Tomich.

25 It is important to note that the term 'Negro' in English is different from *negro* in Spanish, which is equivalent to 'black' in English and which mixes the common term for colour in a pigmentocratic system with an ethnic-racial identification. Therefore, in English you have 'black', 'Negro', and 'African-American', while in Spanish you have *negro*, *afroamericano*, *afrocolombiana*, and *afrodescendiente*.

converged ideologically with the rise of 'black' as a radical political identity of self-affirmation that expressed a politics of liberation against racist oppression, as in the slogan 'black power', championed by Stokely Carmichael as part of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) and also adopted by the Black Panthers. The rise of 'black power' and 'African-American' in the 1960s as the preferable language of black radical politics and self-definition marked a change in the politics of self-naming in the United States of America. In the 1930s, the consensus was in favour of the word 'Negro', as can be shown from a sample of distinct groupings, from Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association to the American Negro Academy, and in the concept of the 'New Negro' as the pursued subject of the Harlem Renaissance.

While in the United States of America it was not until the 1960s that the term 'Negro' came to be replaced by the terms 'black' and 'African-American', in Latin America and the Caribbean the signifier *afroamérica* has a longer history. Indeed, it was the title of a journal published in Mexico in 1940 and that of a book by Afro-Cuban intellectual José Luciano Franco published in 1961. In both the journal — which brought together the most prominent black intellectuals and the most outstanding specialists in Africana studies of the period, including Du Bois, Césaire, Fernando Ortiz, and Herskovitz — and Luciano Franco's book, *afroamérica* was conceptualized as peoples and cultures of African descent in the Americas, and not as simply an identity of the United States of America. In turn, *negro* as a historical, political and epistemic category of collective identity serving as a foundation for social movements, intellectual currents, aesthetic creation, and cultural production linked to projects of decolonization and liberation gained momentum in Latin America from the 1930s to the 1950s; this took place through an identification with pan-Africanism in general and particularly with the Negritude movement. Among the most influential Afro-Latin American figures associated with Negritude at that time were two sets of siblings, both leading intellectuals and activists, especially through literary production and research and the dissemination of black popular cultures serving as a platform for combating racism and affirming the values of Afro-American histories and cultures. These were Nicomedes and Victoria Santa Cruz in Peru, and Delia and Manuel Zapata Olivella in Colombia.

Colombia's black population is the second largest in Latin America and the third largest in the Americas. Ten million of the 45 million people in the country are estimated to be black. As in the rest of the region, the denominator *negro* has a long history. It is a label imposed onto a racialized group that is subalternized in relation to the dominant definition of national self as *blanco-mestizo* (Almario

García, 2010; Chaves, 2009; Leal, 2010; Múnera, 2011). However, *negro* can also be a positive utterance of self-definition affirming a collective identity that constitutes an ethnic-racial difference on the national stage. Ethnic-racial denominations for people of African descent vary considerably in Colombia, a country of great regional diversity. However, the signifier *negro* and the more recent *afrodescendiente* have played important roles in creating languages of sameness and collective identity in the whole territory.[26] A long tradition of *poesía negra* on the Caribbean coast of Colombia can be traced back to the poetry of Candelario Obeso in the late nineteenth century and to that of Jorge Artel since the 1930s. A historical landmark for the rise of Colombia as a bastion of Negritude was the Primer Congreso de la Cultura Negra de las Am*é*ricas (First Congress of Black Culture in the Americas), held in Cali, Colombia, in 1977. This continental gathering brought together nationwide efforts for the recognition of black cultures and against racism, while placing Colombia at the centre of Afro-American political, cultural, and intellectual organizing.[27]

The collective actions and organizational initiatives now conceptualized as and termed the 'Afro-Colombian social movement' received strong impetus from the constitutional change of 1991, when the country was declared multi-ethnic and multicultural. A significant sequel was the approval in 1993 of Law 70, known as the *Ley de Derechos de las Negritudes* (Law on Black Rights). According to Law 70, the subject of collective rights to land, ethnic education, and political representation are *comunidades negras* (black communities). One of the leading social movement organizations emerging in 1990s Colombia was the Proceso de Comunidades Negras en Colombia (Process of Black Communities in Colombia), which waves the flag of blackness in its name. In contrast, another major social movement organization, the Movimiento Nacional Cimarrón (National Maroon Movement), rejects the term *negro* with the argument that to identify with it is to use a dehumanizing label coined by the colonizers who enslaved us as people of African descent. Nonetheless, the Proceso de Comunidades Negras en Colombia defends the use of all such terms, namely, *negro*, *afrocolombiana*, and *afrodescendiente*, as meaningful categories for

26 There are several other identifiers of Afro-Colombian local cultures, such as *palenqueros* for those from San Basilio de Palenque, *raizales* for the islanders of San Andrés, *afrocaribeños* for Afrodescendants of the Colombian Caribbean and *afro-pacíficos* for Afrodescendants of the Pacific coast of Colombia, Ecuador and Panama.

27 The second conference was held in Panama in 1979 and the third, in Brazil in 1985. See Valderrama Pibe's master's thesis on the importance of cultural organizing since the 1940s for fighting racism and affirming blackness in Colombia.

the self-identification of people of African descent, not only in Colombia but also across the global African diaspora.[28] As stated previously, our argument is that these terms, which are used by grassroots communities, black social movements and intellectual activists, can constitute relevant forms of self-definition if they are invested with meanings of positive self-recognition and a sense of collective belonging, and if they encourage collective actions and a project of decolonization and liberation.

The book *No Longer Invisible: Afro-Latin Americans Today*, published in 1995, describes how Afro-Latin Americans tended to be erased, not only from hegemonic regional and national maps, but also from many cartographies of the African diaspora. In the 1990s, the supposed sleeping giant awoke and, by the end of the century, a report from the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean estimated the black population of the region to reach some 150 million. The so-called lost decade of the 1980s was a time of tremendous growth for the organizational capacity and political advocacy of Afro-Latin Americans. The effervescence of local organizing grew into the national emergence of black social movements in several countries. In the 1990s, webs of black social movements were created throughout the region. During this process, *negro* and *afrodescendiente* flourished as positive signifiers of blackness and Africanity across Latin America.

The agenda against racism approved at the Durban conference in 2001 drew, to a large extent, on the programme approved by the network of Afro-Latin American social movements in Santiago de Chile in 2000, where the signifier *afrodescendiente* was introduced, as explained above, as a unifying political identity. The intersectional dimensions of 'Afrodescendent' as a category should also be recognized. First used by Afro-Latin American feminists, the term 'Afrodescendent' flourished as part of a process where racism was deliberately gendered and eroticized. In other words, the political culture in which 'Afrodescendent' was produced as a political category to be used against oppression and for empowerment, was aware of the links between racial, gender, sexual and class oppressions and their entangled forms of discrimination. This is spelled out, both in the Santiago declaration of the regional conference of the Americas in preparation for the WCAR and in the Durban Declaration and Programme of Action, both explicitly against racism and connected forms of discrimination.

28 There is a growing body of scholarship on Afro-Colombian activism, organization, collective action and politics. See, among others, Agudelo, Escobar, Wabgou et al., Osslender, Flórez Flórez, and Pardo.

Today, the term 'Afrodescendent' is becoming a staple of the language of governments, transnational institutions, such as the World Bank and United Nations, and academia and, increasingly, the vocabularies of everyday life. This widespread use is symptomatic of what may be termed a small political-cultural revolution in Latin America against racism and for the recognition of the value of black histories and cultures and, to some extent, political representation. Twenty years ago, it was virtually unthinkable for Latin American countries to declare themselves against racism and to publicly recognize it as a serious problem, as they have done today. Likewise, the setting up of governmental branches for racial equity and black affairs, another partial gain, was not on the agenda. While constitutional change has usefully transformed public discourse, anti-black racist practices and blatant inequalities persist. For instance, a decade since Ecuador's constitution was amended to declare Afro-Ecuadorians a people with collective rights, including the right to reparations, concrete measures to this end have yet to be taken or bear any fruit. Nevertheless, in spite of their limitations, these changes have facilitated an increase in positive uses of signifiers of blackness, such as *negro,* and of Africanity, such as *afrodescendiente*.[29]

A plea to count black populations in each national census has provided another key ingredient in the region's progress towards the recognition of Afro-Latin Americans and the fight against negative attributions to blackness. Taken together, *pretos* (blacks) and *pardos* (mulattoes) now account for more than 50 per cent of Brazil's total population. During the last Colombian census, following a debate about the categories to be used to enhance the underestimated numbers of Afro-Colombians, more diverse categories were introduced into the national survey, enabling people to identify themselves as, among others, *afrocolombiana*, *afrodescendiente*, and *negro*. There is consensus among academics, activists, and even governmental agencies that the figure of 4.5 million, representing 10 per cent of the population, still seriously underestimates the actual size of the Afro-Colombian population. Indeed, other estimates put the figure at 10 million, accounting for 25 per cent of the total population. One of the arguments put forward to explain this severe lack in representation is that signifiers of blackness, such as *moreno* on the Caribbean coast and *raizal* on the islands of San Andrés and Providencia, were not included in the Colombian census.

The diaspora having been declared the 'sixth region of Africa', it may thus be argued that Africanity is a global space of flows in multiple directions

29 On the changes brought about by the wave of black activism that has flourished in Latin America since the 1980s, see, among others, Garcia, Laó-Montes, and Paschel.

across oceans and continents constituted by a plurality of travels of bodies, movements, music, spiritualities, and ideas. A Puerto Rican radio programme, *Rumba Africana*, broadcasts this Africana universe of reciprocal exchanges once a week, where the soukous music and dance of the former Zaire is influenced by Trinidadian calypso, and Congolese salsa modifies Cuban rumba, while Cuban Santeria experiments and debates with contemporary Yoruban spirituality, in which it is rooted.

Political-epistemological lessons

To close this chapter, I will draw three general political-epistemic lessons from the panoramic and historic view we have discussed of languages of blackness and Africanity in Latin America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean.

The first lesson is that, even though there is a great variety of ethnic-racial labels in the Americas, the categories corresponding to anti-black racism, ascriptions of blackness, and attributions of Africanity tend to follow the same logic across the hemisphere. The signifiers, racial discourses, hierarchies and practices of racialization and racism vary, but the ethnic-racial categories defined by a combination of phenotypical and cultural criteria are configured around a three-tier classification-stratification of white, *mulato*, and black.[30] In this vein, ethnic-racial discourses and their corresponding racist regimes are world-historical phenomena that are global at the same time as they are historically contingent and hence, local, ambiguous, unstable, and contradictory. The continuous transmigration of peoples, discourses, representations, and social movements throughout the Americas and globally creates a space of flows for racial significations and anti-racist politics.

The second conclusion is that, as a region, Latin America has always been important in the formulation of African diaspora identities and politics. Banging this drum, the adoption by the General Assembly of the United Nations of the term *afrodescendiente*, coined in Latin America in the late 1980s as a political identity, in the title in Spanish of the International Decade for People of

30 There is a tendency to define a single system of racialization and racial formation in the United States of America based on hypodescent, or the so-called 'one-drop rule' (i.e., one drop of 'black blood') to be black, in contrast to a continuum of a plurality of labels and categories in Latin America. I contend that this is an overgeneralization because ethnic-racial classifications and stratifications are far more complex, diverse, and ambiguous in both vast historic spaces that are as violently homogenized as Latin America and the United States of America.

African Descent demonstrates the increasing global significance of Afro-Latin American epistemic and political perspectives.

The third concluding point is that both *negro* and *afrodescendiente* are important signifiers of blackness and key categories of self-denomination for social movements, cultural currents, intellectual perspectives, and political programmes linking the historical projects of people of African descent in Latin America and the Spanish-speaking Caribbean. Afro-Latin Americans took centre stage in Africana struggles during the Durban process, and their movements pushed Latin American countries to launch the Decade for People of African Descent as an important step forward for black people the world over to gain recognition and representation at the United Nations. The long-term organizational goal is to have a permanent forum for Afrodescendants at the United Nations, a vision articulated by Malcolm X in the 1960s and an institutional gain already achieved by the indigenous peoples of the world. As we keep reinventing Africanity as a global translocal heterogeneous space of flows back and forth between the African continent and the diaspora, and among the plurality of diaspora-scapes, the continuous investing of signifiers of blackness and Africanity, such as *negro* and *afrodescendiente*, with positive political and epistemic values should increasingly become a tool of liberation against the intersecting oppressions faced by the Africana peoples of the world.

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CHAPTER 5

BECOMING BLACK

Brazil's Long Search for Racial Identity

Elaine P. Rocha

Introduction

According to official figures, Brazilians make up the largest population of the African diaspora. If one applies the 'one-drop rule' of the United States of America, more than half of Brazilians are blacks. However, society has fought such classification for more than a century.

The total population of Brazil, according to the census of 2010, was 190,755,799, comprising 91,051,646 white people, 14,517,961 black people, 82,277,333 *pardos*, 2,084,288 *amarelos* and 817,963 Indigenous peoples.[1] These figures are provided by the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE), which studies the composition of the national population and produces statistical analysis, utilizing mostly colour, instead of race or ethnic groups, to classify the population, dividing it into five major groups: white, black, *pardo*[2], *amarelo*[3] and Indigenous. Given that such classifications are based on the self-declarations

1 Tabelas de Resultados, Censo Demográfico IBGE 2010. http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/estatistica/populacao/censo2010/caracteristicas_da_populacao/tabelas_pdf/tab3.pdf (Accessed 10 Mar 2017.)

2 Light brown. Ethnically, it defines mixed race from Indigenous, black and white. The denomination "*pardo*" has been used since the seventeenth century, but it was adopted by the national census in 1950.

3 In Portuguese, "*amarelos*" refers to Asians, predominantly the descendants of Japanese immigrants, but also other Asian nationalities.

of those surveyed, they are not supported by any scientific evidence. The 2010 census indicates two very important elements which help to understand Brazil's controversial position on racial identity: first, there is great ethnic diversity, and second, in 2010 there were 97 million Brazilians of African descent, including *pardos* and blacks.

Although elements of racial self-consciousness and external classifications can be found throughout the entire history of Brazil, since the twentieth century the political element of racial identity has provoked debate, as groups related to individuals subjected to slavery have denounced the persistence of the stigma of social discrimination and unequal opportunities preventing them from improving their standards of living. Much of the Brazilian movement against racism has been influenced by developments in the United States of America and other parts of the world, such as the struggle for independence in Angola and Mozambique. Mainly since the 1970s, issues of racial identification in Brazil have become highly politicized and the features of this debate have changed to accommodate different perceptions. However, the majority of the population still resists abandoning the comfort of the wide concept of *moreno* to embrace the dichotomy of black or white.

The first thing to notice about the growing racial consciousness among people of African descent in Brazil is that blackness is perceived differently in that society. This means that, while in the United States of America and the English-speaking Caribbean, the word 'black' has replaced 'Negro', which is associated with the stigma of slavery, in Brazil the word *negro* has been adopted by the black movement, intellectuals and the media in general to refer to *pretos,* which implies racism and discrimination. A common expression, '*preto é cor, negro é raça*' (black is colour, negro is race), is used to justify racial affiliation as a kind of political statement.

Further, determining the precise number of African descendants among Brazilians is a complicated task. Personal classifications vary widely and official classifications included in the census do not offer a solution, as the census depends on personal declarations and classifications, by the interviewee or by the agent in charge of collecting and registering the data. When, in 1976, the census allowed respondents to declare their race freely, no fewer than 190 different nuances of colour were registered, including expressions of colour, fruit, drinks, such as coffee or chocolate, and other varieties heavily influenced by Brazilian imagination and humour (Piza and Rosemberg, 1998-99, p. 130). Most of the classifications could also be shaped by notions of class, education,

and politics, for example, while avoiding direct affiliation to blackness but at the same time recognizing the impossibility of identifying as white.[4]

In 1996, another survey found that, among the 51 per cent of the population considered Afrodescendent, 43 per cent of respondents classified themselves as *morenos* and only 8 per cent self-declared as black.[5] *Moreno* (male) or *morena* (female) is a category that is widely used among Brazilians. Historically, it refers to a person related to the Moors, a people of north-western Africa (of mixed Berber and Arab descent) who inhabited the Iberian peninsula during the Middle Ages. In Brazil, it is popularly associated with someone of darker skin, eyes and hair, and can be used to define anyone who is not blond or red-haired. In 1954, Nogueira explained that Brazilians mostly used the word *negro* in conflicts, as an offensive remark, while in other situations people would use, among other terms, *moreno, mulato*, *caboclo*, or *preto* to minimize what is seen as a problem. In addition, confirming the above expression on the subject of Brazilian differentiation between colour and race, Nogueira argued that in Brazil, colour prejudice is much more prevalent than racial discrimination.

Yet Brazilian national identity, as it is represented today by intellectuals and in official data, is in opposition to the perception most Brazilians have of themselves, and little has changed in that regard over the past century. Since *moreno* is the general identification, dark skin has to be justified in such a way as to distance a person from blackness; the solution is, therefore, to embrace the Indigenous ancestor, real or imaginary, in order to give a positive meaning to darker skin. Jacques d'Adesky calls for the Brazilian strategy of adopting multiple categories to be recognized as valid, rather than being considered merely a curious case of choosing popular qualification of colour over classifications of race. For him, popular creativity expresses an element of hierarchy, in which whiteness is the reference for superiority, while the other categories play into strategies to avoid blackness (2001).

4 Similar challenges in determining racial classifications based on the black/white dichotomy are found in other Latin American countries, such as the Dominican Republic, Colombia, Cuba, Puerto Rico and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela. See Wade. Also, Posel, examining the issue of race in South Africa, points to the subjectivity of official race classifications.

5 Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE), *Aspectos demográficos, informações gerais.* http://www.ibge.gov.br/home/estatistica/populacao/condicaodevida/indicadoresminimos/tabela1.shtm (Accessed 21 March 2017.)

The historical construction of racial identity in Brazil

Issues related to Brazilian racial identity have captured the attention of intellectuals in several fields, including anthropology, sociology, history, literature, journalism and political sciences, in Brazil and internationally. Especially since the 1980s, some Brazilian historians have focused on racial issues in their analyses of social and cultural history, going beyond studies of slavery. They have described, categorized and analysed racial discourses in public policies on immigration, urbanization, security and criminality over the past two centuries.[6] The increasing interest in and desire to understand racial identity and examine racial tensions reflects a growing debate on racism in Brazil as part of the struggle against the military dictatorship (1964–1985). The movement for the re-establishment of democracy gave visibility to various organized groups, including those of Afro-Brazilians fighting to end racial discrimination and inequality. The groups have also gained prominence through the increased presence of black intellectuals, as the expansion of the education system over previous decades and development of the economy away from the agricultural sector have given Afro-Brazilians greater opportunities to move to urban centres and improve their access to education. Therefore, it is important to note that the racial debate in Brazil has benefited enormously from the participation of black activists and intellectuals.[7]

Concerns with Brazilian national identity as part of a political strategy have been evident in the work of intellectuals since the nineteenth century. With Brazil's independence in 1822 and mounting external pressure in the 1830s to end the transatlantic trade of African slaves, a preoccupation with the labour force would run side by side with concern about the construction of a national identity, including national culture and the ethnic composition of society (Schwarcz, 1998). Part of that effort was to promote a national image that would differentiate the new independent country from its colonizer, while placing emphasis on the youth and strength of its people, and projecting an image of modernity.

6 While a number of studies on Brazilian social and cultural history remain unpublished, one can highlight a few publications in this field. See, for example, Azevedo (1987), Chalhoub (1986, 1990 and 1996), Silva (1997 and 2003), Moura (1995), Castro (1993), Gorender (2000), and Schwarcz (1993).

7 Afro-Brazilian intellectuals having contributed to this movement include Clóvis Moura, Marcelo Paixão, Joel Rufino dos Santos, Flávio Gomes, Olívia Gomes da Cunha, Caetana Maria Damasceno, Abdias Nascimento, Lélia Gonzales and Jurema Werneck.

From the early colonial period, the Brazilian population was composed of a great number of blacks and *pardos*, enslaved and free, a significant number of Indigenous peoples subjected to slavery or living under similar conditions, many working side by side with black people and *pardos*, and a mix of these peoples and whites. Putting an exact number on how many people were enslaved is difficult. For those imported from Africa to Brazil, the numbers vary from 3.5 million to 5 million people, while for the Indigenous population subjected to slavery, there are no figures, probably because the practice had been illegal since the seventeenth century, with various laws prohibiting the enslavement of Indigenous peoples from 1609 to 1757. The practice, however, persisted until the twentieth century in isolated regions of Brazil.[8]

Further, from the first years of colonization, interracial relationships were not only common, but were actually supported by the State, as in the case of Portuguese and Indigenous marriages as a means of what was considered a civilizing of the natives and of protecting the territory (Buarque de Holanda, 1956, 1985). Miscegenation between Indigenous peoples and blacks was common, since most of the Africans imported to be used as slaves were males, and colonialist attacks on Indigenous villages killed most of the adult males, leaving children and women under the domination of farmers. The *cafuzo*, a person of mixed Indigenous and black descent, was quite common and was defended by intellectuals such as José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva, who saw in this miscegenation the key to generating a 'Brazilian element' and reinforcing nationalist feelings (Dolhnikoff, 1998). The participation of Europeans, particularly the Portuguese, in the miscegenation pool is widely explored by Gilberto Freyre, who discusses miscegenation as one of the tools of Portuguese colonization and describes how the colonizer used his power to interact with all groups (1998).

During the Brazilian Empire, the quest for a national identity took over the local intelligentsia and the few scientific, literary and academic institutions created in Brazil, with personal and financial support from Emperor Pedro II, who expressed the need to 'organize the nationality' (Schwarcz, op. cit.). The intellectual elite chose the Indigenous inhabitant of the past to represent the national identity, based on a mythical view of the native as the sacrificial hero

8 For more information on the traffic of African slaves to Brazil, see: Alencastro (2000), Florentino (1997), and Mattoso (1986). On the enslavement of Indigenous people, see: Cunha (1992), Monteiro (1994), Karasch (1992), Paraiso, M. 1992. Os Botocudos e sua trajetória histórica. M. Cunha (ed), *História dos índios no Brasil*, São Paulo, Brazil, Companhia das Letras, pp. 413–430, Meliá (1988), and Gagliardi (1989).

that resisted the conquest and gave his blood for the emergent nation. The literature, visual arts and monuments of the period between 1850 and 1900 are marked by this vision (Rocha, 2002).

The adoption of the Indigenous inhabitant as the new nation's symbol was an optimistic move that also occurred in other Latin American nations, and was embraced even though about two thirds of the Brazilian population at the time was black. Elite optimism was spoiled by Arthur de Gobineau, a French philosopher dedicated to examining hierarchy among races, who visited Brazil between 1869 and 1870. De Gobineau wrote an essay in which he criticized Brazil's high proportion of *mestizos*, asserting that the nation had a physically degenerate population that would be extinct in less than three centuries. For him and his followers, miscegenation was equal to degeneration. From that point of view, there was no hope of Brazil becoming a respected and modern nation, as its population was condemned to extinction (Sousa, 2008).

From the second half of the nineteenth century until the 1920s, Brazilian intellectuals and, by extension, the literate population debated two opposing views of the elements constituting their society: on the one hand, the myth of the noble savage, based on the theory of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and on the other, representations of black people embodying negative traits, such as intractability, laziness, backwardness, ignorance and unreliability. Those feelings were associated with the experience of slavery, when balance and instability were constantly threatened by the possibility of conflict between the enslaved and their masters. After abolition in 1888, the negative image of blacks and *pardos* grew worse, as the elite feared that the former slave, once free of the master's control, would engage in criminal behaviour, putting society and its institutions at risk.

In 1850, the Brazilian government passed a law by which land could only be legally owned if it were gained through commercial transaction or inheritance. Almost 40 years later, when slavery was finally abolished, legislation denied any kind of support to the newly freed, as the law of 1850 prevented such workers from occupying the vast swathes of available public land, thus imposing a situation of bondage and economic insecurity that would culminate in rural-to-urban migration and lead to an increase in criminality and its violent repression. By the end of the nineteenth century, blackness was associated with crime, poverty, diseases and marginality (Fausto, 1984; Ribeiro, 1995).

When the republicans replaced the monarchy in 1889, their promise of modernity and progress was inspired by the positivist philosophy. The first challenges for the new government were those of controlling and organizing society, dominated by the military and planters; solving the labour crisis created

by abolition; and improving Brazil's image in the international arena. While one of the government's first measures was to impose tighter control on the lower classes, dominated by black people, the most popular solution was to embrace miscegenation and make it work to the benefit of the nation. In order to eliminate arguments relating to the supposed biological inferiority of the majority of Brazilians, the government removed colour classifications from the census, which José Luis Petruccelli defends as a measure to address theories of racial hierarchy. Identification by colour was revived only in 1940 (Petruccelli and Sabóia, 2013).

Medical doctor João Baptista de Lacerda, then director of the Museu Nacional, submitted a paper to the First Universal Races Congress, held in London in 1911, in which he declared that the 'question of the *metis*' in Brazil was being solved and the nation's black population was doomed to disappear through miscegenation. He then presented a short list of Brazilian 'mulattoes' who had become successful and respected men in politics, culture and society (Spiller, 1911). Such lists, presented by other intellectuals, were not proof of Brazilian acceptance of black and coloured individuals, the main idea behind the argument of the 'mulatto escape hatch' proposed by Carl N. Degler (1971). Rather, they were an affirmation of the exceptional fate of a small number of mulattoes; as Anthony Marx argued:

> Brazil constructed an informal racial order that was highly discriminatory against "blacks and browns", such that earlier patterns of inequality were maintained. Only a few mulattoes advanced – enough to encourage belief in mobility. Thus, continued popular belief in the mulatto escape hatch appears to be based less on material conditions than on an ideological project encouraging assimilation. Miscegenation in itself did not produce the myth of mobility, but this image did dilute potential conflict (Marx, 1996, p. 187).

Nevertheless, during the first 30 years of the twentieth century, Brazil saw increased intellectual production relating to race, with an emphasis on research on blacks in order to understand physical, intellectual, social, and cultural differences. Authors such as Nina Rodrigues (1935), also a medical doctor, reinforced the thesis of the biological inferiority of Africans, while Oliveira Vianna (1932) defended the idea that Brazilian society would become white after a few generations of blacks and coloureds marrying lighter-skinned partners.

Meanwhile, the negative image of blacks in comparison with the positive image of the *índio* (Indigenous person), represented as a hero in literature, public monuments, visual arts and all elements of Brazilian identity in the period between 1860 and 1920, influenced the Brazilian choice to claim Indigenous ancestry to explain darker skin, as a strategy to avoid association with blackness

(Shaden, 1977, pp. 321–32; Rocha, 2006, pp. 203–20; Ribeiro, 1977). This phenomenon was to persist throughout the twentieth century, and is similar to the situation in the Dominican Republic (Candelario, 2007).

Racial paradise

Between the 1930s and the 1970s, Brazil maintained the image of a racial paradise, a land without segregation or discrimination. Published in Brazil in 1933 and in the United States of America in 1946, Gilberto Freyre's seminal work, *The Masters and the Slaves* (op. cit.), explores the contributions of Indigenous, African and Portuguese peoples to the formation of Brazilian society, emphasizing the importance of miscegenation and society's tolerance of interracial sexual relationships. Freyre's thesis was that the nation was an exception in a period of radical racial discrimination and even segregation, explaining that the Portuguese colonizer was far more tolerant and accepting of miscegenation, which somehow mitigated the system of slavery in Brazil.

Freyre's thesis has been challenged and examined by a number of intellectuals over its near-century of existence. African-American scholar Michael G. Hanchard, who conducted field research in Rio de Janeiro in the late 1980s, agreed with Freyre's proposition about Brazil's exceptionalism, while recognizing that Brazilian society was far from a racial paradise:

> My conceptualization of racial exceptionalism reflects an attempt to explain the subtle ideological shift from the common-sense belief that Brazil is a country without racial antagonisms to a qualified recognition of racial prejudice, discrimination, and subordination as a feature of Brazilian life, while maintaining the belief that relative to other multiracial polities Brazil is indeed a more racially and culturally accommodating society (Hanchard, 1994, p. 43).

Brazilian 'racial accommodation', as proposed by Hanchard, partly results from the adaptation of gradually modified racist theories and ideas concerning, in particular, miscegenation, which were transformed from negative to positive as Brazil embraced its mixed race as its national identity. This attitude complied with the need to include Brazil among civilized nations and, at the same time, justify the strong presence of mixed-race people in society. The 'one-drop rule' adopted by the United States of America to define people according to their 'races', was subverted in Brazil, where one drop of 'white blood' can make an individual whiter and release him or her from the burden of being black.

Getúlio Vargas, populist dictator (1930–1945, 1951–1954), reinforced the idea of a society without racial conflicts when constructing Brazil's external and internal image through an intensive public relations campaign that included the confirmation of samba as the Brazilian national rhythm and turning the samba parades of Carnival into the nation's most important touristic event (Levine, 1998). During his government, following the American policy of ensuring alliance with Latin American countries, American film studios discovered Brazilian culture, and the samba and Carnival were portrayed first in Walt Disney movies and later in Hollywood productions. Carmen Miranda became, with the support of the Vargas government, the muse of Brazilian culture; this was despite the actress and singer being Portuguese, white, and green-eyed – a far cry from the typical Brazilian samba girl. Nevertheless, over the following years, scholars from other countries, attracted by the international propaganda, came to Brazil in search of a racial paradise, only to find that the celebrated miscegenation did not result in political, social or economic advances for Brazilian blacks.

An important feature of the dictatorship was a ban on social and political organizations considered a threat to the idea of national integrity. Black associations, such as the Frente Negra, which was created in 1931 as a political party for Afro-Brazilians and whose agenda revolved around denouncing and overcoming racial discrimination, were thus banned in 1937. Challenging the ideas of African biological inferiority, intellectuals of the Frente Negra used the newspapers to inform Afro-Brazilians of their rights and to advocate for education for black people as the only way to effectively fight racism and inequality (Domingues, 2008, pp. 517–34).

At the same time, Vargas' political propaganda emphasized the idea of one nation, one culture and one people. Whenever issues of racism arose, the government discourse played with the idea of a society of tolerance and inclusion, based solely on the fact that Brazil, in contrast with the United States of America and South Africa, had no laws of racial segregation. Under the same government, in 1938, the chief of police of São Paulo city, in response to a request by shop owners, prohibited black people from taking their Sunday stroll in one of the city's commercial streets (Nascimento, 2000, pp. 203–35). After World War II, while racism was increasingly the subject of debate worldwide, the Brazilian government concentrated its efforts on building a national image of a united society, without conflict or exclusion. By law and according to the propaganda, all Brazilians were considered equal, and talk of racism became taboo and a sign of anti-nationalism (Skidmore, 1974; Bacelar, 2001; Munanga, 1999).

Michael G. Hanchard states that, in comparison to Brazil, with its propaganda of a racial democracy supported by the ideology and culture of whitening, no other pluralistic society in the Americas had similar success in elaborating a strategy that could neutralize claims of racial inequality (Hanchard, op. cit.). In fact, Brazilians' belief that there was no racism in their society made it difficult for national and foreign researchers to discuss the issue at universities or in other public arenas (Rocha, 2010).

The significance of the Brazilian whitening ideology went beyond the belief that miscegenation would erase blackness, as proposed by intellectuals during the first part of the twentieth century, along with the instant increase of the white population via European immigration, heavily supported by the government. According to data from the Instituto Brasileiro de Geografia e Estatística (IBGE), which carries out the population census, between 1850 and 1950, Brazil received more than 3.5 million immigrants from European countries and from Syria and Lebanon. Africans and blacks from the diaspora were banned from entering Brazil under immigration laws in place since the nineteenth century. Interpretations of article 121 of the 1934 Constitution made clear that black immigrants were not welcome based on the prohibition of immigrants of nationalities that were already represented in great number – in this case, the legislation considered Afro-Brazilians an immigrant group – and based on the arguments that black immigrants could threaten Brazilian ethnicity, and that they posed hygienic and health risks. Part of the argument against black immigrants also highlighted issues such as poverty, lower levels of development and, in the case of African-Americans, the risk that such immigrants could bring ideas of subversion and revolt (Geraldo, 2009, pp. 173–209; Skidmore, op. cit.; Andrews, 2004; Gomes, 2003, pp. 307–31).

The same policy also promoted the neutralization of Afro-Brazilian culture. Thus, capoeira – the Afro-Brazilian fighting art disguised as dance – became the national version of martial arts, supported by the government and confined to closed spaces called *academias*. The samba schools presented during Carnival in the 1920s were tamed into parades which, over the past 100 years, have been controlled by numerous rules defining acceptable themes, the streets where they can be held, their timing, dress and, ultimately, the racial features of their queens. Samba as a musical genre also suffered great modifications, with the introduction of Western instruments and arrangements that created what became the famous bossa nova, as the white elite and middle class gradually adopted the new rhythm. While recognizing that every culture is the product of a continuous process of assimilation of new influences and adaptations to current circumstances, Brazilian

samba suffered a whitening process, its original rhythm relegated to second place, giving the world bossa nova, which became the soundtrack of Brazil's rise to international fame during the 1960s. In addition, until the 1990s, the visual media (television, cinema, magazines and advertising) were massively white, minimizing the exposure of Afro-Brazilians (Araujo, 2004).

The military dictatorship prevailing in Brazil between 1964 and 1985 also exploited the myth of 'racial democracy' as part of an external image of peace and harmony. Government propaganda emphasized the peaceful character of a united and homogeneous society, and to talk or write against it could, once again, be considered subversive. The population census did not collect data on colour or race until 1980 (Piza and Rosemberg, op. cit., p. 126). Nevertheless, growing resistance to the authoritarian regime, together with other circumstances, such as Afro-Brazilians' increased access to higher education and employment and to news of racial struggles in other countries, contributed to the development of groups dedicated to fighting racial discrimination. The issue, at this point, was to convince Brazilians that yes, there was indeed racism in Brazilian society.

Black resistance

However, despite governmental control through policing and policies, black people in Brazil continued to use tactics and strategies to preserve their culture and celebrate their memory. A good example is the history of Carnival in Brazil, as explained by Ana Lucia Araujo. In Salvador (Bahia), organized groups of blacks would participate in Carnival from the 1890s under denominations that celebrated their African roots:

> Among these groups one could find the *Embaixada Africana* [African Embassy], Pândegos da África [Jokers from África], *Os Congos da África* [The Congos from Africa], *Nagôs em Folia* [Nagos in Folly], *Chegados da África* [Arrived from Africa], *Filhos D'África* [Sons of Africa], *Lembranças da África* [Memories of Africa], and *Guerreiros da África* [Warriors of Africa]. Affirming an African identity during the carnaval was already a positive cultural assertion in the beginning of the twentieth century. Moreover, many of these carnaval groups like the *Embaixada Africana* were closely associated with terreiros of Candomblé (as they still are today). During the processions, members of these clubs played instruments used in Candomblé ceremonies, danced "African" rhythms, and sang songs in "African" languages (Araujo, 2010, pp. 131-167).

Such groups challenged the hegemonic powers that classified African-related expressions of culture as backwards and undesirable. Persecution of houses of Candomblé and Afro-Brazilian cultural practices was common until the 1940s (Lühning, 1996, pp. 94–220).

Salvador has the largest Afro-Brazilian population in the country. Even when Afro-Brazilian Carnival bands were forbidden from participating in the elite or bourgeois Carnival, those groups strengthened in numbers and organization. According to Scott Ickes, the participation of working-class Afro-Brazilians in Salvador's Carnival increased during the years of depression, when the elite suffered financial setbacks that prevented their clubs from celebrating in great style; meanwhile, the number of black groups dancing in the streets to the sound of the drums increased (Ickes, 2013).

The history of Carnival in Salvador was marked by the creation of the group Ilê Aiyê (whose name comes from the Yoruba language) in 1974, in response to racial discrimination and exclusion. The Carnival band, self-denominated as *Afro-Bloco*, began as a cultural association in Liberdade, one of the largest and poorest neighbourhoods in Salvador, with about 600,000 inhabitants, mostly Afro-Brazilians, who at that time were not allowed in 'quality' clubs because of their colour and poverty. Focusing on promoting African and Afro-Brazilian culture and traditions, the organization today has more than 3,000 members and is heavily influenced by political developments in the United States of America, Jamaica, and African countries, and by Afro-Brazilian traditions, such as Candomblé, capoeira, samba and batuques. The main objective of Ilê Aiyê is to promote racial identity and self-esteem among young people. After the success of Ilê Aiyê, many other *Afro-Blocos* were formed in Salvador and even in other regions, focusing on denouncing racism and promoting Afro-Brazilian and African culture.

Since the 1950s, samba schools in Rio de Janeiro, and in other major cities more recently, have succeeded in portraying Afro-Brazilian history in their parades (Araujo, op. cit.). In fact, themes related to slavery, life in Africa before slavery and life on the outskirts of Rio during the post-emancipation period are the most prevalent topics in Rio de Janeiro's Carnival. During the long period in which the school curriculum failed to cover such content, samba schools filled the gap by portraying black people in a positive light.

Blacks from different regions of Brazil started to organize in non-official political organizations dedicated to discussing racism and discrimination. During the late 1960s, groups of black youngsters found, in soul music dance halls, a place to express their culture and to imitate the Black Power movement

and culture of the United States of America, combining foreign rhythms and songs with hairstyle and clothes. In Brazil, the movement was influential mainly in the largest cities. In Rio de Janeiro, it was called 'Black Rio' and, in São Paulo, *baile charme*. Many Afro-Brazilian activists now in their fifties and sixties would relate their experience in racial identification to this musical movement (Oliveira, 2015, pp. 78–93). J. Michael Turner noticed the changes when studying Afro-Brazilian university students:

> By 1976, Afros as worn in Brazil (hennaed red and of large circumference) were more noticeable than they had been in the United States, where by the mid-1970s the style had become less popular and less of a political and cultural statement. African clothing, such as dashikis and headties, were fashionable among Afro-Brazilian students, and there was and continues to be much serious discussion concerning the desirability of using the word *preto* in substitution for *negro* (Turner, 1985, p. 78).

In July 1971, in the southern state of Rio Grande do Sul, Grupo Palmares, a small cultural association, was set up and dedicated to studying and promoting the history of the *negros* and *mestiços* (blacks and mixed), and organizing lectures and artistic presentations to that end. The association's aim was to promote racial consciousness and to support the social and political inclusion of those groups. Four months later, on 20 November 1971, Grupo Palmares proposed a public celebration of the Quilombo dos Palmares, the most famous maroon community in Brazilian history, and, by extension, a celebration of its leader, Zumbi dos Palmares. In 1976, the group published *Mini História do Negro Brasileiro*, the first book of black Brazilian history (Campos, 2006). It did not take long for the experience of Grupo Palmares to spread among other Afro-Brazilian intellectuals elsewhere in Brazil. The group ended its political activity in 1978, but its influence continued and from 2002, other groups started to celebrate Zumbi dos Palmares around Brazil. In 2011, a law was approved to make 20 November *Dia Nacional da Consciência Negra* (National Black Consciousness Day).

Turner argues that the influence of the movement that started in Rio Grande do Sul was important among Afro-Brazilian students in Rio de Janeiro, who, by 1974, started to demand a course on Afro-Brazilian studies, something that was delayed for decades because of a lack of academic specialists in the field (Turner, op. cit.).

Worldwide events, such as the victory of anti-colonialist forces in Angola and Mozambique and the subsequent independence of those countries, moved Brazilian intellectuals to support first the independence movement and later

the reconstruction of both countries. Cultural similarities facilitated contact among intellectuals and artists, and concerts were held in Brazil to raise money for and publicize the cause of the insurgents. Afro-Brazilian singer Martinho da Vila was one of the key figures promoting closer relations between Brazilian blacks and Angolans from 1972 until after independence in 1975. The idea captivated the interest of others. In 1980, a group of 65 artists started the Kalunga Project, under the leadership of composer Chico Buarque de Holanda, promoting concerts in several cities of Angola.

Robert Mugabe's victory in the presidential elections of Zimbabwe in March 1980 marked the decline of racial regimes in southern Africa and increased Western interest in the struggle against the apartheid regime in South Africa. During that decade, international music stars participated in concerts and demonstrations in Europe and the United States to demand a 'Free South Africa', and media coverage brought such news to the Brazilian public.

Back to black

Various types of Afro-Brazilian organizations appeared during the twentieth century, although until the last quarter of the century they were mostly cultural entities because of political constraints. There were theatre groups, commercial associations, university study groups, and small recreational clubs. The most important entities dedicated to studying Afro-Brazilian culture and to fighting racism included: the above-mentioned Ilê Aiyê (1974); the Sociedade de Intercâmbio Brasil-África (Brazil-Africa Exchange Society), created in Rio de Janeiro 1974; the Instituto de Pesquisa e Cultura Negra (Black Culture Research Institute); and the Centro de Estudos Brasil-África (Brazil-Africa Studies Centre), created in 1975 (Pereira, 2013). These institutions had an important intellectual impact as they were organized to increase knowledge of Afro-Brazilian culture and history, but also contributed to the political struggle for equality and identity.

In 1978, Afro-Brazilians defied the dictatorship when they launched, in a public demonstration, the Movimento Negro Unificado contra o Racismo e a Discriminação Racial (Unified Black Movement Against Racism and Racial Discrimination). A year later, the same organization adopted the name of Movimento Negro Unificado, with branches in various states and cities of Brazil and with great intellectual input and political influence (Pereira, 2013). From 1979, as part of the slow return of Brazilian democracy, new political parties

were formed, many of them creating opportunities for Afro-Brazilian politicians and incorporating the struggle against racial inequality in their political agenda.

In 1996, several institutions related to the black movement in Brazil started pressing for policies of affirmative action. That same year, the Programa Nacional de Direitos Humanos (National Human Rights Programme) started discussing actions to increase the number of Afro-Brazilian students in universities and the need for compensatory policies for blacks. Society started discussing the proposal for racial quotas at public universities, seen as important in increasing racial identification among Afro-Brazilians, at a time when Brazilians started asking themselves, 'Who is black?'

When sociologist Fernando Henrique Cardoso became President of Brazil in 1994, things had moved on since the 1970s. A number of blacks and mulattoes were at university, in politics and in positions (in journalism and television, for example) from which they could influence public opinion; some were close to the Presidential office and a few were members of Congress or the Senate.

In November 1996, President Fernando Henrique Cardoso paid his first visit to South Africa since the election of President Nelson Mandela. On that occasion, questioned about inequalities in Brazil in comparison to South Africa, the Brazilian President declared that Brazil was still struggling against inequalities, stating that 'there are many Sowetos in Brazil […] In fact there was and still is lots of prejudice and discrimination in Brazil, and we are also trying to organize our society in a different way' (Wolthers, 1996, p. 8).

A few days before travelling to South Africa, the President received the African-American leader of the civil rights movement Jesse Jackson, who visited Brazil for the celebrations of Zumbi dos Palmares. Jackson also met with organized groups, Afro-Brazilian politicians, such as Benedita da Silva, Brazil's first female senator, and Celso Pitta, Mayor of São Paulo city, and with Afro-Brazilian artists and activists (Menezes, 1996, p. 1, 6; Munanga, 2003, pp. 124–35; Santo 2016, p. 103–17). He focused on discussions of racial identities, inequalities and affirmative actions.

Discussion of racial identity in Brazil increased after the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance, which brought together representatives of several nations in Durban, South Africa, in 2001. Brazil attracted much attention as did the United States of America and the host country, South Africa. Delegates were selected from different entities to represent Brazil and to discuss issues related to inequality. Although in the last few years of the twentieth century the black movement against racism achieved a certain level of importance in Brazilian society by

denouncing inequalities, Brazil still has a long way to go in recognizing the existence of racism and racial exclusion. While many Brazilians argue that the country has no segregation laws, has never forbidden biracial marriages or reserved jobs for "whites only", like South Africa and United States of America, statistics show that black people are far from having economic, social and political equality (Guimarães and Huntley, 2000). Influenced by the debate and the recommendations for action resulting from the Durban conference, the second National Human Rights Programme recommended the adoption of compensatory measures that could prevent racial discrimination and the promotion of access to education and employment for Afro-Brazilians (Domingues, 2005, pp. 164–76).

In 2003, the implementation by Rio de Janeiro State University of its quota system to benefit Afro-Brazilians created great controversy. White people complained and sued the state, arguing in defence of an exam-based selection system, while Afro-Brazilians complained that people considered white were able to declare themselves as blacks or *pardos* to beat the university's system. The university responded that the practice of utilizing biological tests to determine race had been condemned since the end of World War II, and explained that the system would self-correct in time and that initial problems were to be expected (Thuswohl, 2003). As the quota system and implementation of affirmative action expanded, conversations about racial identity became more common and even mandatory in high school, as students were preparing for university education, and in universities, where students and professors discussed the availability, legality and application of the system.

Again in 2003, a federal law provided for the mandatory teaching of Afro-Brazilian and African history and culture in high schools, and in universities in order to train teachers. A new field of studies thus opened up for historians, educators, sociologists and anthropologists. It also stimulated the construction of repositories of historical and cultural sources and the creation of museums and research centres. Popular organizations, labour unions, maroon communities, religious organizations, and cultural institutions were also set up across the country.

Between 1980 and 2015, Brazil opened up to the influence of the African-American struggle against racism; to the songs of Jamaican musician, Bob Marley, calling for black peoples' rights, which influenced Brazilian music and stimulated an Indigenous reggae movement that expanded into political and social activism; and to the ideas and writings of African intellectuals.

In 1996, the *Revista Raça Brasil*, a magazine in the style of the American *Ebony*, was founded, followed by others that promoted the 'black is beautiful'

argument and informed Afro-Brazilians on arts, fashion styles, culture, and politics. Non-governmental organizations were set up to improve the education of Afro-Brazilians, in preparation for university studies, in what Anthony Fisher compared to developments in the United States of America during the civil rights movement (Fisher, 2003, pp. 9–11). More Afro-Brazilian academics had the opportunity to publish their research as publishers dedicated to black history and culture also started to appear.

Many authors, such as Ahyas Siss, Otair Fernandes de Oliveira, Renato Noguera, and Maria Aparecida Bento, are continuously assessing the systems of racial inclusion from different perspectives. While the consensus is that there is still much work to be done and that it may in fact never end, the initial results of the 12 years of implementation of the first law applied to education have demonstrated what black intellectuals of the Frente Negra movement affirmed in the 1930s, namely, that education was the best way to improve social conditions and to fight inequalities.[9]

The necessary debate over racial identity is also continuous, as part of the culture and politics that surround such a topic. Brazil has not yet reached a consensus about its racial identity, but the society has come to accept itself as multiracial, with great input from the African element and its culture. Even though the day the 'one-drop rule' is applied by Brazilians is still a far way off and will probably never come, there is no doubt that Brazil is not a racial paradise.

9 For a better understanding of the implementation of laws and measures of racial inclusion in education see: Carvalho, Noguera and Sales (eds) (2013), Bento (ed.) (2000), and Siss, Monteiro and Dupret (eds) (2011).

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CHAPTER 6

THE INDIAN OCEAN AS A DIASPORIC FIELD

Françoise Vergès

Introduction

Between 830 and 840, the *Batu Hitam* sank in the Gelasa Strait while sailing towards the Arab world. Its cargo of Chinese gold artefacts and a vast quantity of mass-produced ceramic bowls from Changsha, China, went into the sea (Miksic, 2013). Between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries, the Bahraini city of Manama became part of a 'network of port settlements which connected the Persian Gulf to the world of trade, merchants and trans-continental routes extending from the Mediterranean and the Red Sea to South East Asia' (Fuccaro, 2009). In 1863, 'Bombay was buying 10,000 tons of Mauritian sugar while substantial quantities of rice, flour, lentils, and grains moved in the other direction' (Neveling, 2013). 'By the 1880s, a fleet of Indian-owned dhows of 60-100 tons each, sailed annually from Bombay and other western Indian ports directly to Maintirano and Mananbolo on the independent west coast of Madagascar before crossing to East Africa' (Campbell, 2008). In the nineteenth century, the rising price of pearls worldwide led to the growth of the slave trade between East Africa and Qatar (which then housed 50 per cent of the world's pearl production); East Africa, the Comoros, Mauritius and Madagascar had become the main sources of enslaved persons for the Gulf States. In the twentieth century, the Indian Ocean was a site of

intense competition between the two Cold War powers, criss-crossed by oil tankers and huge cargoes of goods travelling between Australia, Asia, Africa and Europe. The newly independent countries on its rim sought to contain the hegemony of East and West, meeting in Bandung in 1955 and in 1970, creating the Indian Ocean Zone of Peace. In the twenty-first century, new air routes, ports, hub cities, technologies and digitized education and government services have further transformed the landscape.

For centuries, Africans, Indians, Chinese, Jews, Malays and Arabs have circulated across the Indian Ocean. As migrants, traders, merchants, pirates, explorers, missionaries, pilgrims and captives, Africans contributed to the creation of diasporic contact zones. From the Horn of Africa to Indonesia and China, South-South exchanges and encounters cut across ethnic and language affiliations. Diasporic formations have also been linked with the spread of global religious networks and the role they play in transforming cultural patterns. Today, the Indian Ocean remains a space of interwoven experiences and multidimensional memories, reconfigured networks of capital and trade, and new nodes of geopolitical conflict.

Looking at Africa from the Indian Ocean offers a cartography of South-South exchanges and encounters, a diasporic field in which Africans have been agents and actors of history and culture for centuries. Long before the arrival of Europeans on its shores, the Indian Ocean was a site of cultural and commercial interactions between the peoples of Africa and Asia, tracing a corridor of port cities around the ocean, a world of connected histories, contact zones, processes of 'Indian-Oceanic' creolization and hybridity, routes and itineraries across continents, the ocean and its seas. In the twenty-first century, regional powers are seeking to revive the memories of past circuits and are vying to reactivate the routes of the past or create new ones. Current scholarship on relations between Africa and India and Africa and China aims to look beyond the idealized construction of historical relations or present-day declarations of continued solidarity (Mawdsley and McCann, 2011; Bräutigam, 1998; Manji and Marks, 2010) and to look at African agency, at group behaviour (whether elite or not), at globalization from below (the small traders who have taken advantage of new connections and hubs, the migrants, refugees, musicians and pilgrims), at the new contact zones that are emerging, and at the flows of musical and poetic forms, ideas, images, rituals and beliefs. The Indian-Oceanic world as a cultural field is still understudied. There is still much to explore in the fields of musicology, religions, languages and literary forms.

Maps and cartographies

One of the first moves towards decolonizing history and culture has been to redraw the maps carved out by Europeans, who imposed an ethnocentric view of the world, drew lines based on colour and imprinted a hierarchical approach to peoples, especially African peoples. A cartography of the Indian Ocean as a diasporic field raises difficult challenges. The first is the sheer intensity of circulation of goods, cultures, plants, animals, ideas, beliefs and peoples across this body of water. The second is the diversity of languages and of local and regional histories and memories, and the third, the presence of imperial powers and the conflicts around the riches involved. Finally, we must add the new competition over control of the ocean, the new regulations on migration and the forms of globalization from below.

Since the 1990s, the growing literature on the world of the Indian Ocean has shifted the gaze away from an Africa shaped by its connections with the Atlantic or Mediterranean worlds. It is time to write the history of 'Global Africa', of Africa *in the world*, by looking east and south, by connecting and comparing the magnitude of diasporic movements in the Indian Ocean with the Black Atlantic (Gilroy, 1998), the emergence of a black counternarrative of modernity with African-Asian connections in ideas and cultural expressions. The history of Global Africa, past and present, will be written by tracing the multiple and complex itineraries and routes taken by Africans across water towards islands and continents. It will expand the cartography of the continent to its 'margins', the numerous islands (the Comoros archipelago, Madagascar, Maldives, the Mascarene Islands, Seychelles, Sri Lanka and Zanzibar) that have played an important role in making the Indian Ocean a diasporic field. The study of African diasporic formations in the Indian Oceanic world involves examining the ways in which navigation techniques, wars, the creation of trade routes, changes in Europe and Asia and imperialism have affected circulation and exchanges, and also how the Cold War and current geopolitical tensions, economic competition and new technologies have interacted to create new regions and subregions. To study the Indian Ocean as a diasporic field in the light of postcolonial, subaltern, feminist, cultural, decolonial and global studies means imagining a methodology that not only questions postcolonial national narratives and writes history from below, but also brings together threads as diverse as environmental history, maritime history and the question of representation (films, museography, literature, theatre and music).

European cartography and postcolonial cartographies have produced a mutilated – and mutilating – cartography that constructs maps that enclose differences within borders, erasing the circulation of tastes, ideas, fashion and bodies. Using the notions of palimpsests and cumulative palimpsests, an alternative cartography can be devised, one that can show both 'roots and routes', anchoring and wandering, and can map the accumulated layers and levels of signification without foreclosing the present. The Indian Ocean as a diasporic field cannot be confined to a single representation. Its interconnected or conflicting strata call for a leap of imagination – a call artists and novelists have sought to answer. A palimpsest is 'a parchment or other writing surface on which the original text has been effaced or partially erased, and then overwritten by another; a manuscript in which later writing has been superimposed on earlier (effaced) writing'. It is a 'multi-layered record' which both preserves the distinctness of individual texts and exposes the contamination of one by the other, making way for a structure that privileges heterogeneity and diversity. For the Indian Ocean, the archaeological notion of the 'cumulative palimpsest' seems even more apt. It describes monuments in which 'the successive episodes of deposition, or layers of activity, remain superimposed one upon the other without loss of evidence, but are so re-worked and mixed together that it is difficult or impossible to separate them out into their original constituents'.

A cultural cartography of the Indian-Oceanic diasporic field is an evolving cartography that looks for buried memories and allows for new layers to appear. It is a cartography that questions hegemonic narratives and the borders drawn by wars and imperialism. It is a cartography of grey zones and contact zones, of fragile communities under assault everywhere. It charts a new world day by day. It is a cartography of minute gestures, small beginnings and transient practices that weave a world of cultural practices pregnant with dreams and the consciousness of the tragic dimension of the human condition. It is also a cartography that includes nature as its life force, and places humans among other living species.

The history and culture of the Indian Ocean in the *longue durée* present a kaleidoscope that discourages broad generalizations. There is no unity to the Indian-Oceanic world. What is remarkable is that this body of water, so large and difficult to navigate, was crossed very early on by navigators who started their journey in Far East Asia and landed in Madagascar. There can be no discussion of the world of the Indian Ocean without acknowledging the role of the monsoon winds and navigation techniques. They brought peoples into contact, facilitated commerce and the emergence of a cosmopolitan world of

traders, merchants, sailors and pilgrims, and led to the creation of port cities. The monsoon winds, blowing from the south-west from June to November and from the north-east from December to May, led to trade between Egypt (then a Roman colony) and India from the first century BCE onwards, thus 'provincializing' the Roman Empire (Fitzpatrick, 2011), and later between Africa and Asia. After 1250, a string of independent stone-built towns on the eastern African coast – Kilwa, Sofala, Mombasa, Malindi, Mogadishu – were linked to Surat, Calicut, Aceh, Mocha, Hormuz, Basra, Malacca and Guangdong. Gold, ivory, iron, frankincense and cinnamon were sold to Europe, India, South-East Asia, and China and cotton, silk, and porcelain objects arrived from Asia. By the 1400s, the Swahili city-States formed a major world economic power.

The African Indian-Oceanic world is deeply mixed and hybrid, yet it has retained singular and specific forms. Indeed, studies have shown that processes of creolization do not lead to the erasure of original languages and cultures, but rather to the coexistence of original and creolized forms. Pier Larson has shown how central Madagascar played a key role in the movement of peoples and their identities. Taken as captives to the European colonies in the western Indian Ocean, the Malagasy retained their language and rituals and deeply influenced their new cultures and societies. Thus, it would be wrong to view African languages as subservient to European languages in the formation of a creole language. The existence of Malagasy-influenced ancestor-related rituals in Reunion or Mauritius also shows their strength despite national policies (French in the case of Reunion, British or Mauritian in the case of Mauritius) that sought to diminish African legacies and presence. Further, Caribbean processes of creolization cannot be superimposed on Indian-Oceanic ones. Swahili culture, for instance, has been studied as a form of creolization different from the Caribbean and American processes. Swahili traders were important actors in diasporic formations. Historians have shown that these middlemen would come to stay with a family during their trip, often returning to the same family season after season and trading with that family. Often traders married into these families, cementing the economic alliance, usually through temporary marriages, and providing opportunities for peoples and ideas to circulate.

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CHAPTER 7

AFRICAN DIASPORA IN SOUTH ASIA

A Theoretical Perspective

Shihan de Silva Jayasuriya

Introduction

Historically, culturally and climatically, Asia falls into five distinct regions: East Asia, Indochina, Central Asia, the Indian Ocean and West Asia, which are all integrated by the Silk Route (Wickremesinghe, 2010). The present-day continent of Africa was not known by that name throughout the period of African migration. This paper concerns the sub-Saharan African diasporas which emerged from migration streams to Asia. The African diaspora tends to be posited in the frame of the Atlantic world and the slave trade. In the Atlantic, African movement was linked to major economic activities. Income from the Indian Ocean slave trade did not dominate the economy (Piketty, 2014, pp. 158-163). Eastward movement was both by land and sea, but no slave ships were built to transport captives across the Indian Ocean. A new conceptual framework is needed for the Indian Ocean. The key features of such a framework should be the nature of demand, the patronage of migrants, the contributions of migrants and processes of assimilation.

Dispersed communities of Africans in Asia are both historic and contemporary. How do we conceptualize the African diaspora in Asia? The concept of the African diaspora is built on the triadic relationship between Africa as homeland, Africans and their descendants and an adopted residence

or home abroad (Harris, 2003). At a conference of the UNESCO Slave Route Project (2003), Joseph Harris, an African American historian, who first drew scholarly attention to Afro-Asian communities, suggested that the field could be moved further by those who knew the languages spoken in the area. Responding to his suggestion is an onerous task given the diversity of Asia. A team of scholars is needed, working with numerous ethnolinguistic groups. Clearly, this would be a way of unlocking memories of the diasporists and mapping their routes to their Asian hostlands. Identifying migration streams, points of origin and destination are important processes in this work. Africans moved from both coasts of Africa, including the Swahili Coast and also from adjacent islands such as Madagascar, Mauritius and Zanzibar.

African diaspora researchers encounter numerous problems which were well articulated by Hubert Gerbeau (1978) at a UNESCO conference in Haiti: '*et qu'un historien* étudiant *la diaspora africaine devait* également être *archéologue, ethnologue, spécialiste de la tradition orale, biologiste, linguiste, voire psychiatre*', meaning: 'a historian studying the African diaspora should also be an archaeologist, ethnologist, specialist in oral traditions, a biologist, a linguist and a psychiatrist'.

Research methodologies

An interdisciplinary approach is clearly the way forward. It is crucial to record oral histories and conduct anthropological and ethnomusicological studies before memories fade away. But field studies do not give a picture of the historical African diasporas. In some parts of Asia – Sumatra, Java and Macau – we know of historical African communities. Asians of African descent are lost in the diversity of the cosmopolitan cities of Asia and the invisibility of the hinterlands. Intermarriage with the local populace and merger with groups whose socioeconomic plight is similar to theirs has also exacerbated the problem. Several generations were born locally, and Afro-Asians are now indigenized and are nationals of their Asian host countries.

The Afro-Asian identity and diaspora are entangled and should be considered together (de Silva Jayasuriya, 2009). Identity is dynamic and complex, and linked to a territory or homeland and family or kin. As scholars, journalists and photographers seek out Asians of African descent, voices from the margins are heard. Subaltern voices have recently begun to reach a wider audience through films (de Silva Jayasuriya, 2014). Afro-Indians say: 'We're African and we're Indian' (Shroff, 2004).

Amartya Sen (2001), the economist-philosopher, cautions against the limitations of the presumption, often made implicitly in identity politics and identity-based philosophy, that a person belongs only to one community or group. 'African' and 'Asian' are competing identities, but Afro-Asians are able to reconcile the two ethnicities. In the Gulf, people of African descent call themselves 'Gulfricans', in recognition of their hybrid identity. The inclusion of subaltern narratives enhances epistemologies of the diaspora. Scholars need to make judgments based on both historical and oral sources.

Easterly African migrations are centuries old, and histories are fragmented on account of their long duration of almost two thousand years. Indigenous systems of slavery and serfdom became entangled with chattel slavery, in which a captive was the legal property of his/her owner. Trade and religion became interwoven with voluntary migration and slavery in ways that make it difficult to disentangle them. Following the European intrusion into Indian Ocean commerce, the slave trade became a means of obtaining manpower to run imperial enterprises. Without a readily available supply of low-cost labour, the high-risk long-distance spice trade would have been impossible. Colonization was clearly an important phenomenon, which drew upon slave labour to perform myriad tasks from building roads and fortresses to serving as soldiers in the colonial armies. Quite apart from imperial demands, Africans also served as concubines, missionaries, administrators, entertainers, sailors, politicians and State-builders.

Asians with African roots in Dubai, India, Iran, Iraq, Israel, Maldives, Oman, Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Turkey and Yemen have become more visible through the combined efforts of scholars, journalists, photographers and the media. These communities are guardians of their heritage and culture. The concept of community is problematic and has several definitions. The Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage takes a community as meaning a network of people whose sense of identity or connectedness emerges from a shared historical relationship that is rooted in the practice and transmission of, or engagement with, their intangible cultural heritage (Curtis, 2010). Timothy Curtis, Chief of UNESCO's Living Heritage Entity as at late 2022, points out that communities themselves have been included as intangible heritage even though this represents a radical departure from previous heritage practices.

Locating Afro-Asian communities is of paramount importance. In a global world in which economic interaction necessitates awareness of other peoples and cultures, Afro-Asians cannot remain completely unnoticed. But identification is not always easy where ethnic origins are blurred by overlapping physiognomical

characteristics. Skin colour is not a separator of ethnicities where intermarriage has occurred over the centuries. The nature and extent of acculturation is also a drawback in identifying Afro-Asians. Identification is problematic in certain Afro-Asian spaces, particularly where numbers are small and the wider politics favour other identities. Recognition is a prerequisite for securing justice for a victim diaspora that emanated largely from the slave trade.

Sidis

The scholarship on Sidis (Afro-Indians) has expanded since the turn of the century (de Silva Jayasuriya and Pankhurst, 2003). In the western Indian state of Gujarat, the search for lions in the Gir Forest also revealed the presence of Sidis. In India alone there are an estimated 75,000 Sidis with the majority in the states of Gujarat, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and a smaller number in Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh, Goa, Kerala and Tamil Nadu. Sidis consider themselves an endogamous group, similar to what Hindus call *jati* and Muslims call *jamat*. The Portuguese called this grouping a *casta* and 'caste', borrowed by the English, is well known. In the South Indian state of Karnataka, Sidis are either Muslim, Christian or Hindu and this variation reflects their different histories. Not surprisingly, cross-religious marriages occur among the Sidis, indicating the importance of group identity primarily expressed through caste. But caste has also preserved the 'otherness' of Afro-Indians who would otherwise have assimilated and lost their African identity. In other states, religious identity overrides ethnic identity, resulting in inter-ethnic marriages which maintain religious homogeneity.

Self-identification is a key force and a growing factor as the diaspora begins to learn of its shared histories. The homeland is no longer merely imagined, and a few have visited Africa to perform *goma,* their traditional music, at music festivals. Increased interaction between Afro-Asians and Africans has heightened awareness of their ancestral land. Affinities in physiognomical features still rekindle emotional ties with Africans.

The scarcity of Afro-Asian voices and their disenfranchised status had led to the assumption that diasporic consciousness was lacking. But field research is breaking down this assumption. A desire to connect with kith and kin, whose exact whereabouts are not known, is prevalent. For example, the Sidis in the southern Indian state of Karnataka, who learned of Nelson Mandela's visit to India from television, were too late to meet him in person but they wrote to the

President. They received an acknowledgement from Mandela's office. The Sidi leader of the Sidi Development Project (SDP) rejoiced:

> Look this was the first time we Siddis contacted another African in Africa and the President came to know about our existence. By now he has forgotten about us but at least it is registered in his office that we Siddis in India exist and that we contacted him […] (Camara, 2004, p. 110).

Sidis in North Karnataka and Saurashtra (Gujarat) have been recognized as socially and economically disadvantaged and have been endowed with Scheduled Tribe status. This is only the start of a process of achieving human rights. Scheduled Tribe status entitles the Sidi community to the benefit of assistance programmes that include reservation of places in educational institutions, jobs in government-run services (such as railways, post offices and police forces), subsidies for housing and other forms of minor financial assistance. But there is a time lag before these Sidis, thus empowered, can realise their entitlements. They have found negotiating their way through powerful bureaucracies to be a slow process. Scheduled Tribe status is akin to positive discrimination in the United States of America, which was offered to African Americans as a pump-priming measure to break out of a vicious cycle. Many Sidis fall below the radar, and attempts to redress past atrocities and injustices create new inequalities. Some Sidi entrepreneurs and graduates have developed a sense of social responsibility and are searching for ways to give back to their community. As lawyers, sociologists, entrepreneurs and non-governmental organizations emerge from the empowered Sidi communities, there is a trickle-down effect towards those at the lower end of the social spectrum.

Gaining visibility

Strong cultural memories are also enabling Afro-Asians to emerge from the periphery. A few years ago, a twelve-member group of Afro-Sri Lankans performed their traditional music – *manhas* – in Johannesburg. They were the only musicians representing Sri Lanka on her independence day celebrations in South Africa. Several generations of Afro-Sri Lankans were born on the island; they are nationals of Sri Lanka and are entitled to all its benefits, such as free education and free health care. Yet a latent consciousness of another belonging emerges when they meet Africans. However, this is not to be confused with a desire to return to Africa.

Within colonial records, captives are seen as militia and treated anonymously. While enslavement was not exclusive to Africans, the incompleteness of historical records and the perception of colonial administrators weigh down studies of the African diaspora. Captives are categorized together with servants. But ethnic origins are blurred and cultural traits are omitted from the historical record. Occasionally captives are personalized, but their identity is often erased. Few African names are retained. A lack of ethnolinguistic detail makes it difficult to identify ultimate African origins, a problem exacerbated by changes to the boundaries of African territories over the centuries. Financial drivers behind trade and colonization dictated that captives be documented when there was a cost implication, as with the pension payments to emancipated captives by the East India Company Sumatra factory (de Silva Jayasuriya, 2010).

Ancient trade networks and the diversity of Asia have been catalysts for the assimilation of diasporic cultures. Mingling of peoples has led to a cultural mosaic in the region. Trade routes that are older than colonization reveal the routes taken by the captives. But the borderline between descendants of captives and free migrants is not always easy to establish. The intersection of free and forced movement of Africans is memorialized in Janjira, an island base for African traders since the thirteenth century. From the sixteenth century onwards, Janjira became the power base for African rule of two Indian states until independence, when the princely states were merged. The first state was centred on Janjira and extended to the west coast of India (into today's Maharashtra). The second state consisted of scattered villages (in today's Gujarat) and was called Sachin.

Social mobility followed conversion. Assimilation took place within the Islamic world, though the pattern of social mobility following conversion was also true of the Portuguese. Speaking Portuguese and conversion to Roman Catholicism were prerequisites for assuming a Portuguese identity. Conversion to Islam, learning Arabic and Arab lore, was a *sine qua non* for elite military slavery, which enabled Africans to make the transition from enslavement to positions of power and authority within a single generation. A few hundred Sidi elite remain to remind us of their past prominent political role, while the majority of Sidis were marginalized because of lack of patronage following political changes at independence.

Diversity and acculturation have blurred demarcations between indigenous peoples and migrant Africans, and assimilation has further diluted ethnic and physiognomic differences. Asia is heterogeneous and complicated by the layered histories and intermingling of peoples and cultures. Dispersal of Africans to Asian lands is hidden by marginalization.

Concepts must be revised to reflect the changes in epistemologies. Asia covers a vast geographical area, and a single model may not be adequate to explain all scenarios. I propose a model, below, to give visibility to the Afro-Asian diaspora in South Asia which would otherwise go unnoticed amid the diversity of the area. Clearly, elite military slavery enabled African migrants to gain visibility in the sociopolitical sphere. The inscription of Janjira Island on the UNESCO World Heritage List would further underscore the importance of the eponymous state as a memorial to African political authority in India. Scheduled Tribe status has also given some victims the platform to elevate themselves socially and economically, with activists focusing attention on their communities. African Sufi saints, venerated by Muslims, Hindus, Christians and Zoroastrians in India, have also empowered the community. Their cultural memories are intertwined with religious practices, and *goma* is performed in *dargahs* (shrines). *Goma* is also performed in a secular context and reinforces group identity. Through their strong cultural memories, Afro-Asians are gaining visibility, and are carving out a niche for themselves in Asia's diverse cultural landscape (de Silva Jayasuriya, 2015). They highlight the influence African diasporists have had on Asia's arts scene, in musical genres such as Sri Lankan *baila* and *kaffrinha*, and Maldivian *Bodu Beru*.

Epistemological lessons

Epistemology concerns the creation and dissemination of knowledge in particular areas of inquiry (*Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy,* 2005).

Although trade and slavery played a key role in the mass migration of Africans in both westerly and easterly directions, the pushes and pulls, the hostland experiences and the rapidity of social mobility and acculturation in Asia differ from those of the Atlantic. The Afro-Asian diaspora cannot be viewed through the transatlantic lens. The conceptual framework for Afro-Asians should take into account the nature of the demand for forced migrants, the activities migrants performed in the hostlands, the rate and extent of migrants' social mobility, their achievements, the extent of their acculturation or integration, their marginalization and the role of their intangible heritage.

Afrodescendants are claiming their heritage and negotiating a new identity as they emerge from the peripheries. Journalists, photographers, filmmakers and academics have been active agents in bringing their presence to the fore. The key to unlocking demands for recognition is historical knowledge of past events,

crimes and atrocities. This is bound up with human rights agendas. Recognition is a necessary, but not sufficient, condition for the development of marginalized Afro-Asian communities.

Empowered Afro-Asians are important drivers in the process of rectifying past injustices. Diasporists' narratives of their silenced histories play a crucial role in building a picture of what happened on the other side of Africa.

The crucial message is that the well-known pitiful story of the Atlantic African diaspora should not be imposed on the African diaspora in Asia. Most importantly, the agency of diasporists and the rapidity of social mobility for some Africans in Asia sets the eastward diaspora apart, particularly in the subcontinent.

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CHAPTER 8

BLACKS/AFRICANS IN CHINA

Historical Process and Diasporic Experience

Li Anshan

Introduction

The study of the African diaspora has focused on the patterns of dispersal of Africans in the world and the linkages maintained by overseas Africans with Africa (Zeleza, 2005, pp. 35-68). There are studies on history, patterns or linkage of Africans in Asia (Rashidi and Van Sertima, 1995; Jayasuriya and Pankhurst, 2001). A Chinese historian raised a question in Ghana in 1972, 'African influence has been found to be important in some musical traditions of Southeast Asia, why not further north?' (Chou Yi, 1972, p. 3). This chapter attempts to study the black/African presence in China from the Han Dynasty (206 BCE – 220 CE) to the present, mainly based on literature in Chinese. "Blacks" here refers to various black peoples, including Negroid, Oceanic Negroid and Negrito.

The myth of Africans in China in early times

A long history of Africa-China contacts is recorded in Chinese dynastic histories[1] and various literatures, as indicated in Book I. Scholars have studied blacks in China

1 In ancient China, the government had specific officials in charge of writing authentic dynastic history. There are 24 *Histories* which cover Chinese history from the time before the Han Dynasty to the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644).

since the nineteenth century (Lacouperie, 1887; Weidenreich, 1939, pp. 161-174; Li Chi, 1928; Ling Shun-sheng, 1956, pp. 251-267), yet the blacks in their works are Negrito, or Oceanic Negroids of Melanesian type, or related to the Rouzhi (Chen Jianwen, 1993, pp. 111-143). Archaeological evidence suggests the possibility of contact between Africa and China even before the Han Dynasty (Brunson, 1985, pp. 121-137; Li Anshan, 2015b, pp. 34-59). Three views were offered for the origins of the early blacks, namely the islands near Indochina (Han Zhenghua, 1957, p. 200), the Indigenous people of Indonesia (Hu Zhaochun and Zhang Weichi, 1961, p. 86), and West Asia or East Africa (Institute of Archaeology of CASS et al., 1981, p. 478).

The local archive discovered in Juyan, the *Juyan Han Jian,* seems to be the earliest written indication of the presence of blacks in China. It contains about 10,000 pieces ranging from 102 BCE to 30 CE, covering collective and individual subjects, such as political systems, economic activities, the military and culture. Among the 60 individuals recorded in items giving their identity, including height and colour, 53 are recorded as black. The blacks were possibly of foreign origin from the west, including Africa (Yang Ximei, 1995, pp. 969-987).

During the Tang Dynasty (618-907 CE), foreigners came to China as diplomats, traders and workers, and some settled there. The words *Sengzhi* (僧祇) and *Kunlun* (昆仑) were used to refer to the blacks. Dynastic histories show that before the ninth century more than ten *Sengzhi* girls and boys from islands in present-day Indonesia were offered to Chinese Emperors as tributes. *Sengzhi* seems to be identical to *Zanj* (Zandj), meaning related to Zanzibar.[2]

Kunlun or Black people: different views and ethnocentrism

Kunlun or *Kunlun nu* were words popular in literature in the tenth century and after, indicating an increasing presence of blacks in China. There is a variety of evidence of blacks in the period, in paintings, pottery figures and literature. Among Buddhist wall-paintings in Dunhuang in Northwest China, many have black figures (Yan Wenru and Chen Yulon, 1986, p. 92). Famous paintings also contain black figures. One painting, *Yuan Shizu Hunting* (1280 CE) portrayed Emperor Kublai Khan with a black officer on horse beside him (Figure 1). The

2 "It still survives in the name, Zanzibar. The Arabs called the Africans who came from the East African coast, the Zanji." Graham W. Irwin, "African bondage in Asian lands", in R. Rashidi and Ivan Van Sertima, (eds.), *African Presence in Early Asia*, p. 143.

Asian Art Museum of San Francisco possesses a fourteenth-century Chinese painting of a black official, obviously of a high rank judging by his costume and bearing (Irwin, op. cit., p. 141; Chen Xinxiong, 1991, p. 149).

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FIGURE 1. *Liu Guangdao's painting* Yuan Shizu Hunting *(1280 CE)*

As the capital of ancient China from 1111 BCE, Chang'an was an international metropolis. Many black pottery figures were found in the area from the 1940s to the 1990s. A pottery figure in Madam Pei's tomb from the Tang Dynasty is obviously a Negroid, 15 cm tall, with impressive muscles and a short body. He has curly hair, red lips and white eyes, and his nose is not high but wide (Figure 2) (Du Baoren, 1979, pp. 88-90).

Kunlun or blacks appeared in the writings of the Tang Dynasty and after, both fiction and non-fiction, including dynastical histories (Xu Yongzhang, 1983, pp. 96-98; Ai Zhouchang 1987, pp. 49-55, 82). Writings of officials of the time are also important sources of information on African places, food and customs, including the Song Dynasty official Zhao Rukuo, or Fei Xin and Ma Huan who both worked in Zheng He's Ming Dynasty fleet as a naval officer and interpreter respectively (Xu Yongzhang, 1980 pp. 52-61; Wilensky, 2002, pp. 4-20).

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FIGURE 2. *Black Pottery figure in Mme Pei's tomb (850 A.D) found in 1954 in Xi-an*

Opinions differ about the origin of the term *Kunlun*. Zhang Xinglang (Chang Hsing-lang) made a contribution to the study of China's foreign relations with his English publication on the importation of blacks in the Tang Dynasty, an academic source at home and abroad. Although *Kunlun Ren* (black people), not *Kunlun nu* (black slave), appeared in 636 CE, Zhang used the subheadings "verification of *Kunlun nu*", "origin of *Kunlun nu*" or "trade of *Kunlun nu* to China" in his work, suggesting all *Kunluns* at the time were slaves, a statement that would influence future studies. He regarded *Kunlun* as African (Zhang Xinglang, 1928, pp. 101-119; Zhang Xinglang, 1977 [1930]). If they were African, how did they come to China? Since a sea route from East Africa to China was recorded in *Xin Tangshu* (新唐书, 1060 CE), or *History of the New Tang Dynasty*, they probably came by sea (Cen Zhongmian, 1945; Jing Zhaoxi, 1998, pp. 51-54). *Kunluns* were either tributes to Chinese authorities, or left in China by foreign envoys, or slaves sold in the coastal regions (Cheng Guofu, 2002, pp. 79-84). Ge Chengyong's article in 2010 probed the origin of the blacks of the Tang Dynasty, arguing that the theory of their "African origin" was not convincing, and they were not Negroid from Africa but Negrito from Southeast Asia (Ge Chengyong, 2001, pp. 1-27).

There are descriptions of the life of blacks at the time. *Taiping Guangji* (太平广记, 978 CE), or *Comprehensive Collections of the Taiping Era*, contains tales of *Kunlun* as positive figures. Black Mo Kunlun was born in an unusual way after his mother's dream of an alien monk yet grew up as a brave guard and lived a happy life rewarded by the Emperor. Domestic servant Mole was strong, smart and brave. After his master told him his most important secret (his love for a singing girl), Mole helped him to overcome various difficulties in order to fulfil his wish. Mole became a popular figure afterwards. Zhu Yu's *Pingzhou Ketan* (萍洲可谈, 1119 CE), or *Tales of Pingzhou*, recorded several references to *Kunlun* as domestic servants and labourers who worked on board ships to caulk leaky seams below the water from outside, as they were expert swimmers. The blacks in the literature were usually described as honest, brave, strong, willing to help others, or with some special skills, reflecting the reality at the time.

Since *Kunlun* has the connotation of 'race' and colour, it is necessary to make two points here. Ethnocentrism is a universal phenomenon, an attitude or action of a people who regard themselves as normal, beautiful and clever while looking down upon others without communication, especially in Antiquity. The Romans took others as barbarians and the Greeks regarded themselves as the most civilized. Indians thought they were living at the centre of the world. Africans had prejudices against whites. Ibn Battuta told us the Malian cannibals did not eat whites because the whites were considered not ripe. Winnie Mandela described her grandmother as the first racist in her life, who told her that the whites must be sick with their blue eyes and pale skin.

Second, the Chinese prejudice was against all foreigners, not just Africans. Being self-centred and conceited, they looked down upon others, describing their neighbours as barbarians, and called foreigners *gui* (devil), termed the blacks *hei gui* (black devils) or *Kunlun nu* (black slaves), and named whites *yang guizi* (foreign devils), *hongmao gui* (red-haired devil), *fangou* (barbarian dog) or *gui lao* (devil male) and *gui po* (devil female). *Xiyang ren* (Europeans) could only be called *qin* (bird/beast) not *yi* (barbarians), since barbarians were still human, and Europeans were not human (Zhu Chun-ting, 2004, pp. 98-103).

Blacks/Africans' jobs in ancient China

Were the blacks all slaves in ancient China? This is a sensitive question. It is raised here for three reasons. An impression prevalent among the Chinese is that the blacks were mainly slaves, especially during the Tang period. Several newly-published works in English offer the same view (Wilensky, 2002, pp. 4-20; Jayasuriya and Pierre-Angenot, 2006; Wyatt, 2010).[3] Moreover, as Rashidi correctly points out, the story of the African presence in early Asia would be incomplete without the exposé of the black role as servant or slave (Rashidi, 1985, p. 144). An objective answer is needed to provide a true picture of their life at the time. Blacks in China were engaged in various types of work. According to *Juyan Han Jian*, some became military officials, nobles or border officers (Zhang Chunshu, 1977, pp. 197-198). Emperor Xiaowu (454-465 CE) trusted a *Kunlun* named Baizhu who was often ordered to cane the officials. Since the literature shows that some blacks were *nubi* (slave-servants), there is no doubt that domestic service was one of their major

3 For a critique of "master-slave relations", see Bodomo, 2013, pp. 244-246.

occupations. A comparison is made of *Kunlun* to 'imperialist actions whereby Victorian Britons subjugated millions of people of color around the globe in the nineteenth century' (Wyatt, 2010, p. 41). The comparison seems not to be appropriate. Needham stated the difference:

> The Chinese and other Asian nations had been using negro slaves for many centuries, but the fact that their slavery was basically domestic kept the practice within bounds short of the massive imports for plantation labor that dominated the Atlantic Trade (Needham, 1971, p. 517).

In the Tang Dynasty, orders were issued to prohibit the trade in slaves (Schafer, 1963, p. 45). With the transatlantic slave trade, Europeans brought blacks to China. The Dutch had enslaved Africans in Taiwan, the Portuguese took them to Macao, and the British and French used them as servants in coastal China. In the Ming and Qing dynasties (1368-1912), China prohibited the entry of enslaved Africans and the capture or use of Chinese as slaves by colonialists (Ai Zhouchang, op. cit., pp. 49-55, 82). Ghanaian scholar Adams Bodomo has noted that although Africans and Chinese had met a long time before, yet they were 'on equal footing for the most part, and Africans and Chinese never owned each other on any large scale or in any systematic manner' (Bodomo, 2013, pp. 244-246).

Blacks were merchants in China. Ibn Battuta met Moroccans doing business in China during his visit there in the fourteenth century (Ibn Battuta, 1999 [1929]). Sudanese businessmen also worked in China (Ahmed, 1999b, pp. 197-206; 1999a, pp. 323-366; 2014). Blacks were actors, musicians, acrobats, wild animal trainers, porters and peasants at the time. European encounters with China brought enslaved Africans to the coast, and more Africans served as porters, guards, soldiers and domestic attendants in foreigners' residences on the coast in China. In the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644), the Chinese army captured African soldiers in the battle against Portuguese occupation of Macao. In the fight against the Dutch army invading Taiwan, African soldiers were among the Chinese army led by its commander Zheng Chenggong.[4]

4 "Zheng Chengong's Black Army", *Military History*, 4, 1987.

The African diaspora in contemporary China

In modern times, various groups of Africans have been resident in China: artists, traders, students, diplomats, professionals and so on. Several African singers are now among the hottest pop stars in China, frequently performing on television shows. The most famous are two Nigerian brothers: Emmanuel Uwechue, the older one who has the Chinese name 'Hao Ge', and Steven the younger, named 'Hao Di'. They sing Chinese songs and their pronunciation is idiomatic.[5] A charity sale for Ebola prevention in Africa was organized by Ada Yang, an artist in Chinese calligraphy from Sierra Leone. As chair of a foundation, she and her Chinese husband initiated the donation with the help of friends. More than ten calligraphers and painters joined them in the hall of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries.[6] African reporters work for CCTV and there is an African dance group, drum club and arts club in China (Bodomo, 2014, pp. 109-121; Li Anshan, 2015a, p. 22-26).

African traders are by far the largest group, especially in the port cities of Guangzhou and Yiwu. Guangzhou, formerly Canton, has been an international port since ancient times. With the opening up of China, its role in foreign trade has become very important. According to *China Customs Report*, foreign trade in Guangzhou city totalled 759.77 billion yuan RMB during the period January-November 2015.[7] There is no accurate figure for Africans in Guangzhou, but the number is estimated at about 150,000-200,000. African communities in Guangzhou are mainly country-based and a community leader is selected.

> *The leader is selected by the community. He is kind to all people. My community is kind of special. A lot of people did not go to school, so that 60 per cent of the people travelling abroad are illiterate. It is a handicap. When I came in 2003, I found a lot of people had no guidance from anyone. I decided to get them together to resolve their problems, and it succeeded. There were about one hundred people here unknown to the embassy, and I took them to register at the embassy [...] I think they needed help. Sometimes they would wait for me at two or three o'clock in the morning, and I helped them* (Interview with a Nigerian leader).

5 "Hao Ge & Hao Di: popular African brothers in China", http://www.shidaiyoukan.com/shehui/rjzq/3956.html (Accessed on 10 March 2015).

6 Chen Yingqun, "Chinese, African artists donate to defeat Ebola", http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/china/2014-08/25/content_18483941.htm. (Accessed 12 August 2022.)

7 Customs Statistics, "Main foreign trade statistics in Guangzhou, Jan-Nov. 2015", http://www.sinotf.com/GB/Tradedata/1141/2015-12-23/wNMDAwMDE5NjQwNw.html. (Accessed 12 August 2022.)

Why do they choose Guangzhou as their first destination in China? One African explained, 'I like Guangzhou. It is very free here. In Europe, people always consider Africans to be poor and always asking for help, while people here do not. We get respect here and people treat us just as businessmen, without prejudice' (Interviewee No. 27) (Li Zhigang et al., 2009, p. 711). Africans are also doing business in Yiwu, the biggest commodities centre in China, Hong Kong, Macau and other Chinese cities.

Push/pull theory has been well accepted since 1959, yet as a double-edged approach it neglects the process and the role of the immigrants. Using a three-dimensional approach, in other words one that includes the target community, its source community and host community, Bodomo suggests that the African community can serve as a bridge, connecting its place of origin with its new place of domicile (Bodomo, 2010, pp. 693–707; 2012). The African diaspora should be put in the context of economic globalization and transnational migration. The diasporic economy has a dual character, high mobility and diversity and a high possibility of residential segregation. As an enclave, it includes three circles of social ties: African traders, their communities, and the China-Africa circle, which form a part of globalization. The 'ethnic economic enclave' should be taken as a historical process, forming and transforming constantly (Li Zhigang et al., 2012, pp. 51-72). The African diaspora is engaged in the economy but does poorly in social integration because of lack of communication and misunderstanding. Yet various social relations do exist among Africans, facial and circles, penetrable and convertible, concentrated or spread, and forms of individual socialization and networks exist with supportive measures. The African diaspora exists with all its heterogeneity, and an international community is emerging (Xu Tao, 2013). More contact with local media would definitely improve the positive image of the African diaspora (Dang Fangli, 2013, pp. 82-86).

African businessmen/women are also engaged in bilateral cultural contacts. Besides promoting business, they also contribute their knowledge, language skills and values to China. Gizelle, a Cameroonian merchant, has her shop in Yiwu selling hand-made African decor and furniture to Chinese customers, and is happy with her business expansion.[8] There are many African merchants like Gizelle in China. The market authorities in Yiwu have set up an international commercial dispute resolution platform in order to resolve business disagreements. The office comprises volunteer mediators from twelve different nations. Tirera

8 "African merchants thrive in China", http://english.cntv.cn/program/newshour/20120720/110441.shtml. (Accessed 11 February 2015.)

Sourakhata, a successful Senegalese businessman, and his Guinean partner, acted as volunteer mediator offering help with his language skills in French, English, Arabic and Chinese.[9] When an observer website reported his story, it attracted 135 responses, 127 reporting 'being joyful', five 'feeling novel', three 'being moved' and almost all of the comments were positive.[10] The African diaspora in China also has problems with language and communication, pressure from the strict Chinese immigration policy, the dilemma of cultural adjustment, ignorance and misunderstanding of the Chinese around them, and so on.[11]

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FIGURE 3. *Young African students in China photographed with the author (Dr Imen Belhadj from Tunisia and Dr Antoine Lokongo from the Democratic Republic of the Congo)*

9 Chen Lan, 'Foreigners help foreigners like non-foreigners', *Zhejiang Legal News*, 24 June, 2014. http://zjfzb.zjol.com.cn/html/ 2014-06/20/content_76949.htm?from=timeline&isappinstalled=0. For English report, see http://szb.ywnews.cn/html/2015-02/11/ content_6_6.htm; http://newscontent.cctv.com/NewJsp/news.jsp?fileId= 280958. (Accessed 24 February 2015.)

10 'Senegalese merchant turned out to be a foreign mediator for the dispute mediation commission in Yiwu', http://www.guancha.cn/video/2015_02_04_308534.shtml. (Accessed 24 February 2015.)

11 See a special issue entitled 'Foreign Lives in a Globalising City: Africans in Guangzhou' edited by Gordon Mathews, *Journal of Current Chinese Affairs*, Issue 44, p. 4, 2015.

Africans have played a dynamic role in bringing their cultures to China, which has contributed to various people-to-people contacts. As a Ghanaian government official and later a student in China for five years, Lloyd Adu Amoah used his own experience to demonstrate how 'Africa remakes China'. He states that the African diaspora can act with agency in Africa-China relations through behaviour, appearance, marriage and so on, and that the response from the Chinese is positive, thus challenging the conventional view that Africans act passively in China-Africa relations (Amoah, 2012, pp. 110-121). Their cultural offering enriches multiculturalism in China. African painting, sculpture, dance and musical instruments enjoy popularity among ordinary Chinese people (Hai Jun, 2001, pp. 61-63; Wang Hanjie, 2013). Similarities exist between the two cultures and mutual understanding is always beneficial to both (Li Anshan, 2012, pp. 93-97).

In recent years, there has been a rise in Afro-Chinese marriages in China, especially in Guangzhou.[12] This phenomenon has caught the attention of the media, both in China and internationally.[13] Intermarriage has promoted cultural exchange, but lack of mutual understanding has also caused some problems. A Shanghai grandmother picked up an abandoned black baby 15 years ago and gave him a Chinese name 'Zhu Junlong'. She brought him up through kindergarten, primary school and middle school despite various difficulties. Zhu Junlong received a Shanghai registration identity in 2014 and Madam Zhu went through the procedure of adoption.[14]

12 Jenni Marsh, "Afro-Chinese marriages boom in Guangzhou: but will it be 'til death do us part? " June 1, 2014. http://www.scmp.com/magazines/post-magazine/article/1521076/ afrochinese- marriages-boom-guangzhou-will-it-be-til-death.

13 Yepoka Yeebo, "In China, mixed marriages can be a labor of love", *The Christian Science Monitor*, 21 September 2013. http://www.csmonitor.com/World/2013/0921/In-China-mixed-marriages-can-be-a-labor-of-love (Accessed 12 August 2022); "African-Chinese couples on the rise in Guangzhou, China", http://www.cctv-america.com/2015/03/01/african-chinese-couples-on-the-rise-in-guangzhou-china (Accessed 12 August 2022.)

14 "Shanghai old woman raised an abandoned black boy for 15 years with love beyond family bond", http://world.huanqiu.com/photo/2014-06/2736818.html. (Accessed 12 March 2015.)

African students in China

International students are usually not classified as immigrants, yet their link with the diaspora is obvious. Africa-China business began with African students who remained in China. African students came to China in the 1960s and stayed until 1966, when the universities closed during the Cultural Revolution. China resumed cooperation with Africa in 1972. Trainees in railway technology for the Tanzania-Zambia railway project TAZARA came first, followed by formal students from Africa in 1973. With more Africans present, racial tension broke out in the late 1980s between African and Chinese students (Sautman, 1994, pp. 413-437). Cultural difference seems to have been a major cause, since the trigger was usually close contact between male Africans and young Chinese women.

With the creation of the Forum on China-Africa Cooperation (FOCAC), more African students enjoyed scholarships. Self-funded Africans overtook the Chinese scholarship students for the first time in 2005. In such a new situation, young Africans face challenges and have experienced culture shock, more serious for undergraduates than graduates, and for females than males (Disima, 2004). Cultural adaptation thus becomes important, since it can occur in daily life, in the learning process and through social contact, and brings better relations with the host community (Hashim et al., 2003, pp. 795-799). Cultural adaptation is an active response to new conditions, a process of mutual learning.

Why do more Africans come to China for further study? Young Africans want to see the real China after the Olympic Games held there. They want to know more about China's rapid growth, its experience of development with modern technologies and why China can be Africa's largest trading partner. African governments also offer more scholarships for students to study in China. China's readiness for educational cooperation has also promoted the trend. The friendship of Chinese people certainly encourages young Africans. Asked if she found the Chinese to be racist, a Ghanaian girl replied,

> Despite always being identified as "black" and "African", I never felt discriminated against or antagonized, but rather treated with warmth and friendliness. Because I spoke Mandarin, I could often understand what people said about me, and they were rarely disparaging or maligning (Baitie, 2013).

Other practical reasons are lower tuition fees, ease of obtaining visas compared to the West, and the convenience of finding good jobs in companies like Huawei and ZTE in Africa if they have some knowledge of China.

Conclusion

The history of human beings is a history of (im)migration. From the earliest times, people have moved around for various reasons. Blacks/Africans lived in China a long time ago. They came to China in different ways, and worked as traders, labourers, animal trainers, slaves/servants, door-keepers, musicians/acrobats, soldiers/military leaders, seamen, guards and so on. Some became nobles or high-ranking officials.

Currently, the African diaspora includes traders, students and professionals/artists. They have not only immensely improved business between Africa and China, but also contributed a great deal to the promotion of cultural exchange. However, while some have merged into Chinese society, a gap still exists between African enclaves and local communities. How the gap can be narrowed through mutual learning remains an important issue. The African diaspora is the carrier of African culture, social organization and way of life, and can play the role of a bridge between the two cultures. Integrating into a host society does not mean giving up one's own culture. Building the link between the two cultures, facilitating the process of transformation from 'enclave' to 'bridge' remains a difficult task. It is one worth attempting, and it is workable.

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CHAPTER 9

BEING BLACK IN AUSTRALIA

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Introduction

In this chapter, we discuss the meanings of blackness through the writing of Aboriginal scholars and those from Global Africa who live in Australia. In our survey of the writing, there are various usages of the term "black": social, political, cultural, strategic and existential/phenomenological, and these usages vary over time and place. Although not writing specifically about the Australian context, Michelle Wright's work has been useful for thinking about blackness as socially constructed and phenomenological. As Wright observes in her book *Physics of Blackness* (2015, p. 3), 'Blackness […] is largely a matter of perception or […] made up of moments of performance in which performers understand their bodies as black'. Given this understanding, it is important for us to engage with the contested and changing meanings of blackness through the history, politics and social formation of the Australian context in which the term 'black' has been used as an instrument of coloniality and, at the same time, as a way of resisting and challenging the hegemony of whiteness.

We argue that 'race' has been central to Australia's formation, from the fiction of *terra nullius* to the construction of certain groups of migrants as perpetual foreigners to the ongoing emphasis on shutting out 'difference' through border protection policies. We will start by discussing blackness as a racialized identity

in Australia, then look at blackness as cultural and political in the context of decolonization, and, finally, explore the possibilities for solidarity around blackness. In this chapter, the southern state of Victoria will serve as a case study of the way in which blackness is defined in Australia. Although there is some scholarship from other parts of Australia (Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2008; Wynn, 2009; Foley, 2015a), most of the available research has been written by Victoria-based scholars, bloggers and activists.

The construction of the white nation: colonialism in Australia

Throughout Australia's post-invasion history, race has been the cornerstone of colonial and immigration policies, which have been implemented to shape the construction of the nation as, initially, a mirror image of Britain and, subsequently, as a 'multicultural' country controlled by a white dominant group. Aileen Moreton-Robinson, in her book *White Possessive* (2015, p. 7), states:

> Belonging to this new nation, therefore, was racialized and inextricably tied to the accumulation of capital and the social worth, authority, and ownership that this conferred. The Indigenous were excluded from this condition of belonging. […] The white body was the norm and measure for identifying who could belong.

Ghassan Hage (1998) argued that Australia holds onto a white nation fantasy, a set of assumptions about the nation and who belongs and who does not. Whiteness constructs Aboriginal people and certain migrant groups as non-Australians. Underpinning the formation of the Australian nation were the same theories of race and their concomitant ideologies that constructed European and American white men as subjects, their 'superiority' defined against the black Other (Wright, 2004). As Wright (ibid., p. 1) asserts, 'Blackness only became a racial category with the forced removal of West Africans to the Western Hemisphere'. Silvio Torres-Saillant (2009, p. 10), describing the reach of European colonialism, points out that the Christian West construed 'the peoples of Africa, Asia, America and Oceania as civilizational others with respect to the inhabitants of Europe'.

In Australia, Aboriginal people were constructed as 'Other' by the British colonizers and labelled 'black'. *Terra nullius*, a Latin term that literally translates as 'land belonging to no one', was first applied to Australia with the arrival of the British in 1788. The doctrine was used to displace the traditional owners of

Australia from their lands, giving Aboriginal people 'no more claim to ownership of the land than the native fauna' (Wolfe, 2001, p. 869). Through the fiction of *terra nullius*, the British colonizers sought to eradicate Indigenous people who, at the time of invasion, were represented by at least 500 nations, each with their own language and cultural traditions (Tindale, 1940). With *terra nullius*, many nations of Aboriginal people were denied their humanity, and were ostracized from white society, creating a foundation for racism in Australia. Regardless of the fact that *terra nullius* is clearly a fiction and should not have been applied in Australia under international law, it is the basis of the Australian legal system. This doctrine gave the British the power to set up their systems of government, making Aboriginal people invisible. Consequently, not only did they not exist as Aboriginal people but there was an attempt to sever their connection to country, spirituality, identity and culture, rendering them powerless. Therefore, the Aboriginal people of Australia had no legal identity, as they were defined as sub-human.

The construction of Australia as a white nation was exemplified in the ratification of the Immigration Restriction Act or White Australia policy (1901). The White Australia policy was the Australian nation's attempt to prove its whiteness by closing its borders to those people considered its binary opposite. The white authorities policed the entry of 'black' bodies into the nation state by determining their degree of blackness (de Boissière, 2010) and concurrently attempted to 'breed out' Indigenous people through, among other strategies, forced removal from their families (McGregor, 2002). Aboriginal people in Australia were categorized from 'black' to 'white' through the use of colonial racial categorizations similar to those employed in other colonies: 'full blood', 'half-caste' and 'quarter-caste' (Briscoe, 2010). Similar categorizations were used to determine who could migrate to Australia from overseas based on the notion of 'best fit'; in other words, the potential for full racial assimilation into the white nation.

In the Australian literary magazine *Overland* there was a discussion in 2015 about blackness in Australia, led by Natasha Guantai, an Australian-born woman of Kenyan descent. In the online discussion, Guantai begins by stating that there are 'two narratives of Blackness' which are in 'collision' in the Australian context: the narrative of Aboriginal Australians and the narrative of Australians of African descent. People from the Indian diaspora appear to be left out of this discussion, despite sometimes having the label 'black' applied to them and also using the term 'black' to describe themselves in white majority contexts. Guantai argues that she is a black Australian because she is racialized within Australia

by the use of the label 'black'. However, the term 'black', she argues, is used in Australia exclusively to refer to Aboriginal people, while people of African descent are labelled 'migrants'. Further, Guantai argues that her experience of blackness is different again from people who have been racialized in black majority countries (Guantai, 2015). Respondents to Guantai's article dispute her view that non-Indigenous 'black' people are invisible in Australia. Cianan, an Aboriginal person, writes: 'While it is true that Indigenous Australians are regarded as Black, there is nothing in that which precludes other forms of Blackness in the Australian context'. Others claim that Guantai's self-labelling as a black Australian implies that the process of colonization was the same for Indigenous and non-Indigenous 'black' people, which clearly it was not, and therefore undermines Aboriginal sovereignty (Lemoh, 2015; Clarke, 2015). This discussion highlights the complexity around discourses of blackness in Australia, which are bound up with the regimes of colonial power and control that have constructed the category of 'black' and regulate indigeneity, migration and national belonging.

Constructing Aboriginal identities in Australia

In 1903-1904, the 'protection' policies gave the State control over Aboriginal people's lives: the Government removed Aboriginal people from their traditional lands, placed them on missions and reserves for their own 'protection' from punitive expeditions and removed children from their Aboriginal parents through Acts of Parliament such as the so-called 'Half-Caste Acts'. The ideology underpinning those Acts was literally to 'breed out' blackness through assimilation of mixed-race children. To maintain some identity, Aboriginal people began using colloquial language to connect to, and create a strong sense of belonging to their community, and in political activity. For example, if you were from Melbourne you called yourself a Koori and if you were from Queensland you called yourself a Murri. This was a time when Aboriginal people were creating identity using their own terms in order to resist the homogenizing effects of being labelled 'Aborigines', 'Indigenous' or 'black'.

The racist policies of the Australian Government saw Aboriginal people making decisions about their identification as Aboriginal, as a matter of survival. This was a strange time for Aboriginal people's identity, because 'full-bloods' and 'half-castes' were treated differently in the legislation; people would identify or not identify as Aboriginal depending on what was best for them. For example,

if you were not a 'full-blood' Aboriginal child but had dark skin colour you would identify as being a 'full-blood' because the Half-Caste Act would not apply to you, and you would not be removed from your parents. However, on the other hand, if you were a fair-skinned Aboriginal person, you could possibly get away with not identifying your Aboriginal heritage, which would then afford you some of the privileges of white society, such as education and being allowed to earn money rather than being forced to exist on rations. Because of coloniality, the concept of blackness is particularly fluid as there are Aboriginal people who do not have 'black' skin, but are connected to Aboriginal land and identities culturally, socially, and through family and community awareness and acceptance of ancestry.

While it may not be possible to claim that Aboriginal people in Australia shared definitions of blackness with African, African American and/or Caribbean groups, there were transnational alliances based on the fight for civil rights and self-determination. In the early twentieth century, Aboriginal activists such as Fred Maynard (2005), inspired by the Black Consciousness movements in the United States of America and the Caribbean, particularly Garveyism, formed the Australian Aboriginal Progressive Association to fight racist policies. In Australia, Aboriginal people became citizens after the 1967 referendum, which gave rise to Black Power activism, particularly in Melbourne and Sydney, and the establishment of the Aboriginal Tent Embassy on the lawn of Australia's Parliament House in Canberra (Goodall, 1996). This protest was the most effective political action in the history of Aboriginal activism and brought Aboriginal people's struggle to the world's attention. According to Gary Foley (2015*b*), one of the Black Power activists, Black Power in the United States of America provided a strategy for how to organize and effect change. In 1971 the Australian branch of the Black Panthers was formed, influenced by the American Black Panther Party (BPP), which was teaching black people 'to stand up and assert their rights' (Lothian, 2007, p. 21). Like their predecessors in early Aboriginal activist circles, the Black Power activists were influenced by writers such as Frantz Fanon, Malcolm X, Stokely Carmichael and Angela Davis (ibid., p. 23). Later, the fight for Indigenous land rights in countries such as New Zealand and in North America was perhaps a more important transnational alliance for the Aboriginal people of Australia.

One example of the fight for self-determination is the use of the term 'blak', which has the same meaning as black but a deliberate difference in spelling. The term was used by the artist Destiny Deacon in 1991 in an exhibition called 'Blak lik mi' (www.blackhistorymonth.com). The word black, when referring

to Australian Aboriginal people, was always a derogatory term, used by the colonizers. Using language to label people in this way is to express dominance. A crucial stage towards self-determination is taking ownership of language. The term 'Blak' is an example of taking back power and control from the colonizer by reclaiming the meanings of words. Another example is the use of the term 'blackfella', which is used by Aboriginal people across Australia as an inclusive word to describe one's identity or to acknowledge another Aboriginal person's identity. Aboriginal people now have a national voice in parliament and a stronger sense of identity. Aboriginal people are starting to identify as their traditional language groups, and are now no longer using terms from the colonizers' framework to identify themselves.

The Caribbean community in Australia – unity and diversity

The Caribbean community in Australia is diverse, comprising people from different territories in the region and of different classes, races and ethnicities, and many Caribbean people are a mixture of different racial backgrounds. While they come together as a community in Australia, there is not always a unified sense of solidarity around blackness. Michelle Wright suggests that the definition of blackness for African American and Caribbean people is tied to the experience of the Middle Passage , but that history unites some people racially and culturally while at the same time others identify with whiteness because of the shame attached to transatlantic slavery. At the same time, however, the Middle Passage experience differentiates the Caribbean community in Australia from other African diasporic communities. The different understandings within the community can be connected to coloniality in the region, manifested in slavery and its aftermath, which has led to the stratification of Caribbean societies along colour/class lines, with definitions of whiteness and blackness related to a different set of signifiers from those that exist in Australia. Although writing specifically about Jamaica, Kim Robinson-Walcott (2009, p.109) explains that definitions of whiteness and blackness in Jamaica are complicated and are not based solely on phenotype: 'In Jamaica […] the label of colour can refer not only to blood, and not only to phenotype, but also to behaviour and, most critically, to social class and economic power'. While each Caribbean territory is distinctive, similar definitions of whiteness and blackness to those outlined above exist throughout the region (Reddock, 2014). However, in the Australian

context, the nuances of Caribbean colour/class hierarchies are elided in broader society, as the colour of the epidermis, interpellated through the white gaze, takes precedence and has homogenizing effects. Nevertheless, the Caribbean colour/class hierarchies continue to be played out within the community itself.

Historically, African Caribbean people have been migrating to Australia since the nineteenth century and have been racialized in accordance with the social and political situation surrounding their migration. Yet, the migration story of African Caribbean people to Australia is still virtually unknown among Australian scholars, who claim that the discourse around non-Indigenous blackness began in the early 2000s with the 'humanitarian entrants from African countries'. The discussion prior to the 2000s focused on 'Indigenous and non-Indigenous' (read: Indigenous and white), presumably because African Caribbean people have been and are an extremely small group in Australia (Fozdar and Perkins, 2014, p. 123). This ties in with what Guantai suggests is the 'invisibility' of non-Indigenous black people in Australia whose ancestors, in some cases, were among the first groups of so-called 'migrants' in the nineteenth century. In the work of scholars who have written about Caribbean migration history (Higman, 1976; Pybus, 2006; Smith, 2014), there was a marked contrast between the treatment of African Caribbeans who came to Australia in the nineteenth century by Anglo-Saxon and Celtic Australians and the treatment of Aboriginal people by the same groups. Barry Higman (1976, p. 43) writes:

> while the Aborigines were subjected to genocide and anti-Chinese feelings ran high on the goldfields, the black West Indians and Americans could be viewed by the whites as exotics who did not pose any immediate threat to the emerging white colonial society.

The exoticization of African-Caribbean people points to the different faces of racism in Australian society, which 'has objectified black people rendering them invisible and exoticized or demonized' (Henry-Waring, 2008).

In the early twentieth century, racial difference became a point of allegiance for Indigenous and non-Indigenous black people residing in and/or visiting Australia. In Sydney, there was a branch of Marcus Garvey's Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA), which connected Indigenous people with those of African descent through Garvey's call for Black Consciousness. The connection between these groups was also made clear through the formation of the Coloured Progressive Association, which included Caribbean, African American and Aboriginal men who were united in the face of the White Australia policy and colonial policies of paternalism and assimilation aimed at Aboriginal communities. Aboriginal activist Fred Maynard, mentioned earlier,

attended the CPA dinner, as did African American boxer Jack Johnson and St. Croix boxer, Peter Felix (Maynard, 2005). While not explicitly tied to blackness, the alliance between these groups was built on the counter-discourses to white supremacy coming out of the Black Consciousness movement in the United States of America and the Caribbean and represented by intellectuals such as W. E. B. Du Bois and Marcus Garvey (Maynard 2005; Foley 2015*a*). Further, these intellectual connections inspired the emergence of the Australian Aboriginal Progressive Association.

The White Australia policy and its shaping of the Assisted Passage Scheme did not make Australia a place that non-white people could enter and settle; nor did it make Australia the desired place for emigration once the White Australia policy had been dismantled. Between the 1930s and the 1960s, few 'black' people came to Australia and those that did describe either being exoticized or alienated, or both. In the book *Adding Pimento: Caribbean Migration to Victoria, Australia* (Smith, 2014, p. 34), Jamaican Rupert 'Monty' Montague, who arrived in Melbourne in 1963, was seen as 'a rare bird and, as a result, got the glamour treatment'. Jigzie Campbell (ibid., p. 62), also from Jamaica, describes the isolation:

> The lack of black faces around was very hard to adjust to. I found I became a novelty with people staring, some asking what country I was from, and as soon as I mentioned Jamaica I became an immediate hit with cricket-loving Australians.

The quotations highlight the whiteness of Australia and also the way in which cultural similarities, such as cricket, inherited from the colonial experience, made African Caribbean people more 'acceptable' in Australia. Millsom Henry-Waring (2008) made the point that while her African Caribbean-ness positioned her as a 'visible migrant' in Australia, 'my British cultural background also privileges my entry and general acceptance in Australia'. Further, Henry-Waring (ibid.) observed that while her racial origins should not be discounted, 'the realities and shifting contexts of multiple identities […] need to be understood as being beyond essentialised notions of Otherness'.

Among Caribbean community members in Australia there is fluidity in the way in which blackness is discussed and performed. Many of the community members who have emigrated to Australia directly from the Caribbean do not speak of themselves as black, except when referring to their racialization in white majority countries such as Australia, the United Kingdom, Canada and the United States of America. Their identity, on the other hand, is tied to the territory in which they were raised, such as Jamaica, Trinidad, Guyana etc. One example, again from the book *Adding Pimento*, is the description by

Trinidadian Patricia Ann Thomas of being racialized in the workplace by the wife of a former boss: "'Don't forget you're a black girl in a white country." I was astonished and asked her how she got here' (Smith, 2014, p. 116). Thomas questions assumed white authority by alluding to the immigrant status of Anglo-Saxon Australians despite their self-appointed position as the nation's 'founders'. In contrast, the members of the Caribbean community who were born to Caribbean parents and raised in London already have a sense of identity tied to blackness and assert this through embracing the term 'black British'. Otis Binnie, in *Adding Pimento*, states: 'I was born in England but never thought of myself as English but as "black British"' (ibid., p. 126). This identity has emerged in response to the racial 'othering' of their parents who were treated as 'Other' in the English nation when they emigrated to Britain in the 1950s and 1960s. These examples illustrate Torres-Saillant's point that 'the racial experience of people in contemporary society exists within the chronologies of distinct social histories' and that 'their understanding of that experience corresponds to differentiated geographies of knowledge' (Torres-Saillant, 2009, p. 12).

Africans in Australia – constructing Black identities, negotiating whiteness

The complexities of black identity construction in Australia can also be illustrated with reference to the growing and diverse number of African communities. African people had come to Australia prior to the 1900s. In recent times, Africans have arrived in different waves. Communities from South Africa started to arrive before the 1970s, made up mostly of white South Africans. In the 1990s, people came from countries such as Sierra Leone, Liberia and Sudan, and different groups started arriving in the 2000s (Jakubowicz, 2010). While there is now a growing and very diverse African population in Australia, Jakubowicz (ibid., p. 21) noted that 'Australia's approach to immigration, including its relationship with Africa, was long informed by viewing the issue through the lens of race, accepting 'whites' and rejecting "blacks"'. Importantly, during the White Australia period, different immigrant groups, including people from Southern Europe (such as Italians and Maltese) – people who did not speak English and were not British – were also racialized and 'othered' (Hollinsworth, 2006).

Some recent studies have examined the settlement experiences of people from different African background communities, bringing into focus how racism and racialization often impacts identity and belonging in Australia

(Colic-Peisker and Tilbury, 2008; Hatoss, 2012; Windle, 2008). Using their personal stories Mapedzahama and Kwansah-Aidoo (2013, p. 5) illustrated the implications of othering and racialization for constructing identities and belonging as black African immigrants in Australia; by interrogating memories of everyday banal encounters, including selectively asking people 'where are you from?', they conclude that it '[…] is about maintaining the asker's frame of reference for certain groups of people, assigning them to a predetermined, oftentimes racialized category'. For these authors, the process of identity construction and the negotiation of belonging in Australia is complex; it involves contesting powerful colonial discourses that equate blackness with otherness, while it also erases other, often group-specific, social identities and ways of being. They highlight the ambivalence that is produced as a result and reflected in hyphenated identities informed by both African-ness and Australian-ness.

The work with South Africans in Australia provides some insight into the shared as well as the unique ways in which the ideology of race operates to shape the subjectivities of black people across countries with shared histories of empire and colonialism. Sonn, Ivey, Baker and Meyer (2015) have reported how emigrants from South Africa, a country with a history of slavery, colonialism and apartheid, construct racial identities in Australia. Their research focused on people who were racially classified as 'coloured' in South Africa during apartheid, a positioning in a racialized hierarchy that placed white people at the top, black people at the bottom and 'coloured' people between the two. This label and status have been contentious and should be understood in the context of slavery, colonialism and apartheid (Erasmus, 2001; Gqola, 2010). Erasmus (ibid., p. 17) notes that '[…] coloured identity has never been seen as an identity "in its own right". It has been negatively defined in terms of "lack" or taint, or in terms of "remainder" or excess which does not fit a classificatory scheme'. She argues for a critical engagement with the historical and social conditions within which cultural identities and signifiers were produced, because 'coloured' identities were constructed in the context of dynamics of dominance and subjugation between colonizers and Indigenous African groups. Informed by the writing of Caribbean scholar Edouard Glissant, in particular the notion of creolization, Erasmus (ibid.) essentially calls for a much more sophisticated examination of cultural identities as formed in colonial encounters that have involved cultural dispossession, borrowing and transformation in the post-apartheid context.

People negotiate racialized identities and afforded meanings from the home country along with the discourses of the new country that interpellate them as black and other based on their perceived skin colour (Sonn, 2006). Participants

in that research challenged the meanings of the label 'coloured' that was imposed upon them, and which they viewed as negative (Sonn and Lewis, 2009). A similarly pejorative label in Australia, 'coloured' was used in the past to refer to Aboriginal people of mixed ancestry in relation to attempts at assimilation (Reynolds, 2005). For some South Africans in Australia, the label was also rejected, deconstructed and/or redefined in terms of a shared experiential reality, and often delinked from apartheid classification. Some participants replaced the label by defining themselves as South African, South African-Australian, or in terms of being from a place like Cape Town or Durban. Others said they were black South Africans, in line with the more politicized understanding of identity informed by Black Consciousness politics (Biko, 1976). These different identifications point to the ways in which people go about making sense of racialization in Australia in relation to the racist history of the home country.

The terms that people use to name themselves conceal a more complex set of negotiations of displacement, making sense of the discourses that are used to signify people and give meaning to blackness in Australia and globally. The process of interpellation is illustrated by comments made by a participant in a study on identity negotiation among South Africans. One participant commented that:

> In Australia we are known as blacks, in South Africa we are known as coloured. So naturally, when Australians identified me as a black, I felt obliged to correct them, that I am not black, I am coloured. It is still a tough one because even when I say I am black it does not roll well off the tongue. It is just a hard thing to say that I am black because I did not grow up with that identity. I grew up as a coloured South African, and all along I have been a black South African by international standards, as I found out (Sonn et al., 2015).

This excerpt illustrates how the speaker contests her signification as black on the basis of her 'colouredness', which she understands as her way of being socialized. Becoming a black South African in Australia means that the label 'coloured' is out of context. She comes to 'discover' that she is viewed as a black South African 'by international standards'; that is, she is constructed as a black 'other' based on skin colour and the associated meanings of race in Australia. In this context the meaning of blackness has shifted over time, but it has continually been framed in terms of Anglo-Saxon linguistic and cultural privilege and dominance.

Blackness in transversal politics: taking space

At this point in Australia's history, blackness is bound up with resisting whiteness, asserting a presence in Australian society, and creating positive black spaces. Across the examples discussed in this chapter, joining with other black people, despite the cultural and linguistic diversities that exist across communities, is important because of the overwhelming whiteness of Australian society. In some cases, the colour of the epidermis is considered significant because of the isolating experience of not seeing oneself reflected in the faces of the majority of the population or in Australian cultural production. Among Caribbean community members, for example, the desire to live near other black people is a choice some people have made in order to feel a greater sense of belonging in Australia (Binnie, quoted in Smith, 2014, p. 127). Aboriginal people have joined together in Fitzroy for similar reasons, and have, over time, created a community. Communities of the African diaspora have also expressed their connection to a local inner-city suburb in West Melbourne. In this suburb cultural diversity is the norm, constituted among others by the different African groups who live and socialize there. Some have described the place as feeling like Mogadishu; it is familiar and safe, and sometimes there is not a white face in sight (Oke, Sonn and McConville).

The creation of black spaces has been a way of fostering positive social definitions of blackness in the face of the negative definitions used in broader society. For the Caribbean community, the members of which are not all black, it has been about passing on Caribbean cultural traditions to their children and grandchildren and fostering pride in their racial heritage (Binnie, quoted in Smith, 2014, p. 127). The Warriors of the Aboriginal Resistance (WAR) were formed to carry on activist traditions passed down from their parents, which give voice and pride to their community. The fostering of black pride is also a political stance, which follows on from the Black Consciousness and Black Power movements of the early to mid-twentieth century.

Another way in which blackness is shared between the different communities is through popular culture. The Caribbean community recreates a form of Carnival in order to occupy a space in Australian society, a space which is also a black space. The Kulin peoples of Melbourne perform Tanderrum, a dance and cultural gathering. People from Global Africa, largely from East African countries at this time, have been forming communities and are actively

organizing through youth-led activities such as 'In Our Own Words', to claim and assert positive black identities.

For Aboriginal peoples, there has also been a break from blackness as skin colour, which is typically framed in relation to whiteness. The articulation of Aboriginal ways of doing, knowing and being, signifies this break. Understood within a decolonizing framework that includes Aboriginal paradigms, identities are expressed in terms of kinship, connection to land and spirituality. Meanings of blackness are therefore redefined in terms of Aboriginal realities, histories and experiences.

Although they have similar experiences of blackness, solidarity around race relations among Aboriginal, African Caribbean and African people is not a given, though they share modes of resistance to whiteness. First, there are significant cultural differences between and among people from Caribbean territories and African countries, and not all people from these places identify as black. Second, and more significantly, Aboriginal people in Australia do not yet have sovereignty as the traditional owners of the land.

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CHAPTER 10

TRANSNATIONALISM, DIASPORAS AND THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

Some Theoretical Considerations

Harry Goulbourne

Introduction

In an age of mass movements of peoples across nation State boundaries, concepts used to depict social action are likely to be, at best, overlapping and, often, muddled. Such is the case of the concept of the African diaspora. The problem it raises is that of how best to define or understand the formation of identities resulting in communities which transgress the central principles of the most powerful communal identity to have emerged since the sixteenth century. This is the philosophy of nationalism, which demands that people or nation (community) and political authority (the State) become coterminous upon a specifically defined territory. In order to understand new movements of diverse populations across a globalized world, scholars in social studies, the humanities and the arts have sought to build on the long-standing concept of diaspora, but this is often conflated with concepts arising from the growth of transnational communities. In the case of the movements of Africans and the identities and communities they have constructed in different parts of the globe, it is of considerable importance to consider carefully whether these are transnational or diaspora societies. The starting point must therefore be a distinction between transnational and diaspora communities.

Diaspora and transnational communities

Generally, the notion of a diaspora is constituted by the crucial members of a scattered population, who come to believe that they share a common past and a common future or a common destiny to return to a homeland. Throughout history, there have been three very powerful narratives of this kind of construction of community and identity. In the Greek version, groups of people spread out across the Mediterranean trading, conquering and establishing colonies in the eighth to sixth centuries BCE, while retaining a memory of, and a wish to return to, the homeland. In this narrative, there is no sudden disruption of community and social action is largely voluntary. In the more powerful Jewish version, the central elements of a people's identity - Jerusalem and Solomon's Temple to Yahweh, their singular God - are destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon, the leaders of the people are carried off into captivity, and there is a resurgence of an identity that demands a return to Zion to repair the breach. The experience was repeated when future Roman emperor Titus destroyed Jerusalem in 70 CE. Later still, the emperor Hadrian suppressed rebellion in Judaea, renaming the territory Palestine, with the Jews forcibly scattered across the Roman world and beyond. The third narrative, which in several ways resembles the Jewish experience, is that of the African diaspora, discussed below.

Given the features described, it is not surprising that attempts to understand the growth of transnational communities across the globe are often interspersed with aspects of, or overlap with, our understanding of what constitutes the African diaspora. Transnational communities and diasporas or diasporic communities may, however, be distinguished along a continuum of consciousness and/or aspirations, as crudely suggested by the pyramid in Figure 1.

The figure suggests, first, that the movement or migration of individuals and/or groups of people is a universal factor that is much wider in scope than the specific dramatic dispersal or scattering of a particular community or people. Consciousness of belonging to a community that straddles nation State boundaries certainly resembles and even overlaps with consciousness of belonging to a diaspora, but their origins are different: one is formed largely as a result of trauma and loss and the nurturing of a memory and a will or determination to recover; the other is born of voluntary action. In the latter case, while the memory of a point of departure may exist, it might not persist over time. Transnational communities might not be more than nostalgic, romantic and whimsical. Consequently, transnational communities are more

likely to have lifespans of one or two generations, after which memory fades into deeper mythology. Consider, for example, the descendants of the Dutch and German migrants and settlers of North America, who no longer retain dynamic community-memories of their pasts and can be identified perhaps only by the etymology of their names. The generalized migration story of human movements is more of this kind than of the diaspora kind.

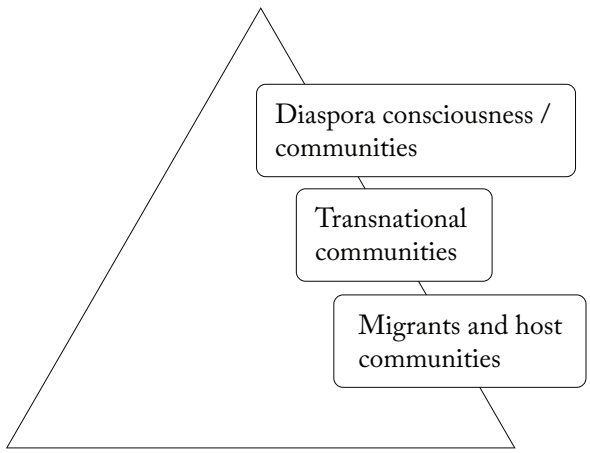

FIGURE 1. *The transnational continuum/apex*
Source: Harry Goulbourne.

Second, transnational communities may be said to nearly always exist in transitory forms for sizeable communities and, if over considerable time, as discrete, elitist entities through the institution of the family. Thus, powerful banking families, such as the Rothschilds, have been able to keep their identities across nation State boundaries and thereby present something of a community over time and space. The same may be observed of some royal and aristocratic families from feudal times to the present. This kind of discrete transnationality may be said to be on the increase as wealth accumulates and accrues to small minorities whose global mobility has few constraints. Transnational communities composed of less wealthy families are, however, likely to last for fewer generations as the tendency for families to fracture over time and space comes into effect. Such folk have fewer agglutinating factors to keep them together; they lack the need to protect wealth, and they do not have the memory of loss. The power of nostalgia is too temporary to abide the ravages of time and space.

In other words, the powerful forces of globalization – the free movement of capital, the disengagement of capital from national boundaries/sovereignty, modern free mass migration, the rise of sophisticated media and communication systems, and so on – enable individuals and groups to keep in touch across boundaries of every kind. In turn, this flow of continuing relationships, information and so forth gives rise to 'new' forms of community across boundaries and time, making it easy enough for groups of people in any of the world's major cities to be more in touch with communities they left across the globe than with their immediate physical neighbours, among whom they lead their daily lives. This is a new experience in human society, as many theorists have remarked. It cannot be certain, however, whether the connections established between migrants and the communities they have left behind will give rise to a generalized consciousness such as that which is shared by members of a diaspora. The absence of that angst, bred of loss and suffering, and the need to repair the breach may leave transnational communities without the agglutinating factors of continuity over time. It may, therefore, be more proper to view transnational communities as kinds of incipient diasporic communities rather than actual diasporas. Perhaps some will be what Marienstras (1989, p.125) described as 'adventurous' and become diasporas, but it is more than likely that with the passing of time and with uniformed integration into host societies, these groups will disappear just as nearly all migrant groups have disappeared over historic time, as figure 2 suggests.

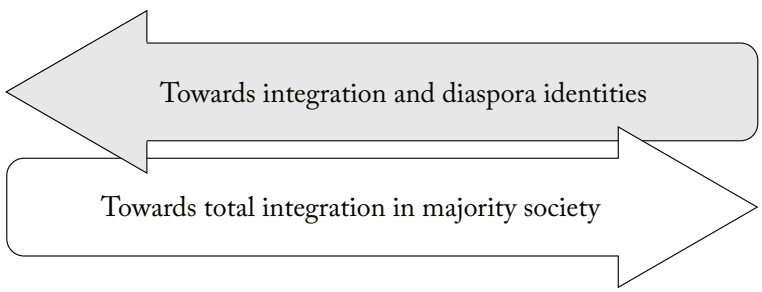

FIGURE 2. *Possible destinations of migrant communities*
Source: Harry Goulbourne.

Figure 2 indicates that the migrant experience (gray arrow) may be fluid, allowing individuals to gravitate towards forming a community with memories of a disrupted past (beginning of a diaspora), or becoming integrated into the accepting or host society (white arrow) because there is no memory of loss

requiring recovery. Of course, in the experience of individuals and groups of people, the situation is never as simple as this suggests. The reality is more likely to be that people turn in both directions at different points in their collective experiences. This is particularly so where racial differentiation (based on pigmentation and other phenotypical features) is present – as is the case with the African diaspora.

While the Jewish experience is generally viewed as typifying what constitutes a diaspora and the other two examples are generally taken to be kinds of the classic narrative of dispersal or scattering of peoples, they are not entirely unique. In human history there are a number of similar narratives, and more and more, groups of people are discovering and inventing what may be called a 'diasporic identity', though sometimes the nomenclature is used only as metaphor or simile. In general, analysts and researchers are increasingly of this view, particularly in light of the impact of cultural studies across cognate fields and disciplines. Some of these experiences originate in peaceful dispersal, such as economic migration freely entered into and freely carried out by the agents involved, and therefore resemble the Greek experience. The mass migrations of people across different parts of the globe in the decades following the Second World War are part of this general story. There are also some dramatic past and present situations which more resemble the Jewish and African experiences. A case in point is the mass movement of indentured Indian labourers from the Asian subcontinent to the British Caribbean and Pacific islands between 1840 and 1918, described by one historian as 'a new system of slavery'. The Chinese and the Irish share a similar story of migration, which was due to extreme poverty and famine in the nineteenth century. To each of these narratives may be added people who migrated and strengthened these respective communities after the Second World War. This continues into the present, particularly with the widespread destabilization of Middle Eastern societies and political instability and poverty in Asia and Africa.

The variety of experiences which now exist and are being constantly formed led Cohen to suggest a fivefold typology of diasporas: victim, labour, trade, imperial and cultural (Cohen, 2001). Cohen also suggests that we make the effort to move away from using the Jewish example as the normative description of a diaspora. While, however, his work presents a more nuanced and open approach to our understanding of these kinds of experience, it is difficult to downplay the importance of the Jewish and African experiences in informing our clearest understandings of diaspora consciousness, particularly as related to significant social and political action, both historically and contemporarily.

The African diaspora

The third great diaspora narrative, that of the African diaspora, is part of modernity and therefore constitutes a powerful aspect of the definition of this kind of experience in the contemporary world. Mass despoliation of West African communities and the shipment of peoples across the Atlantic to the Americas from the sixteenth century in what we know as the Atlantic slave trade compose the narrative of this experience. Historians generally agree that there were over 10 million souls forcibly transported, and these displaced persons constitute the basis of the populations of African descent in the Caribbean and North and South America. But this was neither the first nor necessarily the most significant exodus of people from Africa. It is a well-established fact in anthropology that humans originated in Africa and spread from the continent to the rest of the world, which suggests that all humans may be said to be Africans and that, therefore, most of the world is made up of many varieties of African diasporas. However, what is important in defining groups of humans is the consciousness they develop with regard to their unique identities and communities, and it may be taken for granted that the prehistoric migrations out of Africa did not lead to the development of a memory of a homeland or of a wish to return. Such constructs - homeland, community, return and so on – are products of history and of the social consciousness of being, identity and destiny or fate. The period, then, with which we are concerned is broadly from the late fifteenth to the late nineteenth centuries, when Africans were taken mostly to the continents and islands of the Americas.

Of course, there is a much longer history of forced transportation of enslaved Africans to the Arabian Peninsula and other parts of Asia, such as India. While much of our knowledge of Africans outside Africa is based on their presence in the Americas and Europe, the African presence in Asia may come to form part of the overall narrative, as recent scholarship and this volume suggest. It is not, of course, enough simply to identify their presence in these places to make them part of a diaspora - it is important to demonstrate consciousness of diaspora existence. In the main, therefore, the notion of the African diaspora derives from the African experience in the Americas - particularly the United States, the Caribbean and Brazil, but nearly all countries in the region were affected in one way or another by the presence of Africans and their descendants, who constitute a major pillar of the post-Columbian American (both North and South) world.

Mass migration (economic migration and migration of refugees/asylum-seekers; free and forced) in the post-Atlantic slavery period, from the end of slavery in Brazil in 1888 (earlier in Haiti, in the Dutch, Danish and British Caribbean, and in the United States), involved both the movement of Africans across the Americas and Western Europe and periods of return to the African homeland. The end of the Second World War further intensified the movements of Africans in all these directions. Consequently, sizeable communities of people of African descent in Western Europe and in North, Central and South America, as well as sprinklings of such persons (if not necessarily communities) on nearly all the continents, have added to, but do not share, the transatlantic 'memory' of slavery, perhaps because Africa has yet to acknowledge her active part in the Atlantic slave trade. The notion of the African diaspora is, therefore, a complex matter.

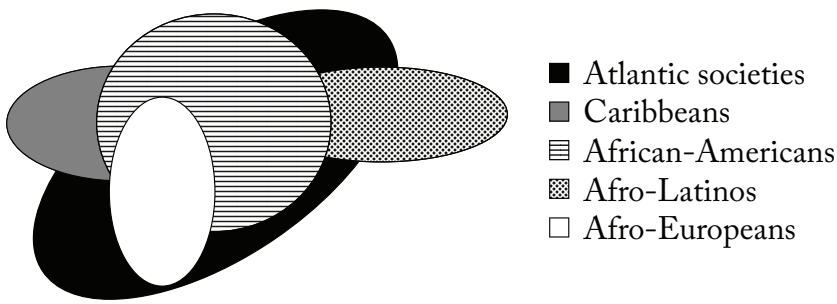

FIGURE 3. *A depiction of the Atlantic African diaspora*
Source: Harry Goulbourne.

Central to an understanding of the African diaspora are the key concepts of shared suffering and belongingness, irrespective of differential social class, cultural identities and nation State status/citizenship, and the need to return and repair a historic breach. An interesting and perhaps unique feature of the African diaspora is that while diaspora Africans may form the majority population in specific regions (such as the Caribbean), account for significant numbers within the population of specific countries (as in Brazil and the United States), and dominate popular culture, sports and general forms of representation of the societies in those places, the sense of, or sensibility regarding, membership of the diaspora remains a constant. Even so, the African diaspora is forever plagued or undermined by racism or exclusion from the mainstream of the larger societies in which individuals or groups find themselves and where they themselves have

successfully established democratic societies. The discrimination has been based on colour differentiation, and consequently nearly all points of contestation or assertion and the struggles for rights have revolved around the question of blackness, as so much of the literature on the African diaspora reflects (see, for example, Bonnett and Holder, 2009; Gilroy, 1993).

In the African diaspora, loss and alienation and the concomitant search for justice find expression in all provinces of the arts, politics and religion, as exemplified by a host of musical genres (soul, reggae, jazz and so on), any number of paintings, the Garvey movement of the 1920s and various messianic groups in the Caribbean. Forms of religious devotion and practices, such as Pocomania and Voodoo in Jamaica and Haiti respectively, illustrate this point. Even within Christian denominations, the forms of worship and the sense of spirituality draw on retentions of Africa. In short, Africa reverberates in all forms of daily life because of what people feel and believe connects them with an African past of one kind or another.

As with the Jewish diaspora, the notion of return is very important to the African diaspora. Those who do not practically return - by far the majority - nonetheless retain and keep alive the notion of 'return' in their imaginations as an aspiration from which their offspring may pick up or retain their integrated status in the majority society. Those who remain in 'exile' may nonetheless support those who have indeed gone on to repair the breach, sometimes to disastrous effect. The place to which the diasporan feels that he or she belongs may not necessarily bear any resemblance to the historical reality. The Rastafarian version of the African narrative may serve as an illustration.

In brief, Rastafarians believe that Africans in the West were stolen from Africa by Europeans, were sold and settled in the Americas, and that their destiny is to return to Africa from this exile. They believe that Haile Selassie I, the last emperor of Ethiopia, was the promised Messiah of Biblical prophecies. His overthrow and death, as well as the fact that Africans in the Americas came predominantly from West Africa (not East Africa), are of little relevance in the belief structure of the group, which holds to its faith in the emperor's rescue of Africans held in captivity. Hope, aspiration and reality aside, this dream has spawned poetry, music and paintings and inspired religious-based Africanist groups outside the continent.

In the African diaspora consciousness, precise physical location and direct historic lines of connection are not themselves of much relevance, and this is because the construction of the myths of belonging and demonstrable historic connections run along different paths. This suggests not only that the birth, development and

continuation of consciousness of belonging to the African diaspora are replete with contradictions, gaps, overlaps and so forth, but also that they constitute a dynamic process of being that is highly creative, as Cohen (op. cit.) suggested.

One of the most creative aspects of the African diaspora has been its contribution to pan-Africanism, the aspiration of a united Africa. On the continent, the dream of a united Africa is essentially political and increasingly economic, but the diaspora view is that the freedom and liberation of diaspora communities cannot be realized independently of the continent's own liberation and the realization of a common destiny. This vision has become a pillar of the continent's mission (through, formerly, the Organization of African Unity, now the African Union) as the anti-colonial struggle and the fight for development have taken shape and gained strength. The point here, however, is that the conception of Africa as a single entity began in the diaspora with Africans' yearning to return from exile and repair the breach inflicted by Atlantic chattel slavery, as part of the emergence of modern capitalism, as Williams showed.

Conclusion

Thus, regardless of the Western European languages communities of African descent in the Americas speak - English, French, Spanish, Portuguese or Dutch – and regardless of the cultures into which they were transplanted as of the sixteenth century, the dream of a united Africa persists. Host cultures draw upon elements of African and European cultures (as well as of South Asian and Chinese cultures, for example), including language, religion, music and so forth, to give rise to what historians describe as Creole societies. What Herskovits called African "retentions" imbue the languages in question and have spawned new forms of expression in speech, music, dance, painting, poetry, religions and forms of worship, and general perspectives. The cultures that have sprung up in the post-Columbian Americas have, therefore, been as much a contribution of enslaved Africans as one of European settlers, although formally this is still only grudgingly acknowledged. Unlike the Jewish diaspora, the African diaspora is not unified by the powerful factor of religion, a claim to a specific and highly contested physical site, such as Jerusalem/Zion, or a particular language. Indeed, even the specific territory or physical terrain in Africa to which members of the African diaspora feel committed is imprecise and highly generalized, but this is of little or no relevance. Like the scattered Jewish communities, many people of African descent in the West long for a return, and in the nineteenth

century this "return" took on a practical form, resulting in the founding of Sierra Leone and Liberia. In the twentieth century, there have been any number of individuals who have sought to find their African souls or roots by undertaking sojourns in different parts of the continent. The ease of communication in a globalized world means that the sensibilities associated with belonging to an African diaspora continue to be strengthened by new points of meeting (in Europe and North America), by new demands for reparations for the cruelties of Atlantic slavery, and, very powerfully, by the symbolic and iconic achievements of the presidency of Barack Obama, as well as the dynamic contributions to the metropoles of the West made by artists, musicians, writers and intellectuals who have recently come out of Africa. Crucially, the African diaspora suggests that while there may be numerous transnational communities - both historical and contemporary - not all develop into diasporas, and while all diasporas are transnational communities, not all transnational communities are diasporas.

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CHAPTER 11

ECONOMICS OF THE TRANSATLANTIC AFRICAN DIASPORA

Joseph E. Inikori

Introduction

Since the completion of UNESCO's project, which produced the admirable eight volumes of the *General History of Africa* in the 1980s and 1990s, there have been considerable advances in the study of Transatlantic African diaspora. The contribution of diasporic Africans to the development of cultures in the Americas has been extensively studied (Mintz and Price, 1992; Heywood, 2002; Hall, 2005; Heywood and Thornton, 2007). Growing interest in globalization as a historical process has helped to make Atlantic world history – the study of the economies and societies in the Atlantic basin as a unit of historical analysis, pioneered in the 1970s (Inikori, 1979, pp. 56–85; 1992, pp. 74–112) – one of the most rapidly expanding fields of historical scholarship (Bailyn, 2005; Cañizares-Esguerra and Seeman, 2007; Bailyn and Denault, 2009; Greene and Morgan, 2009). Central to the rapidly growing literature on Atlantic world history is the development of an integrated Atlantic economy, propelled by an Atlantic market which expanded phenomenally from the sixteenth to the mid-nineteenth century. This chapter presents a summary discussion of the major economic issues in the more recent literature on the long-lasting global impact of the forced migration of Africans and their coerced employment in large-scale production of commodities in the Americas for Atlantic commerce, the main

factor behind the three and a half centuries of sustained market development in the Atlantic basin. The discussion is organized into four sections. The first section examines the new evidence from research showing the vital contribution of enslaved Africans and their descendants to the evolution of the nineteenth-century Atlantic economy from the sixteenth century. The second section presents our much-improved knowledge of the long-term consequences of the forceful procurement of captives shipped across the Atlantic and their employment in the Americas to produce commodities in competition with commodity production in West Africa. The third section traces the current economic plight of people of African descent in the Americas to the socioeconomic conditions under which they worked and lived during enslavement and the systematic discrimination that has persisted since their freedom. The conclusion and epistemological lessons are presented in the fourth section.

Diasporic Africans and the rise of the nineteenth-century Atlantic economy

Before the mid-fifteenth century, the economies of the Atlantic basin were unconnected; there was no common Atlantic market for their commodities and services. Only indirect connections existed between West Africa and Western Europe through Middle East and Northwest African merchants who traded West African gold for Western European textiles that they re-exported to West Africa in their trans-Saharan trade. The development of seaborne Atlantic trade between West Africa and Western Europe followed Portuguese exploration of West Africa's Atlantic coast in the middle decades of the fifteenth century (Blake, 1977; Vogt, 1979). The first half a century of Atlantic trade, 1450–1500, was virtually limited to Western Europe and West Africa. Gold was the dominant product in these early decades. An estimate put annual average Portuguese gold exports from West Africa at 450 kilograms in 1450–1520 (Dumett, 1998, pp. 2–3). Portuguese colonization of Atlantic islands off the coast of West Africa – Cape Verde Islands and São Tomé and Principe (particularly the latter, which produced for export over 2,800 tons of sugar per annum in the 1570s) (Hodges and Newitt 1988, p. 20) – also made West Africa the main source of sugar for Western European markets in these early decades. The linking of West Africa and Western Europe to the Americas, following the voyages of Christopher Columbus and the subsequent European colonization

of the Americas ultimately prepared the foundation for the evolution of the nineteenth-century Atlantic economy.

The historical process which established the Atlantic economy covered about three and a half centuries, from the sixteenth to the mid-nineteenth century. It took this long because the domestic economies in Western Europe still had extensive non-market sectors, and those of West Africa were even more so, while the pre-Columbian economies of the Americas were overwhelmingly dominated by non-market production (subsistence production) (Britnell and Campbell, 1995; Inikori, 2014 pp. 56–88). It took many decades to develop effective domestic markets in the economies of the Atlantic basin before they could be integrated by one Atlantic market. The coerced employment of enslaved Africans in large-scale production of export commodities in the Americas was the main factor in the process. The plantation and mining zones of the Americas, which depended heavily on the labour of enslaved Africans, spurred on the growth and spread of the market economy in the Atlantic world (Inikori, 2014, pp. 69–76). When the value of export commodities from mining and plantations in the Americas grew from an annual average of approximately £1.3 million (sterling) in 1501–1550 to £89.2 million in 1848–1850, as shown in Table 1, it provoked an inter-connected chain of the commercializing process in the Americas and Western Europe.

Production of silver for export in Spanish America created large urban centres in mining fields located in barren lands. This offered growing domestic markets for producers of foodstuffs, manufacturing, and services, especially transportation services. These market opportunities pulled communities hitherto dominated by subsistence production into market-oriented production. One of these large mining centres was Potosi in the viceroyalty of Peru. Thirty-five years after the mines there were discovered in 1545, Potosi had 120,000 people in 1580 and 160,000 in 1650. Two historians have noted that 'the size and influence' of Potosi 'were unparalleled in the Americas and perhaps equal to those of contemporary London' (Burkholder and Johnson, 2004, p. 171). The commercializing effects of the Potosi market covered a regional economy stretching from the Argentine *pampa* through the central valleys of Chile to coastal Peru and Ecuador (Burkholder and Johnson, op. cit., pp. 171–173). A similar commercializing process provoked by silver mining can be observed in New Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries (Schell Hoberman, 1991).

Table 1. *Share of export commodities produced by Africans in the Americas, 1501-1850*

Average annual value of export commodities produced in the Americas		Share produced by Africans	
Period	(£000)	Value (£000)	%
1501 - 50	1,286	694.4	54.0
1551 - 1600	3,764	2,090.6	55.5
1601 - 50	6,268	4,327	69.0
1651 - 70	7,970	5,504.4	69.1
1711 - 60	14,142	11,397.5	80.6
1761 - 80	21,903	18,073.2	82.5
1781 - 1800	39,119	31,247	79.9
1848 - 50	89,204	61,368.7	68.8

Source: Inikori, J. E. 2002. *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England: A Study in International Trade and Economic Development*. Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, table 4.7, p. 197.

As noted earlier, at the time Columbus embarked on his voyages to the Americas in the late fifteenth century, the market economy was yet to be firmly established in Western Europe; non-market sectors remained extensive in the region's economies. The massive import of American treasure expanded the volume of currency in circulation all over Western Europe (urban and rural), contributing immensely to the price revolution which raised the tempo of the commercializing process (Stein and Stein, 2000; Macleod, 1984, p. 366; Drelichman, 2005, pp. 313–336; Hamilton, 1929, pp. 338–357; Gould, 1964, pp. 249–266; Inikori, 2002, pp. 203–206). The export of American silver to Asia also helped to pay for the import of Asian goods (textiles, tea and porcelains) which, together with the import of plantation products (particularly sugar and tobacco) from the Americas, revolutionized the consumption habits of all classes in Western Europe and pulled non-market producers into market-oriented production, contributing significantly to the development and geographical spread of the market economy in Western Europe (Inikori, 2002, pp. 203–206).

Although silver and gold production in Spanish America (enslaved Africans providing about 40 percent of the labour employed (Inikori, 2002, p. 185) was important in the growth of the market economy in Spanish America and

Western Europe in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, as we have shown, its contribution to the overall commercializing process in the Americas and Western Europe pales in comparison with the contribution of the plantations in Brazil, the Caribbean and the United States in the critical centuries, 1650–1850. Large-scale plantation production of export commodities (sugar, tobacco, raw cotton, indigo, rice, coffee, etc.) in the Americas, which depended almost entirely on the labour of enslaved Africans, brought down production costs manifold, which allowed those products to be sold at prices affordable by all classes in Europe. The consumerist culture which the American products (especially sugar and tobacco) helped to create in Western Europe produced the phenomenon historians have labelled the industrious revolution (De Vries, 2008), as the mass of consumers worked extra hard to secure the wherewithal to purchase these products. Because this mass of consumers had to produce to sell in order to buy the new products, market-oriented production grew and the market economy expanded at the expense of subsistence production.

As the European market for the American plantation products grew over the period, 1650–1850, the scale of production in the Americas increased even more and the plantation economies became overly specialized, offering expanding markets for other producers in the Americas. The Caribbean plantation economies offered market opportunities to producers of foodstuffs, lumber, draught animals and business services (especially shipping services provided by New England shippers). The plantation economies (especially the cotton plantations) of the Southern United States offered expanding markets to north-eastern manufacturers, merchants, shippers and financiers; and the growing markets for foodstuffs in the plantation south and the manufacturing, trading, shipping and financing north-east stimulated the growth of commercial agriculture in the Midwestern United States (North, 1961; 1965, pp. 673–705). Plantation production of export commodities (sugar, cotton, coffee), which made Brazil virtually an extension of Africa (demographically) in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, had similar commercializing effects across the country's major regions (Luna and Klein, 2004, pp. 120–149; 2003; Barickman, 1998). For Brazil, the commercializing effects of gold production (dominated like plantation agriculture by the labour of enslaved Africans) in the first six decades of the eighteenth century must be added.

The commercialization of the domestic economies of the Americas and Western Europe proceeded simultaneously with the growth and development of an Atlantic market which integrated the regional markets of the Atlantic basin. As the annual average value of Atlantic commerce increased from £3.2 million

(sterling) in 1501-1550 to £15.8 million in 1601–1650, and £231 million in 1848–1850 (Inikori, 2007, Table 1, p. 74), the combined size of Atlantic markets and the cumulative rate of growth reached a critical mass for the advantageously placed regions (Lancashire, the West Riding of Yorkshire and the West Midlands, especially Stafford, to a lesser extent) of the dominant naval power of the Atlantic basin, England, to launch the first Industrial Revolution. The development of the factory system and the new technologies, invented and employed in response to market size and the rate of growth, drastically reduced manufacturing cost per unit of output, while steel and steamship technology slashed the cost of sea transportation and the railroads connected distant interior regions to complete the integration of the economies of the Atlantic basin into one economic system, the Atlantic economy (Inikori, 2007, pp. 77–79).

West African economies and the rise of the Atlantic economy

As a Yoruba proverb says, 'the person whose head is used in breaking a coconut does not participate in the eating'. As shown in the preceding section, the forced shipment of African captives and their coerced employment in large-scale production of export commodities in the Americas was the main factor in the emergence of the nineteenth-century Atlantic economy. Like the person whose head is used in breaking a coconut, the economies of West Africa paid dearly for the role their forced migrants played in the rise of the Atlantic economy. Before the fifteenth-century Portuguese explorations opened up opportunities for direct seaborne Atlantic trade with Western Europe, West Africa had exploited the available opportunities to build up a steadily growing interregional trade and specialization, in which internal factors (differing natural resource endowments, population growth and concentration, prevalence of peace provided by emerging effective states, etc.) played the dominant role, but aided by external ones, such as trans-Saharan gold exports to the commercializing economies of the Middle East and from there to Europe, and trade with the copper and salt producing economies of the southern Sahara.[1]

The emerging interregional division of labour, driven by trade directed by merchants based in the Niger Bend (the inland Niger Delta), was characterized

1 The discussion in this section of the chapter is based largely on Inikori, "Reversal of Fortune," pp. 56–88.

by the interior savannah regions operating largely as the manufacturing and trading economies, exchanging their manufactures and mercantile services mainly for the primary products of the economies on the Atlantic coast and their immediate hinterlands. By the mid-fifteenth century, when the Portuguese arrived, the commercializing process in West Africa had made much progress. The economies in the region were far more commercial (with well-established exchange currencies, especially cowries and copper rods) than those of the Americas; they were also far more densely populated and urbanized (Inikori, 2014, pp. 58–66).

Because the first two hundred years or so of European commercial enterprise (1450-1650) focused mainly on products derived from West Africa's natural resources and labour (gold, mostly from modern Ghana, sugar, mostly from São Tomé, cotton cloth and red pepper from the Benin kingdom, hides and skins from Senegambia, ivory and woods from south-eastern Nigeria and the Windward Coast) the preceding process of development and commercialization was further reinforced. The commodity composition of the imports brought by the European traders during these early decades makes this clear. Commodity currencies (cowries and copper rods) overwhelmingly dominated the imports, indicating traders' demand for currency to meet the needs of expanding local and interregional trade; there were little or no firearms (Inikori, 2009, pp; 101–104).

All this changed when demand for captives to work the mines and plantations in the Americas exploded. Total shipments grew from 947,339 in 1501–1650 (approximately 6,316 yearly for 150 years) to 11,348,386 in 1651–1850 (approximately 56,742 yearly for 200 years).[2] The adverse impact on the process of development and commercialization of the economies of West Africa was devastating. The employment of enslaved Africans in the Americas to produce commodities for Atlantic markets, in competition with West Africa's economies, raised the competitiveness of the Americas at the expense of West Africa. It is, thus, no surprise that the Americas overwhelmingly dominated commodity production for Atlantic markets during the period 1650–1850. The sociopolitical crisis engendered by the forceful procurement of export captives

2 Eltis, David, and David Richardson, 'A New Assessment of the Transatlantic Slave Trade,' in Eltis, David, and David Richardson (eds.), *Extending the Frontiers: Essays on the New Transatlantic Slave Trade Database* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2008), table 1.6: 40–41. The estimated total for 1501-1867 is 12,521,334. This figure is approximately 14 per cent higher than the 11 million generally derived from Phillip Curtin's controversial estimate. There is reason to believe the new figure will be raised further by research. For now, the four decades-long debate on the numbers shipped from Africa is practically over, and historians who followed the debate can tell who won and who lost. See Inikori, Joseph E., 'Review of Extending the Frontiers,' *Journal of Economic History* (2011), pp. 294–251.

and the direct barter exchange of imported manufactures for the captives, generally taken from the densely populated manufacturing and trading regions in the interior (the Igbo heartland in particular), severely damaged the earlier evolving interregional trade and division of labour. Hence, the commercializing process and the development and geographical spread of the market economy were stalled and reversed. By the time transatlantic export of captives ended in mid-nineteenth century, West African economies had fallen considerably behind those of the Americas; a reversal of fortune of immense proportions had occurred (Inikori, 2014, pp. 66–69).

Economic conditions of people of African descent in the Americas

In spite of the immense contribution they have made to socioeconomic development in the Americas, people of African descent have languished at the bottom of the economic ladder in all countries of the Americas since their years of enslavement to their freedom. Given space constraint, Brazil and the United States, countries with the largest African descent populations, are the focus of the discussion in this section.

With 97.2 million people of African descent in 2010 (Bucciferro, 2015, Table 1, p. 4), Brazil has the second largest black population in the world, after Nigeria. Afro-Brazilians constituted 51 per cent of the 2010 national total; the white population was 48 per cent. In 1800, the black population was 67 per cent of the national total (Andrews 2004, Table 1.1, p. 41), and 58 per cent in 1872 (Bucciferro, op. cit., Table 1, p. 4). In 1976, the average income of white Brazilians was 2.8 times that of Afro-Brazilians, 26.3 per cent of the difference arising from discrimination (Bucciferro, op. cit., p. 23) and the rest from the cumulative effects of limited access to education, health care, capital accumulation and geographical location; in 2010, when the average income of Afro-Brazilians was slightly less than half that of whites, they 'were disadvantaged in their level of education and in their access to health and other services'. In Rio de Janeiro (like several other cities), the 2010 census shows Afro-Brazilians constituted more than half of the people in the shanty towns (favelas/slumps) and only 7 per cent of the people in the city's richer districts (Reid, 2014, p. 181).

Unlike Brazil, African-Americans in the United States make up only 12 per cent of the national population in recent times. However, like Brazil, as we have seen, their coerced labour on the plantations (especially the nineteenth-century

cotton plantations) was central to the development process in the United States; again, like Brazil, African-Americans have languished at the bottom of the economic ladder in the United States since their enslavement up to the present day. In 2011, the wealth holding of the typical African-American family was 5 per cent of that of a typical white family, and the unemployment rate among African-Americans was 16 per cent, compared to 8 per cent among whites (Darity and Hamilton, 2012, p. 2). All this is clearly a continuing legacy of slavery, post-slavery institutionalized racial discrimination, and continuing post-affirmative action illegal discrimination.

When it comes to state policy that addresses the legacy of slavery and injustice, Brazil and the United States are very different. For example, the United States Supreme Court ruled against the use of racial quotas for university admissions, but its counterpart in Brazil ruled in favour in 2012, and the President, Dilma Rousseff, signed a law (the same year) requiring all federal universities to have the racial make-up of their students reflect that of their state location (Reid, 2014, p. 183). Affirmative action in the United States, as defined by Executive Order 11246 of 1965, 'is designed to rectify existing discrimination by making sure the employment process operates in a way that is fair to all candidates, regardless of race or sex. In the area of higher education, affirmative action can ensure that blacks today have a fair opportunity to compete for all educational benefits'. (Fleming, Gill and Swinton, 1978, p. xxi). Thus, by law, state policy in the United States does not address the cumulative effects of slavery and post-slavery institutionalized racial discrimination. Having done little to address the problem for many decades, since the 1990s the state in Brazil has designed programmes, such as *bolsa familia* (family grants), to address the lingering effects of past injustices (Neri, 2009, pp. 221–269).

Conclusion and epistemological lessons

Research since the 1990s has made it increasingly clear that the Transatlantic African diaspora was a major factor in Atlantic world history. Since the 1980s, development theorists have debated the role of the State, the free market and culture in long-run development processes. The evidence on which this chapter is based makes it clear that cooperation between an effective State and the market is a requirement for development. Great Britain employed its naval power to obtain and protect for its entrepreneurs much of the expanded Atlantic markets that resulted from the employment of enslaved Africans in

the Americas; its more economically competitive regions – Lancashire, the West Riding of Yorkshire and Stafford – captured a disproportionate share of those markets to launch the Industrial Revolution, with its factory system and new technologies (Inikori, 2015, pp. 224–265). The evidence shows that in the long run, culture is a dependent variable in the development process. All this is also true for the differing paths of development in the Americas and the adverse effects of transatlantic captive exports on long-run development in West Africa, where the free market operated without effective States in most places. Similarly, the evidence shows strongly that the free market, left to itself, cannot offer a desirable solution to the lingering legacy of slavery in the Americas. Well directed State intervention is needed.

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CHAPTER 12

REFLECTIONS ON INDIGENEITY AND AFRICAN BELONGING IN THE CARIBBEAN AND THE AMERICAS

Shona N. Jackson

Introduction

In nearly every economic and social history of the modern Caribbean, the presumed death, disappearance, or dispersal of First Peoples is given as the reason for the introduction of enslaved blacks. This textual silence, or 'historical trope of anti-indigeneity', is reiterated in studies of race, ethnicity and economy that centre on enslaved and indentured peoples (Forte, 2004–2005). In large slaveholding regions of the Americas, it is the death of Indigenous Peoples, their supposed inability to work, and their association with lands outside of the plantation that are given as reasons for the need for black slave labour. Formative in producing the modern subjects of historical and sociological inquiry and figurative reflection, the 'plantation machine' – a term coined to encapsulate the broad political-economic and social-cultural effects of the plantation mode of production in the Caribbean – ultimately defines the spaces and subjects of epistemological value (Benítez-Rojo, 1996). First Peoples recede to the margins of the plantation, the critical apparatus that studies its modes of sociality, and to the margins of understanding of how formerly enslaved and indentured peoples inhabit a *new* native status. The presumed lack of Indigenous presence in the Caribbean islands allows blacks an unquestioned native status, while in North, South and Central America the considerable presence of Indigenous

Peoples has precluded formal discussion of black native status, except where the intersections of black and Indigenous lives during and after slavery force the issue (Miles, 2015; Miles and Holland, 2006). Moreover, it has inhibited emergent discussions of Indigenous slavery and consideration of the myriad forms of unfreedom First Peoples endured as kinds of slavery (Reséndez, 2016; Warren, 2016). Commencing with the justifications of the Dominican Friar Bartolomé de Las Casas in the sixteenth century, narratives of native death and disappearance haunt the presence of blacks in the Americas, who embrace the social histories of labour to counter legacies of racialized non/being, achieve a new and enacted native status or Indigeneity, and link true belonging, political and material rights to performing modern work upon the land.

This chapter demonstrates that whether the native status of formerly enslaved blacks in the Americas is assumed/explicit or presumed/implicit, blacks have transformed the condition of forced diasporization into a new, native status. In the Americas, this status is constructed both on the supposed absence of Indigenous Peoples – estimated in 1492 to have been between two to four times the total number of blacks that entered the slave trade – and on acceptance of their social marginalization and disenfranchisement.[1] The epistemological terrain of modern labour – understood here as the theories and explanations produced with regard to the relationships of blacks to slave labour that have been espoused and taken up from the social sciences to literature and within nationalist discourses – and its a priori assumption of native death/disappearance is formative for the establishment of New World black, diasporic Indigeneities. Creole Indigeneity, a term coined for the specific mode of black Indigenous 'becoming' in the Caribbean, together with other black, New World Indigeneities, signals the practices of belonging that give blacks a new symbolic and material relationship to the land (Jackson, 2012). These new Indigeneities also represent the tensions with whites, Indigenous Peoples and other racialized, transatlantic groups that inform that practice. As Old World natives, blacks now inhabit a unique native status in the Americas, formed out of the crucible of Indigeneity and diaspora.

Black nativity is a complex phenomenon that involves displacement and diasporization, and the fact that the more than 10 million enslaved Africans who arrived on the shores of the Caribbean and the Americas produced their descendants during and after slavery, not as Africans, but as New World natives,

1 For the population estimates of First Peoples, see Alan Taylor, *American Colonies* (The Penguin History of the United States, Vol. 1) (2001).

a transformation that is both affective and deliberate.[2] In the Caribbean, the assumed native status of blacks derives from their arrival prior to indentured groups and the representation of white plantation owners, during and after slavery, as failed settlers. In North America, it is derived from particular deference to the power of white settlers and their modes of citizenship. In criticism and letters, this dynamic of becoming is dominated by the master-slave relationship between white owners and enslaved blacks, into which it is often collapsed. This leads to a generalized misreading and privileging of the master-slave dialectic – understood here as the power dynamic involved in the competition for physical and metaphysical existence – over the multiple dynamics of settler-native that in fact subtend it. Studies of settler colonialism in Canada, the United States, Australia and South Africa have largely been concerned with the body of white settlers vis-à-vis a non-white, native population. The problem, however, with seeing the white settlers as singular agents in the exercise of imperial/colonial power over native and other racialized and coerced groups is that it shifts attention away from the ways in which non-Indigenous, oppressed peoples seeking freedom and power in the settler State adapted the techniques of settler power, in ways that actually reflect a continuum of settler-native power.

Contemporary shifts in thinking about settler power in terms of its dis/continuity and in terms of non-white bodies reflect the impetus of the work of the Martinican anticolonial writer Frantz Fanon.[3] Fanon's anticolonial description of a settler-native dichotomy defines the white French settler and the Algerian native as mutually constitutive products of the colonial system, in which the imposition of settler power refashions continental Africans as 'native' subjects of settler colonial power and its consolidation in the global political economy (Fanon, 1963, p. 36). Unlike the case of Algerians, however, the origin of the transformation of enslaved blacks into 'natives' is not strictly the imposition of white settler power, but of forced labour and forced diasporization onto Indigenous lands. Rather than a strict settler-native dialectic, in the Americas we find a dialectic of settlers: colonizing Europeans and enslaved blacks who function as involuntary settlers when they engage and adapt the techniques of settler power. For Standing Rock Sioux (born Yankton Sioux) scholar Vine Deloria Jr., both would share the same unique encumbrance: 'there is a profound difference between American Indians and all of these other groups. The Indian is indigenous and therefore does not have the psychological

2 All figures for the number of enslaved peoples are taken from Nellis, 2013.

3 For these shifts, see Mamdani, 2001; Farred, 2008.

burden of establishing his or her right to the land [...]' (Deloria, 1973, p. 58). As non-Indigenous, involuntary settlers, Africans brought to the Caribbean and the Americas have had the burden of two labours: their physical labour on the land for white well-being, a labour that is eventually captured by the colonial and postcolonial States, and a more profound labour for their own being and belonging, within which they are transformed into natives. This second labour, along with its manipulation and rejection of the work black bodies do for white humanity, calls for a rethinking of black, New World Indigeneity in terms of its rejections of and 'complicity' with white, settler power and its grounding in Enlightenment humanism, a phenomenon Chickasaw scholar Jodi A. Byrd calls 'arrivant colonialism'.[4] This complicity encompasses both the hegemonic expressions of black nativity where arrivant native status is consolidated by post/colonial State power (e.g., the Caribbean) and the deployment of a labour episteme, and non-hegemonic ones (e.g., North, South, and Central America) where the episteme is active but foreclosed within the settler State.

Resistant labours: the space and time of Black Indigeneity

In the majority of scholarship on black enslavement and freedom in the Americas, the process of black transformation is largely articulated as litigious, cultural, and phenomenological. In the United States of America, it is the process of national becoming and belonging by which the slave/nigger evolved into citizen/subject/African American. In the Caribbean, it is widely interpreted as the process of becoming Creole and a sovereign subject of the postcolonial State.[5] The cultural and legal dimensions of black transformation obscure the fact that both during and after slavery, blacks underwent a process of active Indigenization that subtends them. In 1970, Caribbean humanist philosopher Sylvia Wynter rejected the singularity of Creolization – the yoking of European and African cultures within the mechanism of the plantation social structure – to describe the shift from African cultural to New World belonging, precisely because it obscured the dynamics of black Indigeneity. Creolization, for Wynter, is in fact distinct from what she identifies as the *resistant* element of black transformation or 'rooting':

4 Byrd borrows the term "arrivant" from Barbadian poet Kamau Brathwaite's *The Arrivants (*1973).

5 This is still true for the roughly one dozen non-independent Caribbean territories.

> For the more total alienation of the New World Negro had occasioned a cultural response, which had transformed that New World Negro into the indigenous inhabitant of his new land. His cultural resistance to colonialism […] was an *indigenous* resistance. The history of the Caribbean islands is […] the history of the *indigenization* of the black man. And this history is a cultural history – not in "writing", but of those "homunculi" who humanize the landscape by peopling it with gods and spirits […] (Wynter, 1970, p. 35).

This 'total alienation' solidifies black belonging as more entrenched than, and oppositional to, white settler/master becoming. Wynter's assertion that resistance – rather than assimilation or emancipation – grounds blacks' remaking of themselves as 'new natives' alerts us not only to the fact that resistance is a structural component of black becoming, but also to the fact that blacks' anticolonial nativity traverses slavery and its modes of freedom.

Resistance is, however, still located for Wynter in a particular time-space. Her invocation of the Americas as a 'new land' places black Indigenous becoming within the time of European western expansion in the Atlantic and within the space of the plantation, and the global markets and rise of capital it engendered.[6] While the specific models of religion, culture, and society upon which blacks drew preceded their entry into the New World, enslaved peoples mobilized them only as anticolonial tools rather than *ante*colonial ones, a significant, but not singular, dimension of First Peoples' Indigeneities in the Americas. By locating the 'humanization' of the land within this time-space, Wynter, too, invokes the land as palimpsest for the black native, which means that specific elements of white settler power undergird this nativity.

Caribbean letters and criticism develop around this specific transformation of the land from palimpsest to black, Indigenous space. Moreover, Wynter's focus on this transformation as humanization parallels the material analysis in works such as those by Guyanese historian Walter Rodney, who claims that blacks transformed and humanized the Guyana coastline (Rodney, 1981, p. 3). Performed on lands that Indigenous Peoples inhabit or inhabited, the time and space of black Indigeneity place Indigenous Peoples' labours for their own well-being in the now Indigenous blacks' past. When black emotive and material labour moves beyond its performance and is written as such, we see its epistemological value and the rise of a modern labour episteme that undergirds black belonging. Within this episteme, the immediate product of black labour was cotton and

6 See Eric Williams, E. (1944). *Capitalism and Slavery,* and Inikori, J. E. (2002). *Africans and the Industrial Revolution in England: A Study in International Trade and Economic Development*.

sugar for export; however, the land itself is the ultimate product that sutures the gap between labour as alienation and labour as becoming and belonging, or disalienation. In the United States of America, there were arguments in the early nineteenth century, such as David Walker's *Appeal to the Coloured Citizens of the World* (1829), which echoed Caribbean ones and held that not only did enslaved black labour develop (read: humanize) the American continent, but also that because of it, blacks emerge as legitimate inheritors of the land.[7]

Black Indigeneity is different from that of Indigenous Peoples not because of resistance alone, but because it is grounded in a type of disalienation around which a labour episteme congeals through letters and politics. Within this episteme, upon independence in the Caribbean, the former colony and space of black labour emerged as a patrimony for blacks, the ultimate source of disalienation. For example, Vere T. Daly, in the first post-independence history of Guyana, endorsed by its first post-independence Prime Minister, claims that blacks were the first to 'make' the country a 'home'. The invocation of the colony as home means that blacks reach back to claim a *prior time* tied to a specific transformation of the land through the productive socioeconomic machine of the plantation, within which their labour accrues teleological value. Black plantation labour as the temporal origin of the home/colony/nation becomes the new time of belonging, which displaces the prior and continuous time of Indigenous Peoples' presence and their non-plantation subsistence labours, making them failed national subjects and market identities.[8]

The twentieth-century achievement of independence across the Caribbean made the labour episteme hegemonic, allowing blacks to assert native belonging as a right to rule, because within it their labour is represented as prior in *time* to Indigenous and indentured peoples. In the United States of America, the episteme is active in calls for reparations that marginalize Indigenous Peoples as failed market identities whose labour could not be captured by the State and exchanged for full citizenship, and it continues to de-link black and native futures.[9] Yet the episteme remains foreclosed for blacks in the face of the failure of the Emancipation Proclamation, the Thirteenth and Fourteenth

7 For this reading of Walker and other such texts by blacks in the United States in the nineteenth century, see Ben-zvi 2018.

8 The use of market identities here derives from Mamdani, 2001. Mamdani uses this term to make visible the ways in which market forces determine the identities of and relationships among individuals in the postcolonial and colonial State.

9 For a contemporary perspective on reparations, see Ta-Nehisi Coates, 'The Case for Reparations', *The Atlantic* (2014).

Amendments to the Constitution of the United States, the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 to actually remove the requirement of death and privation as a condition of black citizenship.

Fetters on belonging: rethinking the master-slave dialectic

For scholars of the African diaspora, the Hegelian dialectic of lordship and bondage, in its reworking from Césaire and Fanon to Susan Buck-Morss and Michelle M. Wright, shapes their conceptualizations of the master-slave dialectic as a material and metaphysical one in which blacks work for the wealth and well-being of the white/settler/master/fully modern/transparent subject.[10] Wright underscores the fundamentality of the dialectic for black being, identifying 'a twentieth-century intellectual tradition of African diasporic counter discourses' that define 'Black subjectivity as that which must be negotiated between the abstract and the real or […] between the ideal and the material' (Wright, 2004, p. 3). The tradition of defining black subjectivity as identified by Wright emerges from this excavation of the Other. However, Hegel's dialectic, read across his phenomenology and history, produces the black other *and* a vanishing native subject.

In *The Philosophy of History*, Hegel claims that 'aborigines' '[…] gradually vanished at the breadth of European activity', and that in the New World, 'negroes are far more susceptible of [sic] the European culture than the Indians'. (Hegel, 1991, pp. 81-82). While the focus in black diaspora and postcolonial criticism is on blacks as the ultimate, secular Other after having taken the place of First Peoples, Hegel's dialectic produces *two* others: an Indigenous one negated entirely through disappearance (although the dialectic of otherness does not work without them) and the black Other, maintained through a greater susceptibility to European culture. Enslaved blacks remain through creolization, or through the place they will come to serve in Karl Marx's materialist dialectic, as a necessary element in primitive accumulation. In Hegel's differing methods of subordination of blacks and natives, the latter are presumed vanished; the former are conceived of as a blank slate, brought in because the latter perished. The idealist dialectic thus makes native disappearance *essential* for conceiving the black subject in terms of its value for white subjectivity and later, the new, native black self.

10 For 'transparency', see Silva (2007).

The Hegelian master-cum-slave dialectic as a process of subordination and excavation from the position of the Other is fundamentally a fetter or constraint for blacks, who re-enact its power relationship with regard to Indigenous Peoples.[11] It preserves the infrahumanity of Indigenous Peoples as necessary for black humanity to be achieved within the dialectic, which offers the last revolutionary potential for Hegelian *Aufhebung*, loosely interpreted here as transcendence based on overcoming. Indigenous Peoples, reduced to cultural presence or land, are thus necessarily invoked in the methods blacks use to 'root' themselves in the literary traditions and in black Marxist historiography, which repeats Hegel's claim of disappearance when defining its subjects in terms of their labour and through that labour, the possibility of no longer being the 'exact antithesis of the citizen' (Wright, 2004, p. 43). In the dialectic in which Indigenous Peoples are made to work for black 'being', there is a tension that maintains the native other as a necessary limit on the production of blackness within modernity. At the same time, there is the desire for Hegelian recognition for the achievement of native status, viewed as a *future* orientation for black identity.[12]

While it may be convenient to say that Indigenous Peoples are absent from some Caribbean islands and do not matter for black Indigeneity there, the endless discursivity of their absence is the precise reason why they are, in figurative and critical writings, brought into the dialectic of being: not the master-slave dialectic but its iteration as a settler-native one, in which they work for black 'becoming' and new Indigeneities, serving as the new limit/measure of black identity within the settler nation-State. Moreover, what might seem a singular truth for Wynter's 'islands' is often writ large as a regional truth that functions ideologically. Caribbean cultural critic Stuart Hall, for example, outlines three cultural, historical and geographic differences that he claims are the basis of diasporic Caribbean cultural identity: *Présence Africaine, Présence Européenne*, and *Présence Americaine*. The first two are largely cultural, but the final one refers to terra incognita or 'the beginning of diaspora, of diversity, of hybridity, and difference' (Hall, 1996, pp. 116–19). Hall's reduction of Indigenous presence to land 'emptied' by Europeans makes it a palimpsest for Creole cultural enactment and labour. Where, however, Indigenous Peoples maintain an active physical presence, the relationship is more complicated.

11 The use of the word 'fetter' in this section is adapted from *The Communist Manifesto* (1848).

12 For more on Hegel, see Jackson (2012). For desire, see Palmer (2011).

In the United States of America, there are 567 federally recognized Indigenous 'tribes' in addition to nations that do not qualify for recognition.[13] In Central and South America, there are hundreds of Indigenous Peoples, with 240 in Brazil alone.[14] Moreover, as the largest importer of enslaved blacks in the Americas, Brazil has seen a unique relationship evolve between blacks and Indigenous Peoples.[15] Of the mainland Caribbean countries, Belize has several Maya groups and the Garifuna, the descendants of enslaved blacks who intermarried with Carib and Arawakan peoples, fought the British in Saint Vincent, and have been diasporized in several Central American countries. French Guiana has seven Indigenous groups and three Maroon groups. Suriname has four Indigenous and half a dozen Maroon groups. Maroons are generally viewed in the same manner as Indigenous Peoples in international law.

In Dominica, there are the Indigenous Kalinago and in Trinidad, the largely mixed descendants of the Caribs still maintain a visible community. Guyana has nine Indigenous groups. As in Belize, in each of the Guianas, Indigenous and/or Maroon groups are at odds with the State: international law has recognized both them and their rights to the land, but States restrict the implementation of international legal rights.[16] In the Caribbean, not only are there recognizable Indigenous groups, but also DNA evidence in the last 20 years has demonstrated survival beyond just culture, language, and 'pure blood', identifying Indigenous genes in the broader population of islands such as Puerto Rico (Forte, 2006). Moreover, when the ways in which Indigenous Peoples articulate historical continuity and identify are considered, the Indigenous presence is more widespread (Castanha, 2010). In the Caribbean, Indigenous Peoples face dispossession from blacks and Indian descendants of indentured labourers, with whom they negotiate land rights. In the United States of America, where blacks and Indigenous Peoples are subordinate in a white settler nation, blacks claim rights through citizenship, while Indigenous Peoples must pit tribal sovereignty against United States citizenship (Bruyneel, 2007). In both contexts, blacks derive rights from labour in ways that are antithetical to Indigenous Peoples' land-based sovereignties

13 United Sates Department of the Interior: Indian Affairs. http://www.bia.gov/WhoWeAre/BIA/OIS/TribalGovernmentServices/TribalDirectory/

14 http://www.survivalinternational.org/tribes/brazilian

15 See the Trans-Atlantic and Intra-American Slave Trade Databases (http://slavevoyages.org)

16 Kambel and MacKay. References to the number of these communities in Suriname and French Guiana are taken from this study.

and, in different ways, they devalue the role of Indigenous Peoples as a historical and contemporary labouring underclass in the Americas.[17]

The disconnection of black and native freedoms around labour eclipses the fact that the well-being of the white/Northern/First World is fundamentally predicated upon the death and privation of blacks *and* Indigenous Peoples. Moreover, the disarticulation was never natural, but engineered legally and socially. It manifested, for instance, in Brazil in the Portuguese distinction between blacks and Indigenous Peoples as *Negros da Guin*é and *Negros da terra*, respectively, which eventually became codified in law (see Forbes, 1988). It manifested in colonial Guiana, when Indigenous Peoples were remunerated by the Dutch for recapturing runaway enslaved blacks. It manifested in the United States of America, where the pre-removal Cherokee Nation and other Indigenous Peoples owned slaves, and where, after Reconstruction, blacks reinvented themselves as settlers on Indigenous lands to which Indigenous Peoples responded by 'enacting de facto segregation policies' (see Menezes, 1977; Holland and Miles, 2006, p. 3). It manifests today where black and Indian-led nations in the Caribbean retain colonial policies towards Indigenous groups and in the United States, where the Cherokee nation has 'expelled' the descendants of its enslaved blacks (see Kellogg, 2011). Despite these breaks, blacks and Indians have found common ground during and after slavery. From the Caribbean, we have the example of the present–day Garifuna. During slavery in the United States of America, we have the example of the Choctaws in Mississippi who aided runaway enslaved peoples, and the example of Martin Luther King Jr. who supported Indigenous groups (see Holland and Miles, 2006, p. 3; Bender, 2014). However, just as King's role as a black civil rights leader eclipsed his solidarity with Indigenous Peoples, today's modes of black organizing also eclipse black movements' solidarity with Indigenous Peoples. While there are efforts within the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement to link up with Indigenous and other groups, the Native Lives Matter movement has largely been made invisible in relation to the former. Moreover, when Native Lives Matter is read through the lens of the BLM movement, it ignores the fact that the threat of death faced by Indigenous Peoples is not the same as that for blacks. Each plays a particular role in an ongoing settler project for which the lives, bodies and lands of Indigenous Peoples are in fact 'ground zero'. Here, the gains of blacks with regard to freedom and sovereignty are in many ways antithetical to Indigenous People's need for recognition and territorial sovereignty. The grounding of BLM in a kind of black vitalism goes well beyond labour and civil rights organizing, and beyond the failure to affirm and secure black life together with Indigenous life and

17 See for example M. Blanet Castellanos. 2010. *A Return to Servitude: Maya Migration and the Tourist Trade in Cancún*.

rights. However, it and other movements still need to address 'European colonization of America' as the 'implicit and undertheorized given' of black freedom struggles (Holland and Miles, 2006, p. 3).

Epistemological lessons

In dominant settler-colonial paradigms, the white settler holds power vis-à-vis minority groups. However, we must begin to address how in the Caribbean and within settler States that fit the dominant model, such as the United States of America, those brought in as forced labour or racialized capital contribute to the disenfranchisement of Indigenous Peoples. They do so because of the ways in which they invert diasporic and Indigenous origins, using the timing of the former to make Indigenous Peoples diasporic in their precolonial, colonial and postcolonial homelands (reservations). This work is happening in other settler contexts such as Canada and Hawaii. In the latter, the focus is on how Asians brought to labour in Hawaii starting in the late nineteenth century now function as settlers vis-à-vis the Indigenous Kānaka Maoli. Bonita Lawrence and Enakshi Dua claim that critical race theory and postcolonial theory neglect Indigenous Peoples because they do not recognize how 'the entry of people of color into Canada put them in colonial relationships with Aboriginal peoples' (Lawrence and Dua, 2005, p. 134).

An epistemological turn in Caribbean social and labour history can emerge from a perspectival shift in how we understand the master-slave dialectic, and from sustained engagement with settler, colonial *and* Indigenous studies, examining how peoples coercively brought into a territory in which Indigenous Peoples existed now hold identities through which settler colonial power works, and thereby extend the colonial subordination of Indigenous Peoples. In black diaspora scholarship, in particular, we must recognize that eclipsing native lives and native sovereignty becomes one way in which we extend the techniques of settler power and constrain our own true freedom. As Yellowknives Dene scholar Glen Coulthard and Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg artist and scholar Leanne Betasamosake Simpson write,

> When we disappear Indigenous presence from our intellectual endeavors, our movement building, and our scholarship, we not only align ourselves with the wrong side of history, we necessarily negate any form of solidarity and become actors in the maintenance of settler colonial-ism (Coulthard and Betasamosake Simpson, 2016, p. 255).

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CHAPTER 13

BLACK STUDIES EPISTEMOLOGIES IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Charisse Burden-Stelly

Introduction: the Black studies movement, pan-Africanism, and cultural nationalism

The black studies movement, inaugurated in the late 1960s by student and community-based demands for a 'more relevant education', represented the intellectual expression of political pan-Africanism in colleges and universities in the United States of America. According to St. Clair Drake, 'Pan-Africanism ha[d] provided a distinct global focus for Black Studies since the programs became a part of the campus scene in the late sixties and early seventies' (Drake, 1984, p. 236). Student agitation for a culturally legible education with utility beyond the so-called ivory tower fundamentally challenged the imperialist, white supremacist, and bourgeois logics of the traditional disciplines. These strivings emphasized economic development of local and global communities, black self-determination and racial equality, and the importance of an internationalist framework to connect African-descendant struggles for liberation in the global North and the global South.

The pan-Africanist ethos undergirding black student militancy was manifested in the characterization of the students' struggles in terms of Third Worldism, with San Francisco State College leading the way by founding the Third World movement in 1968. Black students drew upon the anti-imperial,

anti-colonial, and anti-racist insurgencies in Africa, the Caribbean, and the global decolonizing world more broadly as a metaphor and analogy for their position as an internal colony. Like pan-African movements for independence, sovereignty, and an equal position in the global community, the black student movement asserted itself as culturally and socially equal to the dominant power structure, and thus deserving of recognition, legitimacy, and academic representation of their realities.

The 'intellectual spirit' of black cultural nationalism also animated struggles for black studies on predominately white and historically black college campuses alike (Cruse, 1969, p. 6–10). The Afro-American studies programme proposal submitted to the Yale University administration in December 1968 conveys the influence of cultural nationalism on the formation of black studies. The document emphasized:

1. The diversity of peoples of African ancestry and their living conditions in the perspective of time.
2. The diversity as well as the unity of the African-American cultural experience, and the similarities and differences among the cultures of people of African origin in the Americas and Africa.
3. The various modes of artistic expression in the literature, art, and music characteristic of black cultures.
4. The philosophies and values of these cultures, with major emphasis on continuity and change among the geographic areas.
5. The interrelationships among these factors (Robinson et al., 1969, p. 227).

Black studies were envisioned as a space in which to confront the cultural apparatus of the United States and to counterbalance the historical effects of white cultural particularism that denied the validity of competing values, standards, and epistemologies.

According to Harold Cruse, who played an essential role in orienting black studies towards cultural nationalism, it was only through a sustained investigation of black history and culture that black students, black intellectuals, and black people generally could understand their position in American society, and could work towards democratic and equitable inclusion (Cruse, 1969, pp. 9–12). Manning Marable, another prominent figure in the formation of the discipline, concurred that the function of black studies scholarship was not to merely celebrate heritage and racial self-esteem in the abstract, but rather to utilize history and culture as tools for the eradication of oppression and the fundamental transformation of society (Gates and Marable, 1983, p. 189). Black

studies, then, were a means of redefining the dominant narration of American culture and history by prioritizing the fundamental contributions of black people. Stated differently, the excavation of black history and culture would facilitate social uplift, combat white racial chauvinism, and cultivate the cultural resources with which to wage the battle for human rights and self-determination (Fletcher, 1983, pp. 158–59).

Black feminism

As black students were picketing, striking, and occupying buildings on college and university campuses, black feminist organizations were burgeoning in response to the marginalization of black women in second-wave feminist and mainstream black movements. The Third World Women's Alliance (1968), National Black Feminist Organization (1973), Combahee River Collective (1974), and Black Women's United Front (1975), for example, sought to organize black women across class to combat forms of social and political subjection that resulted in their triple exploitation. Issues of particular importance included employment, wages, housing, day care, and access to good-quality education. The more radical of these organizations combined anti-racism, anti-sexism, anti-capitalism, and anti-imperialism to articulate a programme that directly addressed the concerns and experiences of black women in the struggle for self-determination, an end to economic exploitation and alienation, and the eradication of racialized oppression. Such activism was concomitant with the introduction of black feminism in American higher education.

The introduction of black feminist thought into black studies aimed to challenge black men's overdetermination of scholarly inquiry into the history, culture, and social problems of black people. The inclusion and centring of black women in discourse and knowledge production aimed to clarify what was obscured by their exclusion, expand often-reductive interpretations of black social life due to the omission of gender analysis, interrogate how certain theories and approaches erroneously and unnecessarily placed black women and men in conflict and competition, and reveal whose interests were served in defining black men as the paramount subject of liberation, on the one hand, and pathology, on the other hand.

Starting in the late 1970s, the study of black women's history and literature promoted the rise of academic black feminism. Historians and literary critics, including Darlene Clark Hine, Deborah Gray White, Paula Giddings,

E. Frances White, Evelyn Brooks Higginbotham, Mae G. Henderson, Ann duCille, Deborah E. McDowell, Toni Cade Bambara, and Mary Helen Washington were integral to this project. Concomitantly, black women in law and the social sciences sought to expose the racist and sexist underpinnings of the traditional disciplines, reveal the exclusion and marginalization of black women in studies and frameworks of society, behaviour, and the law, and reclaim space for the experiences of black women in research and scholarship. Here, Kimberlé Crenshaw, Patricia Williams, Patricia Bell-Scott, Deborah K. King, and Elizabeth Higginbotham were of paramount importance.

Black women's studies introduced intersectional analyses of power and systems of oppression into black studies. The work of, *inter alia*, bell hooks, Patricia Hill Collins, Angela Davis, and later Joy James, Ula Y. Taylor, and Carole Boyce-Davies, led the way. Such approaches introduced a novel critique of dominant intellectual systems and offered a host of reforms to transform higher education into a space that was more inclusive of, and open and relevant to, black people generally, and black women particularly. Anthologies including *All the Women Are White, All the Blacks Are Men, but Some of Us Are Brave: Black Women's Studies* (1982), *Home Girls: A Black Feminist Anthology* (1983), *This Bridge Called My Back: Writings by Radical Women of Color* (1983), and *The Black Feminist Reader* (2000), alongside foundational texts such as *Women, Race & Class* (1981), *Feminist Theory: From Margin to Center* (1984), *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment* (1990), *Black Women, Writing, and Identity: Migrations of the Subject* (1994), *Shadowboxing: Representations of Black Feminist Politics* (1999), and *The Veiled Garvey: The Life and Times of Amy Jacques Garvey* (2002), critically reshaped the generally androcentric orientation of black studies, which too often 'socialized out of existence… black women' (Hooks, 1981, p. 7).

Africology

Africology – commonly known as Afrocentricity – became popularized under the leadership of Molefi Kete Asante at Temple University, the first institution to offer a Ph.D. in black studies in 1987. It represented a continuation of the cultural and idealist notions of pan-Africanism articulated by stalwarts, including Paul Cuffe, Una Marson, Martin Delany, Alexander Crummell, Audley Moore, Henry McNeal Turner, Dara Abubakari, Marcus Garvey, and Amy Jacques Garvey. Additionally, Africology built upon debates, starting in the late 1960s,

between scholar-activists, including John Henrik Clarke, Maulana Karenga, and Theophile J. Obenga. Books written by Asante, including *Afrocentricity: The Theory of Social Change* (1980), *The Afrocentric Idea* (1987), and *Kemet, Knowledge, and Afrocentricity* (1990), along with Ama Mazama's *The Afrocentric Paradigm* (2002), Marimba Ani's *Yurugu: An African-Centered Critique of European Cultural Thought and Behavior* (1994), and Karenga's *Introduction to Black Studies* (1982), established the Afrocentric epistemology.

As a reconstructive and interpretive world-view, Africology was meant to 'pose different terms for the debate around race, culture, and community' (Asante, 1996, p. 526) insofar as Western/Eurocentric theories and methodologies, its proponents claimed, could only serve to distort the authentic experience of African people. As the intellectual arm of black cultural nationalism, it articulated a vindicationist narrative in which the self-determination of African descendants was inextricable from the reclamation of an African past, a system of shared commitments, and an ethics of mutuality. Africology posited that Eurocentrism and white supremacy threatened and conceptually incarcerated the political, economic, social – and most importantly, cultural – conditions of African people on the continent and throughout the world. Africologists asserted that, given the reality of white supremacist exploitation and domination, Africans and Europeans had a fundamentally different experience in the world. The shared reality among dispersed Africans resulted in a pan-African perspective forged through a common heritage, history, and identity rooted in Africa. This set those racialized as black apart from whites. Stated differently, the divide between the 'composite African' and the European, as explicated in Ani's *Yurugu,* was both ontological and metaphysical.

In his illuminating text, *Philosophy of African American Studies: Nothing Left of Blackness,* Stephen Ferguson II (2015) offers a distinction between 'strong' and 'weak' Afrocentrism. The strong iteration, represented by scholars including Frances Cress Welsing, Leonard Jeoffries, and Wade Nobles, argued for biological, scientific, and metaphysically exclusivist differentiations between African and European peoples. The weak position, articulated by thinkers such as Greg Carr, Marimba Ani, Molefi Asante, and Ama Mazama, maintained that the differences between the African and the European were sociocultural, ideological, and epistemological.

Africology has much in common with other forms of black cultural studies that predominate in black studies. At the heart of these linked epistemologies is the premise that despite enslavement and colonialism, black people have

been able to survive and thrive through the retention, creation, and exchange of African cultural forms and practices. For Asante,

> the African experience is a global one, and the beliefs and institutions that existed prior to and during the enslavement and colonization by Europe have been able to facilitate our survival on both sides of the West African Ocean despite the incredible brutality of White racial supremacy (Asante, 1996, p. 532).

Conflicts and disagreements between Africology and other articulations of black cultural studies derive from a lack of consensus over the correct or authentic approach to and method for constructing and enunciating blackness, Africanity, and racialized agency. Nonetheless, the purpose of this type of scholarship is to challenge hegemonic epistemologies that assert the dominance and superiority of Europe, whiteness, and the West over all others.

Black cultural and literary studies and post-blackness

The cultural and literary focus of black studies can largely be traced to the influence of the Black Arts movement on its ideological and political formation. According to Barbara Christian, the latter helped to shape the discipline into a space for the reclamation of black culture and history, and for the engagement of blackness as an embodied and experiential reality. Literature, art, and expressive culture became politicized as tools to challenge structures of domination – white supremacy and Eurocentrism in particular – through the integration of feeling and knowledge, and the centring of black being-in-the-world. In effect, cultural and literary studies and production became the method by which the discipline could recreate the world.

Black literary and cultural criticism flourished as a means of understanding blackness through textuality. Harvard University scholars Houston A. Baker Jr, Henry Louis Gates Jr, and Kwame Anthony Appiah, along with black feminist critics such as Barbara Christian, Valarie Smith, and Barbara Smith, were paramount in the textual turn. A notorious debate in 1987 between Joyce A. Joyce, Gates, and Baker in *New Literary History* conveys the ascendance of textuality in black studies, on the one hand, and the ambivalence of alternatively oriented black studies practitioners, on the other hand. With respect to the intersection of representation and black cultural studies, the contributions of Manthia Diawara, Hortense Spillers, and Jacqueline BoBo were indispensable. Additionally, scholars including Harold Cruse, Angela Davis, Cedric J. Robinson,

bell hooks, and Robin D. G. Kelley made up the leftist wing of black literary and cultural criticism.

The emergence of cultural and literary studies was profoundly influenced by the importation of black British cultural studies (BBCS) into American higher education. Stuart Hall's lectures on popular culture at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign in 1983 were particularly important to the rise of black cultural studies in the United States of America. BBCS was an intellectual project that commenced in the late 1970s to investigate how issues of class, culture, false consciousness, and the state were imbricated with the realities of nation, imperialism, racism, and ethnicity. It challenged the silences around race and ethnicity in British cultural studies characteristic of the work emanating from white leftist scholars like Raymond Williams, Richard Hoggart, and E.P Thompson. It sought to expose racisms that were embedded in economic practice, domestic ideologies, and cultural formations. Works like *Policing the Crisis* (1978), *The Empire Strikes Back* (1982), and *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack* (1987) shifted the focus of British cultural studies from culture and society to ethnicity and identity. These texts initiated the antiessentialist turn in British cultural studies among New Left scholars.

BBCS resisted and rejected the homogenizing narratives about black people produced through nation-State discourse and ideologies of black nationalism; concepts including 'translation', 'cultures of hybridity', and 'new ethnicities' thus became important to the turn from racial to ethnic blackness. Thinkers such as Stuart Hall, Hazel V. Carby, Paul Gilroy, and Kobena Mercer helped influence black American scholars to challenge exclusivist cultural formations, majoritarian referential politics, and essentialized black identity, and to take up the politics of representation. Scholars who were uncomfortable with hegemonic (e.g., masculinist, cultural nationalist, American-centred) renderings of blackness or who eschewed notions of authenticity or a composite African personality readily embraced race as representation, post-structuralist discourse, and the performativity of blackness.

Importantly, the accommodation of BBCS into black studies was accomplished with the conspicuous absence of the neo-Marxist critique that was endemic in the work of the Birmingham and London Schools. Consequently, black studies enunciated a study of culture that de-emphasized contradiction, class conflict, and power relations linked to the mode of production. The liberalism and continued retreat from radicalism that characterized the 1980s produced a much more palatable form of BBCS in American colleges and universities, which did not directly challenge the structural conditions of inequality that constituted race

relations. Moreover, as Stuart Hall attested, American black cultural studies was subjected to: extreme professionalization and institutionalization; the formalization of questions of power, reducing them to problems of text and form; and the selective incorporation of aspects of BBCS that approached culture as a way of life without fully accommodating its interpretation of social structures.

The most recent development in black cultural studies is post-blackness, an epistemology of twenty-first century black aesthetics grounded in scepticism about any fixed notion of black art and culture. Coined in 2001 in the field of black visual culture by Glenn Ligon and Thelma Golden, it builds upon the search of the black arts movement of the 1970s to define and specify black art, and the ambivalences and failures that resulted. Post-blackness combines 'mixed media, abstraction, satire, and sheer experimentation' in literature and visual art to convey a cultural mood of disinvestment from notions of authentic, bounded, or representational blackness. Regarding the latter point, writer and cultural critic Touré argues that the advancement of the black middle class after World War II transformed blacks into an intellectually, economically, and academically diverse community, such that there are innumerable ways to 'embody or wield' blackness. Additionally, every person racialized as black has an 'authentic' black identity that makes it impossible to 'do' blackness incorrectly. Thus, post-blackness troubles and complicates blackness, embraces its errancy and excess, and emphasizes its 'stillness-in-motion', without anxieties over 'losing' it.

Post-blackness deploys Amiri Baraka's concept of the 'changing same' and Kamau Brathwaite's theory of 'tidalectics' to interrogate the interplay of presentism, future possibility, and states of 'suspension' in the translation of black experience into art and other modes of cultural expression. Stated differently, post-blackness inheres in the anticipation of a free, self-determined, 'not-yet-here' blackness that shapes what blackness is at any given moment. It is therefore not a rejection of blackness as such, but rather of imposed ideological fixities that obscure the constant tension between 'being' and 'becoming.' As Margo Natalie Crawford explains, 'after an understanding of post-black as post-ideological blackness, we move to the new understanding of "black" as an emptied but full space of imagining the unimaginable' (Crawford, 2010, p. 218). In effect, post-blackness is the epistemological and methodological manifestation of Carolyn M. Rodgers' (1970) expression of being 'Black/ Blacker/and Blackless sometimes' (pp. 265–66).

African diaspora theory

Contemporaneous with the institutionalization of black studies was the popularization of the African diaspora as a heuristic to understand black connection and linkage. The concept helped to explain the condition and future of African descendants against the backdrop of African independence movements. It emerged as both a political and analytic term concerned with the dispersal of African people and their role in building the New World. Early articulations of diaspora emphasized continuity, essentialist notions of Africanness, rootedness, and unity among dispersed groups of African descendants. Consistent themes included violent removal from the homeland, imagined connections among African peoples dispersed throughout the world, and physical or psychological return to Africa. Longing (the psychic and metaphysical yearning based on lack or absence) and memory (the constant reminder of an enslaved or otherwise dominated past that pervades the present) sustained these perceived connections and desires for return. The basis of unity in these conceptualizations was a shared history of white racist domination and exploitation.

Scholars of this theory posited that the African diaspora was an experience of constantly coping with and resisting white supremacy in its myriad manifestations, which fundamentally affected how diasporic identity was formed. Such usages were profoundly vindicationist because people of African descent outside the continent often constituted a minority group in a host country, had a dubious and tenuous relationship to citizenship, and often faced political, economic, and social injustice. Thus, it was necessary to justify why they were worthy of the full benefits of society. It was also necessary to valorize African cultural retentions and connections that survived in the New World to combat Eurocentric notions that people of African descent had no history or culture worthy of study. As a 'stateless diaspora' – that is, a dispersed group that lacks an independent State because of lack of resources, power, or desire (Sheffer, 2003, p. 74–75) – the African diaspora imagined Africa in myriad ways to construct a site of belonging that could be a place of repatriation, racial revitalization, potential freedom, and return to African roots.

As "globalization" became the term used to reflect the ethos of the post-1970 era, the focus of the African diaspora shifted from roots, the nation, and the homeland to fluidity, multiple temporalities, and exchange between sites within the diaspora. According to James Clifford, decolonization, increased immigration, and global communication and transport required

a more 'polythetic' definition of diaspora, insofar as its constitution moved beyond those who were descendants of enslaved Africans (Clifford, 1997, p. 261–68). Kenneth Warren (1993) assessed these changes in theories of the African diaspora, writing that it was the ambiguities within diasporic thought that made particular imaginings possible – not perceived unity or continuity. Further, Africa was not a static place stuck in time that could only be referred to in retrospect; Africanness was as much imagined as it was real and therefore produced a diasporic double consciousness that did not always translate, leading to forms of misrecognition. This iteration of the African diaspora argued for a 'trans-temporal dialogue' (Gates, 2010, p. 62) that must account for varied ways of seeing, being, and knowing blackness. Insofar as experiences of marginalization, dispossession, and oppression are deployed and reproduced unevenly and disparately throughout the African diaspora, broken histories and divergent temporalities problematized earlier understandings of the African diaspora that emphasized unity and continuity.

The African diaspora became a way to critique absolutism while keeping the idea of ethnicity intact – what Paul Gilroy (1993) called 'anti-anti-essentialism'. Instead of the retention of essential elements from an African past, emphasis was placed on cultures being made and remade, with black identity being constructed from multiple and different sites. Further, instead of being fixed or rooted, African diasporic identity came to be understood as the means by which people of African descent could navigate how they were positioned by and in narratives of the past, and engage in cultural retrieval and reconstruction. The African diaspora became represented as a dialogical site of contestation, negotiation, and refashioning. As such, connections within the diaspora became just as important as ideas of origin, which required the decentring of Africa as homeland. Concepts like 'decalage', 'articulation', 'bricolage', 'the changing same', and 'translation' were used to account for the disunity, misrecognition, differences, and disparities within the African diaspora. These, along with the common experiences of black people, accounted for a more complete picture of how diaspora was lived. Moreover, in an attempt to redress the hegemonic influence which the United States of America and the English-speaking world exerted on African diaspora scholarship, more attention began to be paid to sites within the diaspora that had been marginalized or had received little study.

Afro-pessimism

In the wake of pervasive debt crises, structural adjustment, and neoliberalization in the 1980s, Afro-pessimism entered into development narratives about sub-Saharan Africa to describe a host of phenomena at the intersection of governance, political economy, and representation. These included: the effects of Africa's misrepresentation in the Western media on investment, donor fatigue, and development; the exacerbation of the continent's marginalization and exclusion through the circulation of racist stereotypes and derogatory constructions; the effects of neocolonialism on African governance and development potential; the (in)ability of Africans to govern themselves given rampant corruption and economic stagnation; and the question of whether Africa should be recolonized or excised from the global community because of its alleged political and economic failures. Other considerations included the possibility of internal peace, accountability (or lack thereof), the link between political liberalism and growth, and the necessity of democratization to the success of economic market reforms. Afro-pessimism and its ideological corollary, Afro-optimism (or Africa rising), persisted well into the first decade of the twenty-first century, manifested, for example, in *The Economist*'s conceptualizations of Africa, bookended by the notorious 'Hopeless Africa' article of 2000 and a 2011 article positively entitled 'Africa rising'.

In black studies, Afro-pessimism came to prominence in the first decade of the twenty-first century, primarily through the contributions of University of California Irvine professors Frank B. Wilderson III and Jared Sexton. Ironically, though both Afro-pessimism as development discourse and Afro-pessimism as black studies epistemology engage issues of structural lack, failure, and incapacity as they relate to African-derived peoples, they are autonomous and unrelated, with distinct genealogies and modes of analysis. As an interdisciplinary project that combines, among other approaches, film studies, literary theory, poetics, critical discourse analysis, critical theory, and political theory, Afro-pessimism aims to theorize within the irreducible 'anxiety of antagonism' the paradigmatic position of the black in a world structured by anti-blackness and Negrophobia – the position of ontological death. As a black studies epistemology, it 'theorize[s] for battle, to go to war in theory, to fight without experiencing a breakdown or detour in language'. It is grounded in the argument that undergirding the political ontology of modernity is blackness: the singular commodification of human existence that transforms the body into flesh to be accumulated and

exchanged. Such commodification positions the slave as paradigmatically black, and renders racial blackness inextricable from enslavement. This structuring, coupled with the historical failures of abolition, maintains slavery in the 'here and now', reduces the black to the non-ontology and non-being of the slave, and fundamentally emplaces her outside of the modern conjuncture of civil society, citizenship, and humanity (Sexton, 2016; Wilderson III, 2010).

Afro-pessimism derives from black feminist theories of scholars including Hortense Spillers and Saidiya V. Hartman; from challenges to and critiques of the neo-Marxism and post-Marxism of theorists such as Antonio Gramsci and Giorgio Agamben; and from an engagement with the postcolonial, critical, and cultural theories of, *inter alia,* Achille Mbembe, Kra Keeling, Ronald A. T. Judy, and David Marriott. It takes as its structuring logic the pronouncement made by psychiatrist and freedom-fighter Frantz Fanon in *Black Skin, White Masks*: 'ontology – once it is finally admitted as leaving existence by the wayside – does not permit us to understand the being of the black man' (1970, p. 77). As Afro-pessimist philosopher Calvin Warren (2017) argues, this means that the black/slave is a derelict object that has no 'symbolic placement' in the space-time of the modern world, ontologically foreclosed by a semantic field inhered in an enduring commitment to anti-blackness. Consequently, the black/slave, constituted by existential negation, is a sentient being whose unthinkability as person/human/subject scaffolds modernity.

Blackness, as 'a structural position of non-communicability in the face of all other positions […] predicated on modalities of accumulation and fungibility' (Wilderson, 2010, p. 58–59) exceeds the logics of sociality, identity, and difference; its grammar of suffering is wholly unintelligible in its evasion of all categories of the human, including alienation, exploitation, recognition, and incorporation. To eschew historical comparisons and imposed relationality that misapprehend blackness, Afro-pessimism is grounded in the structural instead of the empirical and the political ontological instead of the experiential. Concomitantly, for Afro-pessimists, it is the libidinal economy – not political economy – that subtends modern formulations of power. Moreover, by foregrounding anti-blackness as opposed to white supremacy, this epistemology brings into sharp relief that the zone of being and the zone of non-being are ontological regions of non-blackness/freedom and blackness/slavery, respectively. In the final analysis, as 'an ethics of the real, a politics of the imperative, engaged in its interminably downward movement' (Sexton, 2016), Afro-pessimism, of necessity, rejects the prosthetics of progressive, anti-racist, and multiculturalist discourses that pervade higher education to violently erase and avoid the non-transcendental suffering of the black/slave.

Conclusion: Black studies and the elision of political economy

By the late 1980s, when black studies had become more or less institutionalized, there was a noted and distinct absence of Marxist, historical materialist, and critical political economic analysis of blackness in its formulation. The discipline tended to ignore or marginalize the study of economic agency, economic resistance, the failure of the market, the relationship between labour and exploitation, and economic development (or the lack thereof) in black communities in the United States of America and in the black world. The organization of black studies around the analytic of 'diaspora' reified the cultural specifications of blackness through the transnationalization of the study of black sociality and culture.

The shift in global accumulation – that is, the transformation of capital from its liberal to corporate form – precipitated by the 1973 world recession and oil crisis, the declining rate of profit, deindustrialization in the global North, and a looming debt crisis in the global South had homologous, albeit geospatially specific, effects on all peoples of African descent. The emphasis on cultural affinity and connection in black studies neglected the convergence of the material experiences in the structural organization of political economy among blacks in the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Africa, and the Caribbean in the wake of a neoliberal agenda that produced a rollback of the state and its reformulation. This was instantiated through Reaganomics, Thatcherism, and structural adjustment that accompanied the collapse of the socialist/communist alternative. Despite this global restructuring, popular and scholarly understandings of American and 'diasporic' blackness rejected critical political economy. In other words, black studies failed to incorporate a structural and material critique of globalization that could have provided a deeper understanding of the ways in which black people have been linked historically through the global axial division of labour.

The economists Patrick Mason and Mwangi wa Gĩthĩnji (2008) pointed to the overwhelming representation of the humanities in black studies and the relative absence of the social sciences, especially economics. This was not always the case; in its early development, political economy and economic development were important sub-foci. However, by 2008, when a special issue of *Journal of Black Studies* focusing on the role of political economy in black studies was published, only 1.75 per cent of faculty members in the

discipline were economists, and economics courses represented just over 1 per cent of those that were offered. By contrast, faculty members with specialties in literature and history represented a plurality of the core faculty; and these disciplines, along with music, were the dominant fields among faculty affiliated with black studies. Moreover, radical black political economists in, and the contributions of critical political economy to, black intellectual thought has been all but forgotten. According to economist Julianne Malveaux (2008), 'traditional and theoretical disciplinary formulations' of black studies – in other words, its overdetermination by history, literature, and the politics of identity – have been largely influenced by the exigencies of institutional accommodation, which are best served by the field's cultural studies approach.

The distortions produced by the anti-Marxist and anti-materialist specifications of black studies invisibilize and even negate the structural and material dynamics involved in the production, maintenance, and reinscription of blackness over time and space. Further, the discipline evades and undermines critical political economy by diverting research and scholarship away from the material conditions of black abjection, dispossession, and exploitation. This is notwithstanding the reality that structural and antisystemic modes of critique expose the true conditions of blackness – a revelation that is essential to a sustained anti-capitalist challenge that resists reinscription into the statist project of global accumulation.

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CHAPTER 14

TRANSNATIONAL FEMINISM FOR GLOBAL AFRICA

Amina Mama

Introduction

The historic mission undertaken by pan-African and nationalist intellectuals in the last century was to recuperate and re-frame Africa from an African-centred epistemological perspective. This intellectual task was an integral aspect of anti-colonial movements, providing knowledge that would free Africans from colonial mentality and generate confidence as African nations claimed their place in the community of nations. This epistemological shift was as generative as it was political, as evidenced by aesthetic transformations in the arts, cinema and literature, and push for new research paradigms and theories that could serve African interests and agendas.

In the context of decolonization, the first generation of African intellectuals, most of whom had been trained in the West and experienced racism first-hand, concentrated on historical recovery. A mood of renaissance accompanied the publication of ground-breaking texts, exemplified in the work of Cheikh Anta Diop (1974). Diop's thesis held that Ancient Egypt was an African civilization and that this was the root of all human civilization. His thesis became a classic, powerfully contradicting European claims and their assertions of supremacy, while celebrating the greatness of African civilization.

Diop typified the first generation of the African intelligentsia to emerge from the colonial order, and this dedicated to rebutting colonial constructions of Africa. Their work still inspires African scholars globally, but from today's vantage point it is clear that the first generation countered imperialism by presenting a grand theory of Africa that did not attend to the internal social dynamics, or the historical processes and contradictions that move societies forward (Mkandawire, 2005, p. 6).[1] As such, it did not attend to the class, gender or other key features of social organization. While the inattention to gender is often attributed to the fact that the first generation of professors were nearly all men, it is important to note that scholarship of the 1950s to 1970s preceded the spread of feminist consciousness in Africa. Without feminist tools of analysis, even the best of Africa's nationalist and pan-Africanist scholars did not have the awareness required to see the manner in which dynamics of gender and sexuality imbued the processes that were transforming the African world. The philosophical importance of feminism and the African-focused feminist praxis it brings to understanding the past, present and future possibilities for Africa, are the subject of this contribution.

Dependent independence

The fact that political independence was not followed by the economic independence Kwame Nkrumah and other nationalist leaders had predicted was to present major setbacks for Africa's position in the world. Even before the new national flags were raised, Cold War ideological contestations and a global arms race were fuelling schisms and proxy wars within Africa's movements for political independence and liberation, militarizing and corrupting African politics and forestalling more revolutionary possibilities.

Over half a century later, Africa's condition is attributed as much to national political and authoritarian regimes which, women observe, have remained dominated by men and their masculine views of the world. During the 1970s to early 1980s it became clear that African nations were being incorporated into the global economy on unfavourable terms. World systems and dependency theories treated imperialism as the global expansion of capitalism. Samir Amin

1 Two of Fanon's essays are particularly pertinent here: *The Trials and Tribulations of National Consciousness* and *On National Culture* (originally presented in 1959). Both are available in Fanon's *The Wretched of the Earth*.

(1977) was among the radical thinkers who developed critiques of a world system that had set Africa on a path of neo-colonialism (Nkrumah, 1965). Theories of class struggle turned attention to the dynamics of class exploitation in African societies and to social movement studies that would generate increasingly critical analyses of capitalist modernization and its effects on Africa (Rodney, 1980, pp. 18-41; Padmore, 1971; Shivji, 1974).

The next section discusses the rise of women in the African intelligentsia and the contribution of feminist ideas to regional knowledge production, before proceeding, in the following section, to identify traces of earlier cultural nationalist and revolutionary philosophical positions in contemporary discourses that are grouped under the rubric of 'African feminism'. The last section considers what today's increasingly transnational feminist perspectives offer to the realization of Global Africa.

Women in the African academy

Africanization replaced European men with African men, with little consideration to the fact that colonial regimes had concentrated on drawing men into serving economic and administrative systems, and largely excluded women. There is now evidence pointing to legislative and policy regulations that banned women from cities and imposed other curbs on mobility, and which were enforced through punitive round-ups and fines, and the colonial propagation of discourses that denigrated and pathologized African women (Barnes, 1999; White, 1990). Colonial education for women was minimal, amounting to schooling in domesticity that would add 'a feminine touch' to the empire and produce suitable wives for a Western-style male elite (Mann, 1985; Hansen, 1992; Geiger, 1998). More extensive programmes for women, such as those of the French in Algeria (Lazreg, 1994), were based on a deliberate strategy to undermine the resistance.

Women's 'special treatment' during colonialism emanated from European gender ideologies, but most African leaders did not see this as a problem during the initial euphoric decade of flag independence.[2] Nationhood was primarily

2 There is evidence that women and gender issues were discussed in popular education as far as this was sustained in movements. Left-inclined movements such as the PAIGC under Amílcar Cabral, FRELIMO under Samora Machel and Oliver Tambo's ANC afforded women higher levels of participation during the years of struggle. The legacy of greater involvement is evident in the Southern African nations that record higher levels of political representation: South Africa, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and others. Post-independence movements have campaigned energetically for increased women's political participation.

envisaged as the opportunity for men to be restored to full masculinity and citizenship, with women installed in their homes as suitable wives. In many nations, women were left with the limited legal status of minors and deprived of basic rights, in the name of 'culture'. Women may not have been explicitly excluded from the new State, or the national universities, but their access was constrained by the persistence of European gender ideologies, no matter how inappropriate to African conditions.

It was not until the second and third generation African professoriate that objections were raised, first to protest the underrepresentation of women, and secondly, the manner in which the purportedly 'neutral' masculine cultures of African universities continued to present particular difficulties for women students and professors. It was not until the 1980s that the epistemological challenges presented by androcentric methodologies in mainstream teaching and research would be addressed, through the establishment of feminist teaching and research.

The development crisis galvanized feminist research in Africa (Mama, 2005). Many of Africa's women professors share women's desires for justice. This may explain their concentration in the related fields of law, political science and public policy, education and international development studies. In this respect, African women, like their male colleagues of the same second and third generations, are predominantly forward-looking, carrying out critical analysis of the injustices and inequalities that continue to divide so many African contexts. However, the trajectories of African epistemologies are not linear, as can be seen from the ways in which intellectual discourses of the present carry traces of the major ideological contestations and debates that shaped earlier pan-African perspectives on the world.

Cultural nationalist and Marxist precursors of African feminism

Feminist studies have unearthed a long-standing involvement of women in pan-African and African liberation movements. So for example, Reddock provides evidence of Amy Ashwood Garvey's significant involvement in the Garveyite movement that emerged in the early twentieth-century Caribbean and North America, and the possibility that she co-founded the United Negro Improvement Association (Reddock, 2007). Boyce-Davies reminds us of the African-African American women's participation, including the organizing and

sponsorship of the historic 1945 Pan-African Congress (Boyce-Davies, 2007). But what was the intellectual environment encountered by Anna Julia Cooper, Adelaide Casely-Hayford, Mabel Dove Danquah and others?

During the 1950s Eric Williams had drawn the connection between capitalism and slavery (Williams, 1944) and Padmore published *Pan-Africanism or Communism? The Coming Struggle for Africa* to address the tension between cultural nationalist and revolutionary Marxist positions. This tension was manifest in discussions about which be given primacy – race or class (Padmore, 1972 [1955]). Women were not on this agenda, but their involvement allowed them to form transnational interpersonal relationships with each other. Biographical studies show that radical women travelled extensively, coming into contact with others in both pan-African and socialist movements. Una Marson was involved in anti-imperialist work, while supporting West African students in London during the critical years that led to independence. Personal relationships developed among women such as Claudia Jones and Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti, who both attended the World Congress of Women in the USSR in 1963, and met again in Japan the following year to campaign against nuclear weapons. Several attended meetings of the Women's International Democratic Federation, a left-affiliated organization which provided support to African national liberation struggles.[3]

Studies also reveal a rich legacy of socialist feminist intellectual and political work on the continent. Among the well-documented examples is Huda Shaarawi, a socialist and nationalist, who led the formation of the Egyptian Feminist Union in the 1920s (Badran, 1995). During the 1940s, Nigeria's Funmilayo Ransome-Kuti was organizing women across class lines to resist men's abuses of colonial power (Johnson-Odim and Mba, 1997). While Nigeria and Kenya typify African colonies where the forces for independence largely accepted unmitigated capitalist models of development, many African liberation movements embraced socialist principles and received support from the USSR and Cuba. Africa's socialist liberation movements were more inclined to declare that women's emancipation was a necessary aspect of national liberation.[4] However, over the duration of

3 The United States Government banned Mrs Kuti from entering on the basis of her suspected "communism", and the Nigerian Government seized her passport. McCarthyism had more direct effect on Claudia Jones, who was arrested and imprisoned before being deported to London.

4 Amilcar Cabral, Oliver Tambo and Thomas Sankara are among the leaders most associated with progressive gender politics, but there is evidence that they were often ahead of comrades (women and men) in the structures they led. See, for example, Aliou Ly's article: Revisiting the Guinea-Bissau Liberation War: The PAIGC, UDEMU, and the Question of Women's Emancipation, *Portuguese Journal of Social Science*, Volume 14, Number 3, 2015.

prolonged liberation wars, consciousness-raising work including discussions about the role of women appears to have fallen by the wayside, and the emancipation of women deferred (Nhongo-Simbanegavi, 2000).

Some of the early studies of gender draw on cultural nationalist discourse to focus on celebrating the power they ascribe to women in indigenous African cultures, attributing the oppression of women to colonialism and rejecting feminism, defined as Western, and thus irrelevant to African societies. Boyce-Davies describes this approach as 'culturalist feminism' pointing out the limited evidence for the claim that pre-colonial Africa was less oppressive to women. Drawing on the work of Diop and a number of colonial anthropological studies, the culturalist approach repeats the methodological errors of the cultural nationalist historiography noted in the introduction above. Like first generation cultural nationalism, culturalist feminism takes imperialism as its main protagonist. In order to dismiss 'feminism' it is therefore defined as an aspect of imperialism.[5] While anti-imperialism has wide currency, subsuming 'feminism' under this rubric has a collateral cost, namely the dismissal of the many decades of continental feminism that have followed and moved beyond the cultural nationalism that characterized the mid-twentieth-century movements.

Other second and third generation feminists, particularly those emerging from revolutionary liberation movements, are informed by socialist political philosophy. As such they are aligned with male contemporaries also investigating global systems and social and economic class structures. However, feminist scholars have added much to the Marxist political economies of the 1970s and 1980s, moving beyond structural determinism to raise questions about agency, subjectivity, social and personal relationships and kinship networks, as well as the day-to-day livelihoods and material histories of women. Feminists on the continent have used innovative methods to uncover the histories of movements and the life histories of women, recovering a body of knowledge on feminist consciousness and organizing in African and pan-African movements throughout the twentieth century. However, it has not been the African past so much as the challenges of the present and desires for a better future that have provided impetus to feminists mobilizing across the African world.

5 Amadiume (1987, 2004) pursues the thesis that indigenous African societies were matriarchal on the basis of anthropological study of the Nnobi Igbo community. Oyewunmi (1991) argues that 'gender did not exist' in African societies prior to colonialism, drawing her evidence from the gender-neutral features of the Yoruba language spoken in the Old Oyo Kingdom. Boyce-Davies (2015) provides a well-argued and more detailed discussion of the limitations of culturalist feminism.

The development nexus

From the crisis of the 1970s onwards, the persisting oppression and marginalization of women came to be identified as a significant factor in Africa's underdevelopment.[6] The disproportionate burdening and impoverishment of women provided the material conditions for an escalation of feminist consciousness. This was the context in which the Association of African Women for Research and Development (AAWORD) convened in Dakar at the end of the 1970s, with the specific agenda of challenging the gendered effects of development (AAWORD, 1982). The imposition of structural adjustment programmes through the 1980s, and the accompanying divestment of the public sector gave even more salience to the class and gender exploitation at the heart of African economies, as the conditionalities of structural adjustment increased the burdens on the poorest strata across African societies in gendered ways, exacerbating the feminization of poverty.[7] The 1980s also saw the establishment of the Women's Research and Documentation Project at the University of Dar es Salaam,[8] and the Women's Research and Documentation Centre founded by historian Bolanle Awe at the University of Ibadan in 1988. By conducting research and advocacy work on the situation of women in the surrounding communities, these early interventions marked a departure from ivory-tower conventions, and faced resistance from colleagues. However, feminists working on women and gender were able to draw modest amounts of development funding into resource-starved universities, so that by the mid 2000s, there were as many as 40 gender and women's studies departments in African Universities. Academic networks were pressured to include women and take on gender analysis by women in their ranks, as well as by external donors.[9]

6 Boserup's seminal monograph "Women's Role in Economic Development" was published in 1970. The "feminization of poverty" became a catch phrase for the complex intersections of class (or more accurately, socioeconomic status and rural locations) with gender that were implicated in underdevelopment.

7 Antrobus, a vocal critic of Structural Adjustment in both the Caribbean and Africa, was also a founder of the Women and Development Network (WAND) at the Cave Hill Campus of the University of West Indies, and of the DAWN network. See Antrobus, P., 2004. *The Global Women's Movement: Origins, Issues and Strategies.* London, Zed Books.

8 Faculty members Marjorie Mbilinyi and Ruth Meena were among the founding group.

9 The Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA) has led the way, holding the first regional workshop on 'Gender Analysis' in 1991, followed by an annual summer institute and annual gender workshops. See Imam, Ayesha, Amina Mama and Fatou Sow (eds) *Engendering African Social Sciences* (Dakar, CODESRIA, 1996) and CODESRIA's Gender Series.

The connections between continental and Caribbean feminist activism point to a long historical consciousness. During the early 1990s, feminists on the continent were inspired by the success of colleagues establishing gender and development studies at the University of the West Indies. This informed the establishment of the African Gender Institute (AGI) and its success. Apart from adding women and gender studies to the University of Cape Town curriculum, AGI convened a continent-wide programme to strengthen gender studies and research. The AGI strategy brought African departments and centres into a re-engagement with feminist movements around pedagogic and curriculum work to advance feminist agendas within and beyond the African academy. Relationships between African and Caribbean feminists have been sustained through exchange visits and mutual invitations, and the establishment of the African gender studies journal *Feminist Africa* in 2002 informed the establishment of the *Caribbean Feminist Review* five years later, in 2007.[10]

Between the 1980s and the present day, African feminists on the continent and in the diaspora have been able to mobilize resources to establish NGOs and programmes for women. This has enabled the formation of thousands of women's organizations carrying out advocacy, training, information and resource work, and significant outreach to women in remote and disadvantaged communities.

The impact of so much mobilization cannot be detailed here, but there is now an extensive bibliography of sources detailing some of the advances and gains that have accrued to women through the rise of feminist organizing and its pervasiveness. Indeed, feminism of one form or another has come to pervade many arenas, across civil society and social movements, political and state structures, legal and policy making institutions, religious formations, social and educational spaces, as if it will indeed leave no stone unturned. Perhaps the most celebrated gains have been those evident in gender equality clauses in constitutions and the African Union's policy commitments, as well as in numerous legal reforms by national governments. It is perhaps only on the African continent that the highest level of governance – the African Union – has responded to concerted feminist advocacy, with a series of new protocols and commitments.[11]

10 *Feminist Africa* Issue 6 'Diaspora Feminisms' was edited by Trinidadian feminist Rhoda Reddock, and a number of Africans have contributed to the *Caribbean Feminist Review*.

11 The Protocol on the African Charter on Human and People's Rights and the Rights of Women in Africa (the Maputo Protocol) of 2003 has been signed by 36/54 nations (as at July 2016), and is the most advanced statement on African women's rights. Furthermore, in 2003, a Diaspora Division was established at the African Union.

The strategic adeptness of women's organizing in African and Caribbean contexts has resulted in significant advances in women's legal rights and political participation, policy discourses and provisions for women. However, the opportunities afforded by development funding have been contradictory. Specific advances in one or more areas have often been accompanied by wider de-politicization that may steer attention away from controversial subject matter and issues, or more radical actions. Often, feminist energy and skills are redirected towards providing skills and services to a development industry concerned by 'mainstreaming gender' in inclusionary ways that serve to maintain the status quo. In this sense, radical feminist agendas tend to remain at the margins, while the mainstream landscape is complicated by new professionals variously referred to as 'gender trainers', 'gender experts' and 'gender consultants' who offer distilled technical skills that are freed from the historical-political ferment that concerned the generations before them.

New questions arise with every gain. So, for example, what criteria differentiate 'success' from 'appropriation'? What material conditions determine whether the appropriation of feminist concepts becomes a good or a bad thing? With the massive proliferation and dispersal of discourses enabled by digital technologies and facilitated by postmodernism, how do we establish what is 'real' as compared to purely discursive? Pan-African feminism is born of intertwined epistemologies of resistance, which respond to material conditions of African histories and the fact that African women and men live different lives in societies that are more or less segregated by sex and gender. While sex and gender may be fluid and flexible in terms of African cultures, the fact is that with globalization, Western hegemonies of race, gender and sexuality are propagated through the 'global development' industry, as much as by 'global market forces' constricting the historically available possibilities in ways that demand more radical and complex strategies of resistance.

Transnational feminism for Global Africa

African feminism, once freed from the burden of proving its authenticity and relevance, embraces a transnational outlook derived from a long experience of transnational contacts across the African world. The example of the Pan-African Women's Organization (PAWO) reminds us that African women have recognized the merits of continental unity since at least 1962. More than half a century later, the convening of the fourth African Feminist Forum (AFF) in

Harare in 2016 marks a radically different moment and heralds twenty-first-century possibilities. The African Feminist Forum has convened four times since its creation in 2016, attended by hundreds of African women on the basis of their identification with feminist politics. The Forums are uniquely designed, self-critically reflective celebrations of continental feminist movements in all their diversity. Pursuing a transgenerational and inclusive mobilizing strategy, the AFF promotes the hosting of national forums to involve and inspire hundreds more women across the continent. [12]

Transnational feminism can be defined as a contemporary movement that proceeds on the basis of identified common interests that are not bound by national borders and can be better addressed by cross-border organizing. As an epistemological perspective, it offers a methodology for challenging the gendered effects of globalization, including the unfavourable terms under which women from Africa and other Southern contexts are being incorporated into the global market. Transnational feminism is explicitly anti-capitalist and retains an anti-imperialist focus on the exploitative features of the global market economy.[13] Today there is greater engagement with mainstream matters that earlier generations might not have regarded as priorities for women: macroeconomic policies and global trading systems; conflict and security; environmental degradation and climate change, all of which are addressed through transnational organizations and networks and supported by transnational women's funds,[14] whose modest budgets provide little indication of their global impact.

Finally, the evidence presented here demonstrates connections that have passed the test of time and have the potential to facilitate processes that can contribute to the realization of an inclusive, just and equitable vision of Global Africa that brings freedom to African peoples, wherever they are.

12 The founding commitments of the African Feminist Forum are articulated in the Charter of Principles for African Feminists. The assertiveness of the Charter and its far-reaching objectives point to a rising generation of African feminists working in and for Africa, finding the power and voice to address long-term injustices and confront even the most contentious issues. These include action against the multiple forms of violence perpetrated against women, the rights of lesbian, gay, transgender and other sexual minorities, alongside long-term struggles for political, socio-cultural and economic justice.

13 Many feminist networks remain concerned with all the issues that would conventionally be defined as feminist: sex- and gender-based violence, sexuality and sexual freedom, women's health and reproductive rights, harmful traditional practices, women's education and political participation, women's human rights, domestic labour, the exploitation of women's labour, sexual harassment, constraints on women's mobility and the policing of dress. Feminist movements are at the forefront of such organizing, taking full advantage of new technological tools and levels of mobility.

14 For example, the Global Fund for Women and the African Women's Development Fund.

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CHAPTER 15

INTELLECTUAL GENEALOGIES OF BLACK/QUEER/DIASPORA

Jafari S. Allen

As we proceed upon the specific and difficult tasks of survival in the twenty-first century, we of the African diaspora need to recognize our differences as well as our similarities. […] We seek what is most fruitful for all people, and less hunger for our children. But we are not the same. […] To successfully battle the many faces of institutionalized racial oppression, we must share the strengths of each other's vision as well as the weaponries born of particular experience. First, we must recognize each other.[1]

Introduction

Black/queer/diaspora work emerges from radical black and Third World lesbian feminist art, activism and scholarship, and builds upon the scholarly and programmatic practice of black queer studies and queer of colour critique, to consider the state of diasporic black queer projects in the context of various shifts in empires and affiliations. For at least thirty years, activists, artists and scholars have shown the social and poetic co-articulation of blackness, 'queerness' and nationality – putting together how blackness and oppositional

1 Audre Lorde, foreword to *Showing our Colors* (Opitz et al., 1992).

consciousness, and blackness and sexual and gender non-conformity, are lived, albeit uneasily. The conjunction of these various streams of work owes much to the maturation of the literature in black and queer of colour studies, and the current existential crisis in queer studies, and also to the recognition of the presence of the transnational in every moment, even 'at home', and the rapidity of popular forms of (uneven) global exchange. In this short summary of the black/queer/diaspora studies project, I hope to provide a sketch of the salient issues and texts in this emergent field. Today, new South-South conversations – from the Caribbean to various regions of Africa, Asia and Oceania, for example – and voices from the North, clarifying their simultaneous British-, American-, Canadian- or Europeanness, are beginning to be heard in a framework that is non-national and 'non-Western'.

This work thus pursues 'new' sets of questions, conjuncturally related to perennial ones: Do African and Afrodescendent sexual minorities and gender insurgents share common desires, or conditions, across borders and languages? What 'erotic subjectivities' (Allen, 2011*b*) and insurgent black queer poetics obtain in sites scholars have previously ignored, or spaces that reach 'across', 'through' and 'between'? What political or affective strategies might be effective for one place or space, but not for others? And finally, what methodologies must we use to track all of this? By what means should we convey our analysis and reflection? Black/queer/diaspora work surfaces at a moment when the terms 'black', 'queer' and 'diaspora' have already begun to be elaborated beyond the metaphors and concepts offered by any one of these constituencies, and beyond false dichotomies of essentialism and anti-essentialism (Hall, 1996; Gilroy, 1993; Mercer, 1994; Carby, 1987; Carby, 1999; Lara, 2006; Glave, 2008*a*).[2] Following Rinaldo Walcott's crucial intervention to the effect that a 'diaspora reading practice […] can disrupt the centrality of nationalist discourses within the black studies project and thereby also allow for an elaboration of a black queer diaspora project' as 'the reconceptualizing of black queer and black diaspora produces both a black queer diaspora and a new black queer theory' (Walcott, 2007), we can thus claim to position black/queer/diaspora in black studies, queer studies and feminist studies as a 'backbone rather than anomaly' (Johnson and Henderson, 2005, p. xii).

2 We were also profoundly shaped and inspired – from the time we were children and young adults – by the prose of writers like Zora Neale Hurston, James Baldwin, Gwendolyn Brooks, Chinua Achebe, Derek Walcott, Dionne Brand, Toni Morrison and others, who are of course masters of affective and performative writing. For many of us therefore, black/queer/diaspora is as much about the writing – that is, not 'writing up' data, reporting or mimicking the prose style of French theory, but rather attempting to convey feeling as supplement or complement to information – as, and articulated with, theory and methodology.

Here, black identity/identification is understood as hybrid, contingent, relational and no less socially real. That is, 'black' is a useful term for describing the historical, political and affective ties of many individuals to one another, yet we do not attach mystical, transhistorical or essential biological value to this term. The black diaspora is at once about particular locations (actual and imagined), roots/uprooting (principally understood as being from Africa, but equally, in other cases, to and within Africa), and routes along which bodies, ideas and texts travel. By diaspora we mean these conditions of movement and emplacement, and processes of (dis)identification, and also relationality, as Jacqueline Nassy Brown (2005) points out. Afrodescendent groups' (dis) identification as black, Afro-hyphenated, *Kréyol,* Creole, mixed or other, does not occur in a vacuum, but is conditioned by particularities of place, in relation to discourses and practices within other places. Black diasporic relationality refers to this process. And while actual migration, whether forced, chosen or coerced, continues to be a major factor in making the black world, the diaspora is so deeply constitutive of the fabric of blackness that it is also experienced among individuals who will never leave their own town, but who nevertheless powerfully imagine their own black/queer 'other' identity.

Who's 'queer'?/Whose queer?

Black and queer of colour scholars have already pointed to the important contributions of the larger enterprise of queer theory, with respect to its ruthless critique of normativity, and have roundly criticized queer theory's proposition of universal heterosexual privilege, which undermines the importance of intersectional experience and positionality (see especially, Rodríguez, 2011, pp. 331–348; Allen, 2009*b*, pp. 311–326 (16); Halberstam, 2005, p. 23 (3–4 84–85), pp. 219–233). Sexual minorities and gender variant individuals from the global South who negotiate but do not wholly capitulate to what Cymene Howe (2002, pp. 237–79) has called the 'universal queer subject' discursively fall, in both time and space, outside the narrowly Western and Northern middle-class gay constructions of 'family', 'lesbian', 'gay', 'queer' and 'gay rights'. Not only are black subjects always already queer in terms of normative liberal ideals of the person, but black queers also often seem 'a queer too far' for much of queer studies and gay and lesbian popular culture and politics. Still, 'queer' not only marks one of the constitutive academic discourses and historical moments here, but is also a critical way of seeing and saying. That is, following Muñoz (2009,

p. 1), for me, 'queerness is essentially about […] an insistence on potentiality or concrete possibility for another world'. And of course, for black queers, survival has always been about finding ways to connect some of what is disconnected, to embody and re-member. Collections such as E. Patrick Johnson and Mae G. Henderson's *Black Queer Studies: A Critical Anthology*, Jennifer DeVere Brody and Dwight A. McBride's 'Plum Nelly: New Essays in Black Queer Studies' (a special issue of *Calalloo: A Journal of African and African-American Arts and Letters*) and a number of other works have already drawn the lineages of black queer studies. 'Plum Nelly' and black queer studies each emerge in different ways from the Black Queer Studies in the Millennium Conference (2000), organized by Johnson at the University of North Carolina (Boggs, 2000). Black queer studies more or less followed the parameters of the conference, focusing on blacks in the United States of America, with Rinaldo Walcott's contribution pushing at these borders from Canada, a 'queer place in diaspora'. However, Michelle Wright and Antje Schuhmann's collection *Blackness and Sexualities*, which emerges from the Europe-based Collegium for African-American Research and was published in Germany, broadens the geographic and thematic scopes of the black queer studies project, to Europe (and Cuba), as well as to themes that are not strictly LGBTQ. Each of these works, characterized by insurgent re-readings of classical or otherwise well-known texts, reclamation of intellectual traditions, and writing into the scholarly record subjects otherwise relegated to the margins, at once cleared and claimed space (Battle and Barnes, 2010; Page and Richardson, 2010).

More recently, Omise'eke Natasha Tinsley's *GLQ* article 'Black Atlantic, Queer Atlantic: Queer Imaginings of the Middle Passage' proposed a rethinking of metaphors of ships, oceans as bodies, and performative bodies (offered by Paul Gilroy, Antonio Benitez Rojo and Judith Butler, respectively), arguing that the black queer Atlantic 'churns differently […] diffracting meanings', leaving black queer diasporic subjects 'whole and broken', 'brutalized and feeling […] divided from other diasporic migrants and linked to them' (Smith, F. 2011). Apropos of queer of colour critique, José Esteban Muñoz's *Cruising Utopia: The Then and There of Queer Futurity* follows his earlier work's commitment to creating alternative visions of performance and performativity, read through a lens constituted in and through cultural theory that affirms futurity, but with a difference. As more individuals trained in social science methodologies contribute to this work, we are beginning to see new possibilities (McCready, 2010). *Say it Loud, I'm Black and I'm Proud: Black Pride Survey 2000,* Gloria Wekker's *The Politics of Passion*, Wesley Crichlow's *Buller Men and Batty*

Bwoys, David A.B. Murray's *Opacity,* my own work and Juan Battle's Social Justice Sexuality Project, now under way, have begun to provide ethnographic dimensions and empirical data (Decena, 2011; Moore, 2011; Allen, 2011*b*) for black queer studies and queer of colour critique.

While commentators have astutely cited the Black Queer Studies in the Millennium Conference (2000) as a watershed moment which provided both a platform for the staging of black queer studies and a foundation for various other related pursuits, like collaboration and mentoring that support the work of black queer studies and black queer scholars and artists, an event that preceded it by five years is just as significant, yet has garnered little critical attention (Alexander, 2000, pp. 1285–1305; DeVere Brody, 2000, pp. 1–1277; Woodard, 2000, pp. 1278–1284). The 'Black Nations/Queer Nations?' Conference, documented by Shari Frilot in a film of the same name, was concerned not only with raising questions about the study of black LGBT two-spirited and same-gender-loving black people, across nationality, class, ability, gender and sexual expression, but also with expanding the capacity for critical engagement and political organizing (Frilot, 1995). As Vincent Woodard asserted in his astute review of the Black Queer Studies in the Millennium Conference (2000), the 'Black Nations/Queer Nations?' Conference 'was the first to pose the black queer question in an academic setting'. The interrogative and often contradictory meanings and politics of each term – *black*, *queer* and *nations* – and the articulations instantiated by the stroke (/) make this at once a potentially destabilizing and generative heuristic. In fact, this heuristic sutures (or makes coherent) the in-between *idea* of black/queer/diaspora. 'Black Nations/Queer Nations?' is thus also an important model for engaged projects, which, like black/queer/diaspora work, attempts to deepen and broaden the ineluctable connections between scholarship, activism and artistry. Even a cursory look at the foundational works of black queer studies – anthologies, broadsides, chapbooks, poetry collections and other non-academic intellectual and political work – demonstrates this connection.[3] Black queer studies and queer of colour critique is practised not only in scholarly publications, but also in teaching at graduate and undergraduate levels, and in panels offered at local and international conferences and symposia.[4] In addition, a number of critical archival and cultural projects, political organizations and personal connections between individuals

3 See especially Barbara Smith, Audre Lorde and Joseph Beam. Much primary material, including personal papers and ephemera can be found at the *In the Life Archive.*

4 Caribbean Region of the International Resource Network (Caribbean IRN).

whose networks and texts stretch across the globe, represent a more widespread and democratic circuit of *black queer here and there*.

Genealogical matrices

While literatures on globalization and transnationalism have tended to highlight the ways in which the State is disappearing or being eclipsed by global capital and new information technologies, even neo-liberal (leaning) States retain their powers and prerogatives of surveillance, severe discipline and in some cases expulsion or extermination of vulnerable persons, even as they continue to disinvest in public health, education and welfare. My own research in Cuba, Trinidad and Tobago and Brazil, and experiences at home in the United States of America, impels us to take seriously the distinctions between socialist and liberal States, post-colonial and imperial nations, North and South. There are crucial historical and political-economic distinctions that condition and structure both the ways in which a State – any State – attempts to regulate particular bodies, and how national belonging is reckoned. Still, it seems the State – seemingly every State, though of course with widely varying scales and intensities – depends upon racialized heteropatriarchy (which is always also classed) to constitute and maintain itself in the global hierarchy of States (Allen, 2009*a*, pp. 53–62; Allen, 2011*b*). Since she wrote *The Boundaries of Blackness,* Cathy J. Cohen has exposed the ways in which the United States of America and black institutions, academics and families construct the dangerous vulnerabilities of the deeply and multiply subaltern – an analytic category she has formulated as 'punks, bulldaggers, and welfare queens' (Cohen, 1997, pp. 437–465). In her essay 'Deviance as Resistance: A New Research Agenda for the Study of Black Politics', Cohen critiques African-American studies' politics of respectability and argues that the reputed deviance of lesbians, gays, transgender and bisexual persons, single mothers and State aid recipients, in the eyes of American policymakers as well as scholars and civil society leaders, marks this group not only as unruly would-be subject-citizens, but also outside of cultural boundaries of belonging and care (Cohen, 2004, vol. 1, pp. 27–45). Similarly, M. Jacqui Alexander has argued that some bodies, such as those of the lesbian and the 'prostitute', cannot be included as citizens in former colonies of the Caribbean precisely because they embody sexual agency and eroticism radically out of step with the aspiration of the nation to advertise itself as independent, developed, disciplined and poised to join the number of putatively civilized

States (Alexander, 1994, pp. 5–23; Alexander, 1991). As she beautifully shows, this same 'erotic autonomy' is the place from which individuals and groups have staged various rebellions. Taken together, the work of Alexander and Cohen illustrates both a set of nettlesome political problems and a theoretical puzzle, across a black diaspora that is at the centre of the black/queer/diaspora project: Is there any place where the benefits and recognition of citizenship can accrue to the unruly – the 'prostitute', homosexual, 'welfare queen', transgender person, or the black? What calculus emerges when these gendered, raced and sexed categories of the non-national, deviant, non-ethnic/racial, non-conforming, or merely 'other' are compounded? One of the major contributions of the black/queer/diaspora project is to show that 'diaspora' constitutes a way out of the nation State. Failing inclusion as a properly hygienic citizen or subject, where is the place for the black queer? This query also pointedly suggests that the notion of citizenship, with its obvious rules of exclusion and exception, stands in for a wider range of assurances and freedoms, since non-State actors like families, cultural groups and especially religious organizations, often think like a State – making strange bedfellows with repressive State apparatus in their support for projects of respectability. Their shared project is to discipline individuals into local legibility and particular forms of subjectification. An assortment of players, including Muslim clerics in northern Nigeria, Christian fundamentalists governing the Statehouse of Indiana and other areas of the United States of America, and government officials in the Caribbean and East Africa, citing their personal conservative Christian and Hindu religious beliefs, erroneously imagine a moment before the experience of same-sex desire, and support the enactment or continuation of 'anti-gay' legislation. As they perform a celebration of sexual diversity, Western European nations continue to disclaim the black and Afro-hyphenated within their borders.

Black 'quare' studies in the United States of America have focused on 'making an intervention at home', as Johnson and Henderson remind us.[5] Recently, examinations of African, Caribbean, Canadian, European and Latin American literature and film have revealed that this theme is indeed global: 'home' as a site of ambivalence and potential 'conflama' (a United States black gay vernacular composite connoting confusion and drama), yet at the same time somehow constituting Hemphill's 'place that will be worth so much effort and love'. It

5 'Quare' of course refers to E. Patrick Johnson's important intervention in Black Queer Studies: A Critical Anthology, which first appeared in 2001: '"Quare" Studies, or (Almost) Everything I Know about Queer Studies I Learned from My Grandmother'. *Text and Performance Quarterly*, No. 21, pp. 1–25.

is just as central in black/queer/diaspora literature beyond America's borders (Walcott in Johnson and Henderson, 2005). *Our Caribbean: A Gathering of Lesbian and Gay Writing from the Antilles,* edited by Thomas Glave, is just as powerfully read as a diasporic text as an Antillean one, and while mostly from the 1990s and 2000s, includes work from as far back as 1956 that reveals, like much of Glave's own beautifully evocative lyrical writing, that 'home' in (and out of, and returning back to) the Caribbean is also a troubled space. Of course Canadian/Trinbagonian Dionne Brand's critically acclaimed oeuvre also layers (im)migration, diaspora, dispacement and longing. While there is a growing number of works on Africa that sympathetically engage sexuality, including those of Marc Epprecht, Neville Hoad and the working group's own Graeme Reid, the impressive collection edited by Sylvia Tamale, *African Sexualities: A Reader* (which is more of a comprehensive reader on sexualities rather than specific to homosexualities and trans identities) has opened the way for more work highlighting African sexual minorities and gender insurgents from the perspectives of black African activists. As the work of photographer and activist Ajamu X and the community arts organization rukus! shows, Britain continues to be a hotbed of black/queer/diaspora work. This of course follows the work of British artists like filmmaker Isaac Julien, Nigerian photographer Rotimi Fani-Kayode, and critical cultural scholar Kobena Mercer, whose work in the late 1980s and 1990s spoke pointedly and engagingly to black queer culture across three continents, before focusing more particularly on visual art. This brilliant and provocative work parsed the political and conceptual consequences of gender, racial and sexual difference, nationality, ethnicity and aesthetics within Britain and beyond. Moreover, popular forms of Africentricity – another iteration of earlier pan-African movements – are also well represented in black lesbian and gay culture in Britain and the United States of America.

As Cohen notes, truly radical or transformative politics have not resulted from queer theory thus far. In some cases, it has in fact 'served to reinforce simple dichotomies between heterosexual and everything "queer"' (Cohen, 1999, p. 22). Perhaps the transformative politics we have been waiting for will emerge through following and participating in actual political transformations on the ground. As one example, the concept of 'sexual orientation inclusion advocacy', as practised in Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago, may provide fertile ground. This work by and on behalf of vulnerable populations of LGBT persons seeking to be free from violence, harassment and discrimination is far from a single-minded focus on 'sexual rights'; it sees itself as extending participation and protection for minorities and vulnerable persons of all kinds, in these self-

consciously multicultural post-colonial countries. Thus their queer work, which seeks to redeem the anti-colonial struggle, is, to borrow the title of a recent Arcus Operating Foundation report that surveyed the field, at once about *Saving Lives, Promoting Democracy, Alleviating Poverty, and Fighting AIDS* (Galst, 2010). Uninvited interventions by radical black feminists in black politics, arts and letters demonstrated that submerged, discredited or 'alternative' knowledges, produced in the interstices of violence, silence, invisibility or forgetting, exposed a wider horizon of possibilities than had been imagined previously (Combahee River Collective, 1986; Ferguson, 2004; Clarke, 1983 [2000], pp. 197–208; Simmons, 1983 [2007]). The black/queer/diaspora project takes up this challenge to develop a synthetic vision and methodology of diasporic black queer futurity. We have taken up the work that Cathy J. Cohen has challenged us to do, shifting research agendas to understand and meet the urgent demands of those who are multiply vulnerable. Furthermore, we are following M. Jacqui Alexander's proposal that the key epistemological aim of our work should be to think/live/write contradictions of genre, discipline, materiality, spirituality and affect, all at once (Alexander, 2007, pp. 154–166).

Epistemological lessons

The stakes are, literally, life and death for Afrodescendent non-heteronormative and gender variant individuals – not only in the global South, which is often labelled a homophobic place out of sync with the so-called 'enlightened' North, but also in 'developed' States. In many nations of the world they face the criminalization of 'sodomy' and 'cross-dressing'. In extreme examples, rumour and innuendo – perhaps plastered on the front page of a newspaper – is enough to cause a person to be beaten, jailed or killed for being homosexual or gender variant. Nationalist rhetoric, which cast LGBT rights and recognition as 'foreign' attacks on 'tradition' or sovereignty resonate with fundamentalist religious rhetoric, both in the former colonial world and in the metropoles. Racist and transphobic disenfranchisement, employment discrimination, and the strategic silence of most nation States on the need for targeted public health interventions for LGBTQ individuals whose secondary and tertiary marginalization makes them more vulnerable, is widespread.

Epistemologically, it is important to focus on black/queer studies not only because black people have been viewed through jaundiced lenses, but also because it is now clear that standard scholarly frameworks do not allow us to

see anyone or anything fully enough, or clearly enough. Black/queer/diaspora is the conjuncture of scholarly literatures, theoretical frameworks and sites of struggle and cultural production. Primary among these is a commitment to the on-the-ground experiences and intellectual, artistic and political legacies of black people in a number of areas. Chief among these is black feminism, and 'acting womanish'. Another important stream is a re-working of other intellectual and activist traditions, like queer theory. The recent emergence of black/queer and queer of colour work points out the limits of queer theory and queer studies. On its own, that is outside of its continued re-working by critical race, decolonial indigenous and disability theorists in the academic world, the arts and activism, 'queer' may never do what some defenders claim it was meant to do: achieve a wider co-articulation of a number of embodied and embodying categories of normativity, like nationality, gender, region, class and ability, as well as sexuality. Nonetheless, despite often important critiques of their provenance and use as merely inaccurate or sloppy shorthand, queer thinking and queer seeing still offer a unique way of pushing past normative assumptions of 'sexuality'.

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CHAPTER 16

GENEALOGY OF A DISCRIMINATORY RHETORIC IN THE CLASSICAL ARAB-MUSLIM WORLD

Salah Trabelsi

Introduction

It was at the beginning of the second half of the fourth century of the Hejira (H), or tenth century of the Common Era (CE), that geographer and chronicler Muḥammad Abū al-Qāsim Ibn Ḥawqal decided to travel the world. The story of this pilgrimage is recorded in the book he left for posterity: *Kitāb al-Masālik wa-l-Mamālik* (Book of Roads and Kingdoms), known mainly under its other name *Ṣūrat al-'arḍ* (The Face of the Earth). In this travel journal the author explains that he wants to examine the reasons for the differences between countries and the customs, culture and ways they adopt. In all likelihood he left Baghdad on 7 *Ramaḍān* 332 H/15 May 943 CE. He travelled to the Maghreb, Sahara, South Africa and Muslim Spain from 336 to 340 H (947 to 951 CE). He went on to Egypt and Syria, followed by Iran, Armenia, Transoxania and Iraq before winding up his travels in 362 H/973 CE with a journey across Arab Sicily. This journey of over thirty years resulted in this itinerant geographer writing an exciting narrative based, he said, on his unequivocal observation of reality and a meticulous appraisal of the testimonies he had collected. We are particularly interested in the description of African countries and his perception of blacks in general.

Ibn Ḥawqal remains silent when it comes to the real motives for his travels. But at the beginning, in his prologue, he presents a succinct account of his investigative methods and the reasons for choosing the people he deemed worthy of inclusion in his account and those whom, because of their different characteristics, he excluded. The author provides a geographical and ethnocultural map of the world based on phenotypical and religious criteria. In an empirical way, it offers a classification that crosses the line of colour and distinguishes people by their customs and modes of governance. This chromatic, custom-orientated and political taxonomy ended with territories inhabited by blacks being seen as the representation and quintessence of the most radical kind of otherness. In the author's eyes this part of the world was the prototype of wild societies living in a state of nature. Dark-skinned, devoid of beliefs and intelligence, these people had slid to the bottom of the human hierarchy.

Having established that much, however, the author changes his mind and plays down his opinion a little, appraising two distinct African communities. Apparently, the moral and institutional weaknesses that he attributes to blacks in general are not entirely irreversible. Hence the Ethiopians and Nubians are included in the ranks of civilized nations, being capable of extricating themselves from the mass of black people mired in unbelief and absolute ignorance. However, the author seems to insinuate that such qualities are not specific to those peoples. In his opinion, they are the product of closeness to Egypt and Byzantium. This happy coincidence of being situated near two great civilizations has given them the advantage of avoiding the insurmountable defects considered widespread among the blacks. Ibn Ḥawqal takes great care to explain his way of thinking. Clearly, this is based on an elementary logic that excludes so-called primitive peoples and retains only those whose customs have been mellowed by culture and civilization. Apparently the issue is not simply the type of social or political organization, because the choice also depends on other peculiarities specific to them. Ergo, because of their physical and moral differences, their identity is said to be reinforced by a twofold naturalness. The climate and physical environment, combined with the prism of colour, would therefore explain the different way in which they are treated.

This approach is neither surprising nor unexpected. The same grounds for categorization and cultural stigmatization were at work from the beginning of the Arab conquests. Ibn Ḥawqal is heir to a long tradition that is perceptible amongst the earliest geographers, chroniclers and travellers. It would probably be wrong to downplay the importance of his work. His concern to educate is clear, especially as he claims to want, as a traveller and eyewitness, to give an

informed account of events that he himself has experienced. But despite his willingness to convey tangible information, the author fails to pull away from the preconceptions of his time.

Let us, then, continue to follow his line of reasoning. Undoubtedly, Ibn Ḥawqal is quick to give his conjectures the appearance of a principle of evidence. Hence the following text:

> I have not mentioned the country of blacks in the Maghreb, nor Bedjdja and Zanj, nor other groups living in the vicinity because proper organization of empires is down to religious conviction, good morals and wise institutions; and the preservation of wealth depends on a just method of government. But these people neglect these qualities and do not participate in them; they therefore deserve to be singled out from other empires when it comes to being developed. However, some of the blacks settled in the vicinity of these famous empires adopt a religious belief, regulated lifestyles and sensible institutions and become closer to the inhabitants of these empires: an example are the Nubians and Abyssinians who conform to Byzantine ways of life. Before Islam, they were confined on Byzantine lands just as Nubian region borders Egypt and Abyssinia skirts the coastline of the Red Sea. Between these peoples and Egypt there are settled desert areas with gold mines; on the other hand they are linked to Eygpt and Syria via the Red Sea. […] These are the known empires: the territory of Islam has grown by annexing the land of the aforementioned empires and it has seen its prestige and grandeur grow as a result (Ibn Ḥawqal, 1967, pp. 9–10).

Evidently this viewpoint is far from unique. The framework of the narrative and the specific use of words are clearly reminiscent of the words and mindset of his predecessors, especially Ibn al-Faqīh al-Hamadhānī (1967), al-Balkhī (1899) and al-Istakhrī (1961). Furthermore, he claimed that al-Istakhrī, his teacher and loyal companion, had entrusted him with the work and made him responsible for correcting topographical maps and annotations. The composition of his work clearly shows a direct link with a particular literary genre from the late third to early fourth centuries called *'adab al-masālik wa-l-mamālik* (general survey of roads and kingdoms) which helped to forge and propagate a new vision of the world. With Arab expansion beyond the Maghreb, Sudan and the Mediterranean, this viewpoint would be widely expounded by successive Arab scholars. The way blacks were perceived was therefore to leave a lasting impression.

It must be said that during the first centuries of Islam the image of the African continent was only an obscure and fragmented reflection. In general, the weight of intellectual opinion among Arab scholars would long be marked by the old prejudices inherited from their Greek masters. Despite the importance

of contact with Sudanese kingdoms and of trading initiatives, mainly geared towards gold and slavery, we have very few accounts or overviews of Africa, its peoples, their character traits and history. The speculative and descriptive geography did not reveal anything specific to the old continent. As for the term *Ifrīqiya*, this designated the eastern Maghreb and presented no analogy whatsoever with the name that would later be given to the 'dark continent'. The latter was seen as an archipelago of wild lands inhabited by scattered peoples, which extended to the fringes of the Maghreb, the Sahelo-Sudanese strip, the shores of the Red Sea and the lands bordering the Indian Ocean and the Sea of Zanj. Early travel accounts described a hostile world inhabited by primitive populations; paradoxically, they were of major interest because of trading opportunities in gold, precious wood, ivory and enslaved people.

How were these territories, criss-crossed for long periods by traders familiar with long-term trade, so cloaked in silence? However, if the Arab merchants had been endowed with audaciousness and commercial skill alone it is unlikely that they could have extracted so much profit from such a remote and perilous undertaking. Those taking such risks must have had an extensive knowledge of routes, stopovers and distances between the countries concerned. But that alone cannot explain the success of the Arab merchants. They also needed an accurate appreciation of the needs, habits, psychological inclinations, tastes and preferences of the African peoples.

Despite the many strands of Arab scholarship flourishing by the beginning of the ninth century, knowledge about the black population remained extremely scant. When it came to social conformity, it suffices to look at the work of geographer Ibn al-Faqīh al-Hamadhānī. In *Mukhtasar Kitāb al-Buldān*, he compared the shape of the planet to that of a bird. In this system, Africa was stripped of all material reality. The parts that he sketched of the northern part of the continent, from the western fringes of Egypt to the extreme edges of the Maghreb, are insubstantial. In this highly evocative allegory of the thinking of the time, Ibn al-Faqīh (op. cit., pp. 3–4) recalls that:

> According to 'Abd Allah Ibn Wā'il al-Saḥmī, the shape of the world is split into five areas. The world looks like a bird's head with two wings, a chest and a tail. The head of the world is China and beyond China is where people called the Wāq-Wâq live; and beyond the Wāq-Wāq are a people whose numbers are only known to Allah. The right wing is India and beyond India there is an ocean beyond which there is no-one; the left wing is al-Khazar […]; the chest of the world is Mecca, Hedjaz,

> Syria, Iraq and Egypt; the tail stretches from Dhāt al-Humān to the Maghreb, and the worst part of the bird is the tail.

Documentary sources provide much of our information regarding the development of mindsets, the introduction of colour prejudice and the establishment of an imaginary hierarchy. Understanding the processes involved in producing stereotypes and the markers of biological and sociocultural identities proves an inexhaustible subject. To which precise moment in the history of the Arab and Muslim world can we trace back the premises of the naturalization and essentialisation of blacks? How did the transition from simple stereotype to systematic stigmatization come about? Did the latter precede or coincide with the spread of enslavement?

In general, the texts reveal the spectacle of successive and overlapping cycles of resignation and friction. They explicitly mention sporadic tension and aggravation. This is apparent in the writings of authors such as al-Djāḥiẓ (1964, vol. I), al-Balādhurī (1996), al-Ṭabarī (1991), al-Masʿūdī (1973), Ibn Ḥawqal (2014), al-Wakīʿ (n.d.) and Ibn Khaldūn (n.d.). It emerges that between the late seventh and early eleventh centuries, bloody conflicts were provoked by enslaved black people. Exacerbated by the spread of enslavement into all areas of activity, the enslaved people's revolt raised chronic concerns. We know that the rebellion unleashed in the lower Mesopotamian valley between 869 and 883 resulted in tragic bloodshed. Spurred on by their early successes, the enslaved rebels extended their protests further afield and directed their attacks toward Baghdad. News spread like wildfire, spreading panic and fear throughout the Caliphate provinces.

According to the chronicle of al-Ṭabarī (op. cit., vol. V, p. 587), the longest and most bloody revolt lasted for fourteen years and pitted enslaved people against the caliphate army. This contemporary historian of events is the first to provide conclusive evidence drawn from administrative archives and facts he had personally experienced. The author describes in great detail the ups and downs of the insurgency and its spread across the land. His accounts highlight the parallel rise of wealthy bourgeois estate owners and, on the other hand, a considerable core of (mainly African) enslaved people. In addition to forced labour, the latter suffered oppression and relentless misery. We also know that though their movement involved bloodshed, the rebels succeeded in thwarting the expansion of hydrographic and agricultural initiatives in the lower Mesopotamian valley.

Importantly, it is in this context of rebellion and tragic confrontation that we witness the most violent outburst of images and negative attributes directed

against blacks. As a result, there is a noticeable change in the tone of historical narratives. Chronicler al-Tabarī is a case in point. This historian, who is usually relatively objective when narrating facts, cannot stop himself from denigrating and maligning the actions of the insurgents. His words take on a violent tone, fiercely denouncing the enslaved rebels and describing them as a 'band of savages, godless monsters, cursed and evil traitors, enemies of God and Islam'.

This new rhetoric marks the beginning of the crystallization of the issue of colour and enslavement. When a scholar like Ibn Ḥawqal confesses his discomfiture about including specific information about the world of blacks in his book, this voluntary omission is not unrelated to the memory of the grim years of the enslaved people's struggle. The copyist for Ibn Ḥawqal (op. cit., pp. 237–8), who visited the environs of Basra during 537 H/1122 CE, reported that 'there was scarcely anything left except ruins and rare vestiges. All the neighbourhoods have been demolished apart from a few that are still famous […]'. This devastation, he says, began with the Zanj revolt and became more noticeable thereafter.

By examining some classic literary, geographical and historical texts we shall attempt to unravel the complexity of these culturalist and racializing discourses. By reconstructing their semantic and genealogical threads, we shall try to identify their historical significance. As we have just seen, the founding of an immense colonial empire brought about profound socio-economic and cultural changes – a shift that shattered traditional and family values. By the middle of the seventh century, the outlines of a new society had appeared, with a particular interest in the acquisition of enslaved people. As the main source of energy and prestige, enslaved people would soon be greatly in demand. In a way that was probably different but concordant, Arab chronicles attest to this insatiable call for labour that could be fashioned and worked at will. The development of large-scale work in mines, palm groves, cotton fields and sugar cane plantations, hydroagricultural projects in Iraq, Arabia, Iran, the Persian Gulf, Maghreb and Andalusia was the lever for the mass deportation of a dependent workforce.

But the enslaved did not all come from the same world. They were an assortment of people of disparate origins and with different skin colours. Even if the warning signs of racialized discrimination were visible from the first century, it should be said that slave recruitment was not based on phenotype. That is perhaps the main difference between this model and the Atlantic enslavement model. It is certainly problematic to speak of an exact symmetry between the notions of slavery and negritude. Neither can we subscribe totally here to Achille Mbembe's reflection on modern European societies and the tragic fate

of the black man that he mentions in his *Critique of Black Reason* (2017). Of all human beings, he says, the Negro is the only one whose flesh was turned into a commodity. Moreover, the Negro and his race have never been linked as one in European consciousness. Since the eighteenth century they have been, as an entity, the hidden and oft denied subsoil from which modern knowledge – and also of government – was rolled out.

Obviously, the first part of this paragraph cannot apply because it does not correspond to the historical period we are dealing with here, and because of the extreme variations of origin and skin colour of those enslaved during the Middle Ages. On the other hand, the second part of his proposition, although describing a situation far removed in time and space, might not be totally devoid of meaning when it comes to thinking about otherness, similarities and dissimilarities in the Muslim world. It should not be forgotten that even back then, Arabs were not completely indifferent to the ethnic origins of the enslaved. Despite the silence and denial, some writers even had the audacity to launch a debate on the colour issue and representations of blacks. The *Risāla fī Fakhr al-Sūdān,* written by al-Djāḥiẓ (died 869), the great prose writer of African descent, is clear proof of the exacerbation of social tension and ethnic prejudice. This admirable text is also a supreme historical testimony to the extent of the subjection being suffered (al-Djāḥiẓ, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 172–226).

As a lucid observer, the author examines the history of this repressed underclass tucked away in the low-lying lands of Basra and al-Ubulla. He sheds light on their stubborn resistance in the face of contempt and exploitation. As such, he is the great initiator of a new genre in Arabic literature, that of appraising society. One of the points in favour of al-Djāḥiẓ is that he examines the contradictions in his world from a conceptual and contextual standpoint. He is the first Muslim philosopher to describe social reality and expose the discrimination and violence suffered by black minority groups. He sets out the dilemma between so-called universal ethical principles and social practices in a clear way, without skirting the issue. The result is a careful examination and decoding of Arab perception of black minorities.

This epistle has the great merit of being both historical and didactic. It retraces the genesis of discriminatory discourse and goes on to meticulously decode the rhetorical processes and mental maps keeping blacks on the lowest rung of the human ladder. The brilliance of this author's offbeat style of writing, with its tinges of humour and irony, reveals the power of images and stereotypes. By describing their modes of enunciation, he emphasizes the scope of legends and sinister allegations. He also explains how the colour

adjective *aswad* (black) has come to replace the noun *'abd* (slave). This lexical retroversion had the effect of reinforcing the similarity between stereotypes that mixed up social, ethnic and anthropological traits. It ultimately resulted in an essentializing category:[1] a persistent prejudice that still haunts Arab societies. The author also puts the spotlight on another ethnic referent, that of *Zanj,* (plural *Zunūj*, and *Zanjiyyāt* in the feminine), often used in narrative texts to describe the enslaved black people. Originally this word was attributed to East African Bantu communities. Over time the word became widespread. *'Abd*, *'aswad* and *Zanj* became interchangeable terms. As nouns, they stood for a confusion of biological, social and cultural identities. The *Risāla fi fakhr al-Sudān* highlights the resonance of these discursive amalgams and their impact on collective mentalities.

It is clear that these realities date back further than al-Djāḥiẓ's era. The main argument of this epistle is one of transparency and a strong need for a debate on the representation of blacks over the two periods of history: pre- and post-Islam. He writes to the blacks, for the attention of Arabs:

> This is one aspect of your misguidance. In pre-Islamic times you considered us equals and were happy for us to marry your daughters and wives. But once the laws of Islam were established you decreed that that was all obsolete (al-Djāḥiẓ, op. cit., vol. I, p. 197)

A little further on he adds:

> God – Almighty – did not create us black to disfigure us. Rather it is the climate in our countries that has caused that situation (ibid., p. 219).

Turning to the register of resistance, the author recalls certain episodes of their history in the lands of Islam. He recollects the mutiny that happened in the second half of the eighth century before the great rebellion of 869 CE:

> The Zanj said: The forty who rebelled in the valley of the Euphrates at the time of Sawwâr Ibn 'Abd Allāh were our own. They displaced the inhabitants of the valley of the Euphrates from their homes and massacred the people of al-Ubulla (ibid., vol. I, p. 195).

This brief allusion to fugitives from slavery and their desperate struggles is supported by other medieval chroniclers, especially al-Balādhurī and al-Wakī'. The latter recounts serious incidents that occurred at the beginning of the 'Abbasid caliphate. He reports clashes between dozens of brown-skinned

1 These categories are still used in many Arab countries. In the Maghreb, the word 'abd is often used as a generic substitute for any individual with a dark complexion.

enslaved people, during the year 143/757-60, to the famous grand judge Sawwār Ibn ʿAbd Allāh, who we know was the first Hanafi magistrate to be appointed by Caliph al-Manṣūr himself (r. 136-158 H/754-775 CE).

This judge was entrusted twice with the jurisdiction of Basra; the first time from 138 to 144 H/755 to 761 CE, followed by a three-year gap. He was reinstated as head of the magistracy in 147 H/764 CE and remained in that post until his death in 157 H/774 CE. Apparently in addition to his job as grand qadi (magistrate) he was also head of the police force and probably officiated for some time as a prefect. It was during his first term that, according to the author of *'Akhbār al-Quḍāt*, a group of enslaved people caused a disturbance:

> A group of twenty or so black slaves owned by Basra masters escaped on horseback and rode off towards Daoud Basin. Once there they protested vehemently, causing much tumult and noise (al-Wakī, op. cit., p. 270).

Terrified, some of his relatives advised him to kill them all. Others suggested that he should turn a blind eye, believing that they were only anguished, starving brown-skinned enslaved people who would eventually return to their masters. Others recommended sending troops over to disperse them (al-Balādhurī, op. cit., p. 350). But the situation deteriorated rapidly. The rebels took refuge in the thickets of al-Ubulla, which they turned into an improvised fort and raiding base. This restiveness quickly turned into a major movement. Despite their small number, they spread their radius of activity and raged for several days, sowing havoc and destruction, attacking the houses of the rich and killing many inhabitants. They even challenged the authorities by congregating close to the prefect's house.

Finally, qadi Sawwār decided to put an end to the rising insurgency and called in the army. Government troops repelled the rebels and massacred most of them. Shortly afterwards, however, another revolt broke out, this time in the heart of the holy city of Medina, egged on by other groups of enslaved black people. It is likely that stories of the exploits in Basra and al-Ubulla would have helped boost the boldness of those enslaved in Medina.

Most chroniclers described these enslaved individuals by the simple generic of *Sūdān*. For al-Djāḥiẓ these rebels were undoubtedly Zanj. We cannot say exactly when they began to settle in southern Iraq. But it is highly likely that they were deported to Iraq under the first Umayyad caliphs to work on canals, terracing/earthwork and irrigation projects. It is in this region that most enslaved Africans were found.

Considered to be particularly disorderly, they were the source of the most infamous Arab proverbs; and the butt of the most ferocious rants by Christian doctor and Baghdad theologian Ibn Buṭlān. According to him, owning these kinds of slaves was not easy. Judging them to be disobedient and fractious, he recommended they be treated with harshness and brutality and forced to work until they dropped to their knees. In his opinion, enslavement and hard labour went together because, he explained:

> [T]heir extremely dark skin, hateful nature, mood swings, careless and unthinking temperaments, physical endurance and capacity to withstand pain and suffering predispose them "naturally" to hard labour. (Ibn Buṭlān, 1957, pp. 354–378)

This treatise, written by the highly skilled practitioner Ibn Butlān, offers a singular and striking framework for psychological and social representation. The author tries to sketch a racialized classification of people and ethnicity. From this value grid he goes on to a kind of "rationalization" of domestic activity and socio-professional assignment. Armenians and Zanj, considered to be particularly disorderly and rebellious, are, from that moment on, described as the vilest and most dastardly of the enslaved, whether black or white, on planet earth.

The recurrence of revolts, terrorism and repression led to the question of whether enslaved resistance boosted the impact of categorization. Indeed, we can see the gradual formation of the spectre of irremediable human inferiority of the enslaved. For their part, Muslim jurists did not fail to provide legal and moral assurances legitimizing the legality of the slave trade and reinforcing the authority of masters over their servants. In his *Risāla,* devoted to elements of Malikite Muslim dogma, Ibn Abī Zayd al-Qayrawānī (2005, pp. 146, 150, 182), while admitting ambiguity regarding enslaved status, did not hesitate to legally associate children born to enslaved females with cattle, and brown-skinned enslaved people with fleeing camels.

In short, it is a terrible blow to reduce the enslaved to the status of an animal. From his own experience of being enslaved, Frederick Douglass shows the pitfalls inherent in these manœuvres aimed at reversing the causes and effects of oppression and enslavement:

> Ignorance and depravity, he says, and the inability to rise from degradation to civilisation and respectability are the most common allegations made with regard to the oppressed. The evils of slavery and oppression are precisely those that the owners of slaves and oppressors would like to assign from their system to the natural character of their victims. In this way, the very crimes of slavery become the very best defence of slavery (F. Douglass, quoted by Gates, 1995, p. 94).

However, in addition to the power of images and prejudices, the register of myth and religion is mobilized in turn to give the most misleading insinuations more weight. From this point onwards, negritude, stupidity, ugliness and turpitude are presented as obvious signs of a congenitally weak, deceitful and hypocritical nature. We find in the work of Ibn Qutayba, a former disciple of al-Djāḥiẓ who ended up turning his back on his master's thinking, an eloquent testimony to the way in which this gradual and progressive shift in the ethic stereotype slid towards contempt and stigma. In a passage in his work *Kitāb al-Maʿārif,* Ibn Qutayba returns to the question of blacks, the *Sūdān* and the so-called divine curse. To do this he appeals to the authority of Wahb Ibn al-Munabbih (born in the mid-eleventh century), a Christian of Yemeni descent who was honoured and celebrated for his immense knowledge of the Bible and Talmud. Ibn Qutayba states that in the beginning, blacks were white, beautiful and radiant, before Noah cast his curse on the children of Ham:

> Wahb Ibn al-Munabbih reports that Ḥām, the son of Nūḥ, was originally a white man. He had a beautiful face and a very pleasing appearance. But God changed the colour of Ḥām following the curse of Nūḥ, his father. Ḥām then went away followed by his children and settled on the coast. God made them multiply and grow. They became the lineage of black people called the Sūdān. They ate fish. They sharpened their teeth like needles so the flesh of fish stuck to the teeth. Some of the descendents of Ḥām settled in the Maghreb. Ḥām produced Kūsh, Kanʿān, and Fūt. The latter went to live in India and Sindh and peopled the area with his posterity. Kūsh and Kanʿān, however, both spawned the race of blacks represented by the Nubians, Zanj, Fazzanais, Zaghāwa, Abyssinians, Copts and Berbers (Ibn Qutayba, 1992, p. 26).

This disparate canvas would be used by a raft of Arab prose writers to systematically spread their imprecations. Ibn Ḥawqal, like Ibn Butlān or philosophers such as al-Kindī or Ibn Sīnā, did not bother adding any aesthetic or moral consistency. Al-Masʿūdī openly admits that Arabs adopted the prejudices inherited from the ancient Greeks and they, in turn, helped to accentuate them.

He recalls that the philosopher Yaʿqūb Ibn Isḥāq al-Kindī had discussed the physical and intellectual attributes of blacks. In a treatise on the determination of celestial bodies, he had, says al-Masʿūdī, repeated the classification of Greek philosopher Galen who gave them ten specific traits, namely:

> Frizzy hair, lack of eyebrows, full nostrils, thick lips, sharp teeth, a strong skin odour, dark black pupils, cracks on hands and feet, […] developed penises and an excessive cheerfulness. The predominance of this last trait is explained by mental debility amongst black people and low intelligence […] Tāwus al-Yamanī, the disciple of

> ʻAbd Allah Ibn al-ʻAbbās, never ate the flesh of an animal killed by a black man. Blacks, he said, are hideous creatures. I was told, adds al-Masʻūdī, that Caliph Abū al-ʻAbbās al-Rāḍī bi-Allah, son of al-Muqtadir, never accepted anything from the hand of a black man. He said that they were disgusting slaves. I do not know if, by acting in this way, he was following the example of Ṭāwus or if he was conforming to particular rites (al-Masʻūdī, 1973, vol. I, pp. 82–83).

To break the stranglehold of conformity, we had to wait until the middle of the fourteenth century. It is in the work of Ibn Khaldūn, a philosopher and scholar from the Maghreb, that we see the emergence of a new scholarly mindset. He tried to tackle, in his own way, the thought processes of the past and its insane excesses:

> Genealogists, who know nothing about the nature of things, he explains, have imagined that blacks […] are the sons of Ḥām […], sons of Nūḥ and that the curse placed on them by the latter is the reason for the darkness of Ḥām's skin and the slavery that was subjected on his descendants by God. Now the Pentateuch only says that Nūḥ curses his son Ḥām and nowhere is there mention of his skin colour. The curse only made the sons of Ḥām slaves of the descendants of his brothers. To attribute the skin colour of black people to their being sons of Ḥām is to ignore the true nature of heat and cold and their impact on climate and creatures. The dark skin of inhabitants in these two parts of the world result from climactic conditions, that is to say, the increasingly hot sun of the south (Ibn Khaldūn, n.d., p. 83).

The problem Ibn Khaldūn has is that he cannot completely get rid of the alleged theory of humours and ancient stereotypes, nodding to the inferiority, inconstancy and extreme emotivity of blacks (Ibn Khaldūn, n.d., p. 86).

In this short overview we have examined the evolution of the intellectual and semantic framework surrounding the representation of black African communities in the classical Arab world. The few literary and historical narratives included in this picture reveal important accounts of the process of elaborating a classificatory rhetoric of enslavement-generated minorities. In spite of the alarm calls by al-Djāḥiẓ and al-Masʻūdī and the timid and laborious developments put forward by Ibn Khaldūn, we see that the preponderance of Arab scholars, whether Muslim, Jewish or Christian, remained particularly imbued with prejudices inherited from the Ancients. Philosophers, doctors, jurists and Arab chroniclers quickly began to develop semantico-discursive schemas extolling the hold of stereotypes and stigmatization. With the spread of enslavement, the realms of knowledge seem to have been set aside in favour of strategies justifying domination and oppression. New and highly colourful taxonomies are emerging from behind this intellectual movement of paradigms of knowledge.

Of all the classical Arabic prose writers, al-Djāḥiẓ is a pioneer. His unusual approach gives us an active picture that is a perfect reflection of the rise in social tension and discrimination. The author intends to shatter the wall of silence and points out the high places of exclusion and contempt. To support his argument he uses dramatic examples from daily life, opens the field of micro-history and redefines the foundations of a universal humanism. Throughout his epistle we are shown a gallery of portraits celebrating black men and women; individuals sanctified by posterity because of their poetic erudition, wonderful valour, piety and wisdom. However, most Arabic scholars were reluctant to accept the relativity of values and propriety. They found al-Djāḥiẓ's viewpoint and his defence of blacks erroneous and impertinent. Ibn Qutayba, one of the most eminent representatives of the classical literary tradition, wastes no time vilifying him, saying, 'if he was convinced that he was responsible for his writing […], he would not wear himself out in an effort to make the false unbelievable in his own eyes' (Ibn Qutayba, 1962, p. 65; Pellat, 1977, pp. 1–8; Pellat, 1980, pp. 1–67).

This rapid review demonstrates the importance of carrying out a deep and thorough investigation of the documentary sources to unravel numerous issues. It is clear that these issues are not just rooted in the past. Today, as in the past, the hindrance of access to public freedoms and citizens' rights is still a stumbling block where social and racial discriminations are concerned. What is going on at the moment in Tunisia,[2] Morocco and Mauritania, to name but a few countries, speaks volumes about the lasting nature of the phenomenon.

2 For the first time in the history of the country since the first abolition of slavery in 1846, Tunisian authorities have only just officially recognized the extent of the racism that is eating away at society. After the bloody attack on three Congolese students in December 2016 in downtown Tunis, the Prime Minister Youssef Chahed pledged to launch a new debate on anti-racist laws: 'We need a national strategy to change attitudes, [and] a law that makes discrimination illegal', he said (cf. *Libération* dated 27 December 2016). Let us hope that these promises will be carried out in order to eradicate this scourge for good: http://www.liberation.fr/planete/2016/12/27/la-tunisie-se-decide-a-agir-contre-le-racisme-anti-noirs_1537749

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SECTION II

MAPPING THE AFRICAN DIASPORAS

INTRODUCTION

Mapping the African Diasporas

Vanicléia Silva Santos

Introduction

The purpose of this section of Volume X of the *General History of Africa* is to trace the formation of African diasporas and outline their characteristics and connections with Africa. The chapters explore the connected histories and the agency of Africans forcibly removed from their homeland. The authors focus on Africans in Africa and other parts of the world and on modern Afrodescendants, considering their cultural and political traditions, as well as the continuity, rupture and transformation thereof.

Some conceptual questions require an explanation. The concept of diaspora is not restricted to, and does not originate specifically from, the study of people of African descent or a specific period. It is used to refer to the extensive migratory flows of different peoples - be they Asians, Jews, Muslims, Europeans, Africans or Palestinians - that have occurred throughout human history and relates to the formation of diaspora communities. However, diaspora is not synonymous with simple migration (Palmer, 2018, p. 15). Limited in scope, migration is defined as a change in residence across a specified geopolitical boundary, whereas a diasporic flow can be defined as the 'movement of a particular people to several places at once or over time' (Palmer, 2018, p. 216). A diaspora may therefore be the product of various diasporic currents that flow both involuntarily and

voluntarily. In the case of the African diasporas, different diasporic currents took peoples from different parts of Africa to different parts of the world, and to different regions inside the African continent itself.

So-called 'ethnicities' attributed to Africans in the diasporas outside Africa constitute the common thread of this section. The African identity vocabulary that emerged in societies of the Atlantic, the Mediterranean, South Asia, the Middle East and China was originally constructed by slave traders from these regions. In general, when assigning an identity to African captives, these foreign traders considered a wider region, such as Abyssinia or Ethiopia, or their ports of embarkation, such as Mina (a reference to São Jorge da Mina Castle, in present-day Ghana), Macua, Moçambique and so on. Such practices generated confusion about the identity of enslaved Africans. In the Americas, this identity was also termed 'nation', *nación*, *nação* and so on. Mariza de Carvalho Soares (2002, p. 60) points out that the nations attributed to Africans by the slave traders were incorporated by enslaved groups and used to reinforce 'old ethnic borders or establish new configurations' in the Atlantic world. Soares suggests the concept of 'origin groups' (*grupos de procedência*) for the purposes of understanding the identity system invented by the Atlantic slave traffickers. As for the enslaved Africans, they reorganized themselves based on common ethnic attributes as an alternative, but this was not the only alternative. The contributions in this section investigate ethnogenic processes among Africans and Afrodescendants.

The people who voluntarily and involuntarily moved from the African continent, whether from the Mediterranean coast, East Africa or the Atlantic coast, belonged to different cultural systems. They spoke different languages, were subjects under various rulers and were members of dynamic, complex societies with more or less rigid hierarchies. The studies presented in this volume carefully consider all these factors when discussing African diasporic experiences. The large number of books and articles produced and congresses and other academic activities carried out in this field of study have shown that overarching, universal theories do not account for the dynamic realities of the African diasporas.

The mapping of African diasporas presented here represents a collective attempt to describe how Africans have been integrated into world history, how Africans and Afrodescendants have constructed their identities and their destinies against great odds, and how, in doing so, they have reshaped global history. In addition to the concept of diaspora, this volume looks at the broader concept of Global Africa, moving far beyond the English-speaking black Atlantic to connect different regions inside Africa with the outside world, namely, places in Asia, the Indian Ocean, the Mediterranean, Oceania and the

Pacific. The idea here is to counter the tendency to see the African diaspora exclusively as an Atlantic phenomenon, a tendency even marked by a Northern Atlantic bias (Gilroy, 1993).

I wish to emphasize that the Global African diaspora perspective considers voluntary and involuntary migratory currents both inside and outside Africa. It goes beyond traditional views that simply focus on European domination and command over the flow of Africans around the world, without downplaying the role of the Europeans in the multiform exploitation of African peoples at home and abroad through time. We chose to go beyond this colonial narrative to introduce a timeline marked by successive diasporas and different dimensions of Africanness worldwide, bringing African peoples and their descendants to centre stage. Thence the importance of the concept of Global Africa, which also has an interdisciplinary aspect that creates a link between history and African studies, black studies, black Atlantic studies, Africana studies and decolonization approaches.

The research presented in this book is engaged in an effort to overcome a general, imprecise and racialized image of the African continent and its diasporas, which was often used to support the Hegelian notion that Africans had no history, that they did not belong to civilized societies and that they therefore did not contribute to the development of the societies into which they were forcibly inserted. These new perspectives seek to overcome the limitations of previous studies that concentrated on the demography of trafficking and the history of enslavement, and they move towards understanding the historicity of Africa and of Africans on and outside the continent. The emphasis is then shifted to investigations of the multiple experiences in both Africa and the different diaspora destinations, highlighting social and cultural issues as constitutive elements of African agency in exile.

One of the challenges of this section was delineating the space-time scale, as well as the historical approach. It was not possible, nor was it our goal, to eliminate the numerous time frames, topics and case studies presented. The editorial focus was the global history of Africans, emphasizing intercontinental interactions and their dynamics. However, inevitably, some regions and periods were better represented than others. Two aspects of this topic warrant particular clarification: first, the emphasis on the Atlantic was not intentional but, rather, determined by the contributions received; and second, Global Africa includes the people within the African continent itself, movements to other continents, mobility across continents and transnational identities.

Considering that there have been different diasporic currents throughout human history, Colin Palmer (2018, pp. 215-216) divides these currents into two

categories: the pre-modern diasporas, before 1500, and the modern diaspora, after 1500. While the pre-modern concept is useful for distinguishing the period after the fifteenth century, the idea of a so-called 'pre-modern' Africa has Eurocentric connotations that should be avoided. For example, we consider the African diasporas from the seventh to the fourteenth century to be commercial, diplomatic and military diasporas, especially with regard to the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean basins. Palmer divides the modern African diaspora into three currents: (1) the transatlantic slave trade, from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century; (2) the movement of African captives and free migrants to the Indian Ocean basin, East Asia and Oceania in roughly the same period; and (3) the current that began at the end of the nineteenth century has continued in the twenty-first century, and is characterized by the voluntary movement of Africans and Afrodescendants inside and outside Africa.

The papers in this section deal with commercial, diplomatic and military diasporas that have settled across the Mediterranean and the Indian Ocean basins since the seventh century. However, the majority of the chapters focus on the modern diaspora, characterized by the development of commercial systems that promoted forced movements of Africans to Europe, the Americas, East Asia, the Indian Ocean islands and the Middle East. The chapters offer a complex view of Global Africa in various parts of the world between the seventh and twentieth centuries, an aspect of which was migration to societies in the Americas, Europe, Africa, the Mediterranean and Middle East, South Asia, China and Oceania. It should be emphasized that these diasporas resulted from several currents that existed for a long time. Most, but not all, were engulfed by the slave trade. An estimated 12,500,00 million people were taken from Africa to the Americas between the beginning of the sixteenth and the end of the nineteenth century (Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database). According to Joseph E. Inikori (1982, p. 20), the actual figure was probably much higher, reaching 15,400,000. Some 14,387,000 people were taken to the Indian Ocean and Asian regions, between 650-1875 (Austen, 1979, p. 68). In the Mediterranean basin, around 1.7 million Africans were part of the Sahara-Maghrib slave trades between 1550 and 1900 (Austen, 1992, p. 227). The slave trade during the period from the Arab expansion in North Africa (667) to the second half of the sixteenth century 'remains too thinly documented for any direct calculation of its scale' (Austen, 1992, p. 222). Here, the chapter written by Salah Trabelsi is a significant contribution to the documentation of the African presence in the Iberian Peninsula. An important word about the slave-trade numbers: all calculations are based on

the documents available, which are very limited for some regions and periods. These numbers are therefore estimates and not exact calculations.

Lastly, a point that is central to this publication: when talking about diasporic currents, we are also referring to movements of people with unique personal trajectories that have long been invisible in conventional narratives (Davies, 2003), which are based on documents that have identified said people as, and relegated them to the category of, 'slaves' or the 'undocumented' (Azoulay, 2020).

Historical sources for the study of Global Africa

This volume offers a comparative and interdisciplinary perspective, especially because of the multiplicity of historical sources used. The authors of this section were invited to develop other ways of writing the history of the African diasporas, taking into account new epistemes, interdisciplinary methodologies, both traditional and unfamiliar historical sources, literary and artistic works on African history, and diasporic experiences as essential material.

The methodology used to study Africa and its diasporas must take into account several aspects of the issues involved, such as: the historiography on the specific theme; the nature of the sources, which are often written, by European and African authors alike, in European languages, in addition to Arabic, Mandarin and other Asian languages; familiarity with documentary typologies and their variations; the colonial nature of reports and other narratives (such as travel logs); the logic of the records' formation and organization; the context in which the records were produced; their potential for revealing controversial facts and complex processes; the cross-checking of different types of sources; and the interdisciplinary interpretation and critique of the documents. Any questions regarding sources, whether written, oral or part of material culture, should, preferably, focus on the production of history from an endogenous viewpoint, which favours the agency of Africans and their descendants, as well as their cultural references and class and gender backgrounds.

The section contributions are based on a wide range of historical sources. Documents of the slave trade, such as ship manifests, customs documentation and other serial records, as well as slave trade data stored in digital databases, were revisited for the purpose of reconstructing individuals' trajectories and their efforts to change their living conditions. Other records, such as travel diaries and police, legal and administrative correspondence, form a corpus of

evidence for analysing individual and collective flight, the formation of maroon communities and revolts.

Ecclesiastical documents constitute another important source for studying the experiences of Africans in the diaspora and have been used by historians for decades. These records show that Catholicism was not only a manorial platform for controlling Africans, but also an instrument of African power, autonomy and organization. The research conducted by Soares (2002) on brotherhoods organized around West African 'origin groups' uses documents produced by the brotherhoods themselves, such as minutes and by-laws, along with baptism, marriage and death records kept by the Catholic Church. Soares (2019) recently published a study on a manuscript written by Francisco Alves de Souza, the leader of a Catholic congregation in Rio de Janeiro; in the manuscript, de Souza describes himself as a member of the Makii people from the northern border of the kingdom of Dahomey. These ecclesiastical sources are used extensively in the research on the Atlantic world (Reginaldo, 2011) because the brotherhoods were 'the first and main institutionalized form of organization for black Africans and their enslaved and free descendants' (Soares, 2002, p. 61). In the chapter she has written, Lucilene Reginaldo uses this kind of source to examine the creation and internal dynamics of Catholic brotherhoods founded by both enslaved and freed Angolans in Brazil.

Their widely studied wills and post-mortem inventories have shed light on various aspects of Africans' lives, such as their occupations, how they managed to purchase certain goods and their freedom. Because of the wealth of information they have to offer, these documents have also been explored as sources for biographies of Africans and their descendants. The numerous biographies published in the last two decades clearly suggest a departure from strictly demographic, economic and social historical perspectives and a move towards perspectives centred on more concrete, individual experiences. The latter type of perspective often illuminates issues related to the demographic, economic and societal characteristics of the many living environments of diasporic Africans (Lindsay and Sweet, 2013).

Another dimension of the sources used for studying diasporas in Global Africa is a focus on a broad definition of material culture which goes beyond artefacts by recognizing that human relationships are both social and material. From this perspective, the material world is no longer seen as a mere backdrop to the development of social action, but is instead recognized as the 'means for building memory, giving coherence and continuity to social life and, thus, cultural reproduction' (Silva Santos, Symanski and Holl, 2019, p. 27). In recent

decades, material-culture studies have emerged as a transdisciplinary field, dealing with both the past and contemporary issues and involving disciplines such as archaeology and anthropology, as well as history, cultural geography, sociology, museology, the hard sciences and technology studies. In recent decades, on both sides of the Atlantic and in East Africa and the Indian Ocean regions, there has been an increase in archaeological research aimed at understanding the history of the African diasporas (Silva Santos, Symanski and Holl, 2019; Allen, 2017; Seetah, 2015; Ogundiran and Saunders, 2014; Haviser and MacDonald, 2007; Ogundiran and Falola, 2007; others).

Material culture has therefore become essential for advancing research on the techniques and knowledge Africans carried with them, their religious practices, their aesthetic tastes and their ways of resisting oppression, achieving integration and doing business. For example, in 2011, some extraordinary discoveries were made during an archaeological excavation carried out at Cais do Valongo (former harbour of Rio de Janeiro, where more than half a million Africans disembarked between the end of the eighteenth century and 1831), recognized as a World Heritage site by UNESCO in 2017. Several tons of the material remains of enslaved people and those employed in the slave trade have been unearthed there. One example concerns research into glass beads, through which Patrícia Brito (2019) discovered important details about the bead trade in nineteenth-century Rio de Janeiro and the participation of enslaved communities in this trade. In addition, she found out that preferences for a certain type of bead (known as the 'drawn bead'), for certain colours (such as blue) and for larger bead sizes were associated with symbolism and with social and religious stratification. In their chapter for this book, Flávio dos Santos Gomes and Luís Cláudio Pereira Symanski look at the importance of historical archaeology in the study of African traditions recreated in the *quilombos* and districts where enslaved people lived in the Americas.

Lastly, catechisms, dictionaries, songs, interviews, collections of tales from oral traditions and newspaper announcements were used to think about language and other forms of communication in African diasporas. Even though the languages spoken by Africans did not become predominant in the societies examined, documents show that, at certain times, they were widely used and did not disappear completely. The contributions to this book show that African languages changed the host languages in the diasporas and created new cultures.

The historical sources used in the research for this collection of texts were obtained from archives located on all the continents marked by the African diasporas, as well as on the African continent itself. For example, Lucilene

Reginaldo, who studies the religious brotherhoods founded by Angolans in Brazil, did her archival research in Luanda, Salvador da Bahia and Lisbon. In her chapter on the presence of peoples from the northern coast of Mozambique in Madagascar, Klara Boyer-Rossol combined oral sources of the Makua people with a variety of written sources found in Malagasy, English, French, Norwegian and Portuguese archives on both sides of the Mozambique Channel. Here, numerous research experiences arose, involving multicontinental investigation aimed at tracking down historical sources of information on the experiences of Africans in the diasporas and in the communities established within the boundaries of the African continent.

Mapping the African diasporas

This section has six subsections with the following themes: the formation of communities; resistance; spirituality; languages; work and technology; and back-to-Africa migration.

The first subsection covers the currents of voluntary and involuntary movement in the eastern and western Indian Ocean, as well as the creation of black communities in Europe, in the Indian Ocean region, on the west and east coasts of Africa and in the Americas. The notions of community and of political entities concern people seeking to establish bonds with others in a similar situation in the period between the fifteenth and the nineteenth century. The second subsection covers the various forms of resistance among Africans who were enslaved or under other forms of oppression and exploitation. In the third subsection, diasporic forms of religion are examined from the standpoint of community formation around their places of origin, which revives the debate between the global and the local. The fourth subsection focuses on the languages spoken in Africa and their presence in the lexicons of European languages and in music and other performance traditions. The fifth subsection deals with the different types of labour performed by Africans, besides work in mines and on plantations; it discusses the techniques Africans brought with them from their places of origin and introduced to the New World. Finally, the last subsection covers the return to Africa of Africans and their descendants from diaspora territories. The remainder of this introduction looks more closely at the six themes on which this section is based.

Communities

This subsection begins with the African presence in East Asia, the western regions of the Indian Ocean and the Middle East. The first contacts between Africa and China occurred before the Han dynasty (206 BCE – 220 CE). In addition, evidence confirms the presence of Africans in China during the Tang (618-907 CE) and Song (960-1279 CE) dynasties. Evidence also shows that voyages motivated by trade and diplomatic interests were made between the East African coast and southern China; in other words, there was movement of free Africans in Asia. However, forced movement did take place. The chapter by Don J. Wyatt shows that, despite the presence of Africans in China's historical record, we can only speak of trade in African captives as having begun in approximately the eighth century of the Common Era.

According to Wyatt, at no time were Africans enslaved and brought to China by Chinese slave traders. On the contrary, there was 'a known and confirmable succession of groups that ferried Africans from west to east across the Indian Ocean into China and that profited thereby from their sale as slaves'. Śrivijayan and Javanese merchants are reported to have introduced the trade in African captives to the court of the Tang dynasty. Later, traders from the Middle East also took up the activity. Wyatt doubts that the references to slaves that appear in Chinese sources actually relate to Africans. The author questions the association of terms such as *zanj* with Africans and slavery among the Arabs, pointing out that in 1083, when Cengtan, a noble from Zanzibar, visited Guangzhou (Canton), this term was not associated with enslavement at all. Wyatt suggests that the term *Kunlun*, also thought by past researchers to be a reference to enslaved Africans, was not restricted to Africans. In sum, this contribution shows that the presence of Africans in eastern China increased considerably only in the mid-seventeenth century, when they were brought there by Europeans. Thus, in East Asia, Africans comprised a minority of enslaved peoples. China and other Asian nations with centralized power took people captive through military actions within the region itself.

The presence of Africans in South Asia has been documented as early as the third century CE, and it increased substantially in the tenth century with the expansion of the Arab slave trade. Historians have pointed out that the diasporas resulting from the Atlantic slave trade and slavery in the Americas do not constitute a model analogous to that of the African diasporas in the Indian

Ocean region, given that, even in the modern era, African diasporas in the latter part of the world were not solely associated with slave trafficking.

Faaeza Jasdanwalla discusses the African presence on the island of Janjira (a name that comes from the Arabic *jazira*, which means 'island'), off the west coast of India, which since the fifteenth century has had a significant population from East Africa. The Africans and their descendants in Janjira were called Sidis. Jasdanwalla writes about the participation of the Sidis in trade networks as sailors, naval commanders and public servants, as well as in other capacities. Two Africans who had come to India as enslaved people in the sixteenth century stood out in the region: Malik Ambar, who became the regent of the Ahmadnagar sultanate in India, and the administrative official Ambar Sainik, who became the Sidi governor of Janjira.

People from East Africa were also taken to the Persian Gulf and the Gulf of Oman. From the beginning of the eighteenth century to the final decades of the nineteenth, a great number of Africans were taken to Sistan va Baluchestan through a slave trade network dominated by the Oman sultanate, which extended from East Africa to other regions of the Indian Ocean and the Persian Gulf, as we learn from Behnaz Mirzai, the prominent historian of slavery in Iran. She analyses the formation of Afrodescendent communities in southern Iran, Khuzestan, Sistan va Baluchistan and the provinces of Bushehr and Hormozgan and the extent of their integration into the local populations. Mirzai points out that to conduct a critical analysis of enslaved Africans and their descendants in Iran, one must consider the local socioeconomic, cultural, geographic, historical and legal specificities conjunctionally. According to Mirzai, despite ethnocultural variety and general heterogeneity, African traditions have both influenced Iranian culture and been transformed by it.

Cassandra Pybus discusses the African diaspora in Oceania, specifically in eastern Australia during the American War of Independence (1775-1783). Founded as a British penal colony, New South Wales received prisoners convicted of petty crimes in England. Pybus uses London parochial and judicial records and New South Wales archives to trace the origins of blacks in the penal colony, and she sketches profiles of individuals such as Billy Blue, who fought in two wars. After leaving the United States of America in 1782, Blue went to London, where he did various jobs and ended up being arrested and convicted for stealing sugar. The majority of the Africans convicted of crimes and sent to Australia and New Zealand experienced some sort of enslavement. Pybus unveils the complex diasporic processes that brought Africans, both voluntarily and involuntarily, to Oceania.

With regard to the Indian Ocean region, Klara Boyer-Rossol writes about human trafficking between Mozambique and Madagascar, which increased significantly during the nineteenth century while the slave trade was gradually becoming illegal. In the chapter she has contributed, she shows how the slave trade routes between East Africa and the island of Madagascar led to the emergence of new sociocultural groups on the latter: the Makoas and Masombikas, whose names derive from generic terms used to refer to people whose geographic or ethnic origin is in what is present-day Mozambique. In addition to emphasizing the dynamics of international trafficking, the author examines the formation of the Makoa identity on the island and the Makoan struggle to return to the African continent.

Catherine Servan-Schreiber reports on the sociocultural development of the island of Mauritius, characterized by the presence of people from India, China, Europe and Africa. In her chapter, she discusses the narrative debates concerning the history and cultural identity of the island's residents. To counterbalance a colonial hegemonic narrative that denies African traditions on the island, Servan-Schreiber examines texts in the local black literary tradition and musical styles such as sega, seggae, and chutney.

Leaving the Indian Ocean and moving towards the Atlantic Ocean, we arrive in the Mediterranean. We are guided by Salah Trabelsi, who explores Berber, Nubian and Sudanese soldiers' participation in the Muslim conquest of the Iberian Peninsula from the seventh century onward. The author proposes a pluralist history that goes beyond simplistic and dualistic categories: blacks/whites, enslaved/free, East/West, Islam/Christianity. Using Arabic and Latin chronicles as sources, the author breaks the silence on African soldiers' participation in the conquest. He points out that, whether voluntarily or involuntarily, large numbers of women, children and men moved between the two shores of the Mediterranean basin, merged with Arabo-Spanish society and greatly contributed to its development.

Isabel de Castro Henriques deals with the African diaspora in Portugal from the fifteenth to the nineteenth century. This diaspora was associated with the slave trade, in which Portugal played an important role. In her chapter, de Castro Henriques highlights African integration into Portuguese society, where mestizos became numerically significant. She shows that Africans and Afrodescendants used strategies to resist and to integrate into their new social environment. For the author, syncretism took place in Portugal; although new religions were not created, certain religious codes, both European and African, were modified. She points out that black confraternities and the

participation of Africans in many Catholic religious festivals, with their dances, processions and music, are evidence of the Africanization of Catholic rituals and syncretism in Portugal.

Roquinaldo Ferreira and Carlos Silva Jr., using concepts such as those of the trans-imperial approach and the Afro-Atlantic community, examine the formation of such communities on the West African coast. Exploring African governors' power to dictate the terms of social and commercial interaction with foreigners, the authors discuss the diplomatic, commercial, religious and cultural exchanges that were essential to the construction of communities on the Gold Coast and the Bight of Benin and in Loango and the southern regions of the Congo. Finally, they point out that in the Atlantic coastal societies of Africa that received larger numbers of European traders there developed highly cosmopolitan and urban environments that gave rise to families and individuals specialized in the Atlantic trade; their identities reflected an intense cultural exchange, both domestically and overseas.

The chapter by Edda L. Fields-Black examines the concept of creolization as applied to Upper Guinean and West Central African peoples, characterizing it as a sort of 'primary creolization'. Fields-Black argues that said peoples were creolized before becoming part of a modern diaspora. The author discusses the evidence of this primary creolization in cultural contacts among different peoples on the West African coast. The Mande, a group with considerable military and political power, had subjugated, incorporated and enslaved other peoples. For Fields-Black, although the Mande had instituted a political and legislative apparatus and assumed the control of trade in the Upper Guinea region, cultural praxes between conquerors and the conquered were no longer distinctly Mande, Atlantic (here the author refers to the linguistic classification) or Kruan, but rather Creole. Fields-Black's argument points to a cultural dynamic that took place before transatlantic enslavement and the creation of the modern African diaspora.

Michele A. Johnson discusses the presence of Africans and their descendants in Canada, a *longue durée* history spanning from the early seventeenth century to the twentieth century. Johnson focuses her analysis on the introduction of slavery in Canada, the kinds of work in which the enslaved were employed, the struggles for abolition, the voluntary and involuntary flows of black people from Africa, Jamaica and the United States of America to Canada, and racism as a structural element in the history of Canadian society. Although Afrodescendants have lived in and contributed to Canadian society and economy for centuries, that there have been recurrent attempts to exclude these people is clear. Alleging

that Afrodescendants were unsuited for the Canadian climate and society, State authorities long ago created a narrative that was regularly applied as an excuse to explain Afrodescendants' low rates of admission to the country. The author covers in her chapter the voluntary and involuntary movements of African peoples from the Caribbean to Canada and from Canada to the United States and Sierra Leone.

Also from a *long durée* perspective, Paulette A. Ramsay writes about Afrodescendent communities in Mexico from the fourteenth century to the present. She explores key elements of this history, such as the importation of captives from Africa to work in silver mines and plantations, various forms of slave resistance and institutions grounded on the idea of racial mixing. Ramsay argues that the lack of research on Afro-Mexicans reflects the absence of affirmative action policies in the country. She challenges the Eurocentric discourse of negation and discusses Afro-Mexican traditions that are essential to understanding Mexican society.

Rina Cáceres examines how Central America has been a locus of African diasporas since the sixteenth century. Using a comparative and long-term approach, she discusses the dynamics of slavery in the region, as well as the resistance strategies adopted by enslaved people, such as *palenques* (runaway communities), negotiations with slavers and legal challenges in the pursuit of individual freedom, and the struggle for general emancipation. In the chapter she has written, Cáceres also explains transformations in the social, political and literary realms of Costa Rica and other Caribbean societies that took place at the end of the nineteenth century. In addition, she describes more recent struggles for citizenship.

Deborah A. Thomas looks at the Jamaican diaspora in the United States of America in the twentieth century, describing it as a process that has evolved over time, as is the case with other diasporas. She unravels how African-American culture has influenced the Jamaican black community through new social media and how Jamaican popular culture has done the same vis-à-vis the United States. According to Thomas, despite its hegemonic position, the United States does not have a monopoly on the global production of blackness. Jamaican cultural and political struggles have become references of black awareness in other areas of the diaspora, including the United States.

Resistance

The enslavement of Africans around the world was also marked by resistance against the enslavers. Resistance against slavery took on diverse forms, both violent and subtle, individual and collective. It included revolts, revolutions, the murder of slave-masters, flight and the formation of runaway communities, as well as magic spells, feigning illness, stealing and a long list of day-to-day resistance actions. Until the 1950s, enslaved people's revolts did not receive much scholarly attention. In recent decades however, they have received noteworthy attention, especially from scholars of the black Atlantic.

In contrast with resistance in the Middle East, significant research has been done on examples of resistance in the Americas. The seventeenth-century quilombo (a settlement of fugitive slaves in Brazil) of Palmares is a case in point. Since the turn of the twentieth century, studies on Palmares have sought to understand the runaway community as a political entity. The advances in research on the history of Angola in the 1970s and 1980s led to new interpretations of the significance of Palmares. The internal organization of this quilombo was connected to political experiences in Angola before the arrival in Brazil of the main cluster of Africans who created the gigantic quilombo. This knowledge was essential for resistance and struggle against enslavement in Brazil (Hunold Lara, 2010; Nascimento, 1985).

Besides Palmares, there were thousands of fugitive settlements in the Americas, the Indian Ocean and even Africa itself. They and their people were known by different names in different places: *marrons, palenques, cumbes, mainels*, *cimarrones*, *mussitos, aringas* and so on (Amantino and Florentino, 2012; Capela, 2006). Communal living among escaped slaves, regardless of the duration of such community, is a major example of how Africans and their descendants resisted colonialism and enslavement. In sum, in Africa, Brazil, Haiti, the United States and Madagascar, on Indian Ocean islands and in the Arab world, among other places, the fugitive settlements established by the enslaved in defiance of the enslavers triggered major transformations in those societies and across colonial and national boundaries.[1]

1 The Zanj Revolt, considered one of the most extraordinary events in the Afro-Arabic world, is an exception. The year 869 was the beginning of one of the longest slave rebellions in the history of the Abbasid caliphate. The Zanj, who originated in East Africa, worked under harsh conditions on plantations and in salt mines in Basra (southern Iraq), receiving only food in exchange for their labour. Freed and runaway slaves participated in the protest against Arab slave-masters (McLeod, 2016, p. 80). Some historians suggest that the Zanj included not only enslaved Africans, but also people from ethnic groups outside Africa (Talhami, 1977). This revolt, much like others, was an act of rebellion against the tyranny of the slave-masters and part of a struggle for autonomy.

The chapter by Rafaël Thiébaut examines aspects of resistance to enslavement in the Indian Ocean in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. His analysis covers inland individual flights, collective rebellions, shipboard revolts and cases of marronage on the islands of Madagascar, on the Mascarene Islands, in Cape Town, in India and in the Malay Archipelago.

João José Reis discusses collective slave resistance in Brazil in the form of quilombos and uprisings. These were the most common types of active resistance. He argues that although it was not the only one, religion was a crucial factor in revolts as 'a language and inspiration' most notably for Muslim rebels, but also for those devoted to Catholic saints and Yoruba *orixás*. The author also points out that the enslaved contributed actively to their emancipation in 1888 with numerous local uprisings and mass flights from plantations.

Two chapters examine the most spectacular and successful example of slave resistance in the Americas, the Haitian Revolution. Sylviane A. Diouf discusses the influence of the Haitian Revolution on aborted slave conspiracies and actual revolts in the United States. Diouf emphasizes that the Haitian Revolution was one of the most important political events of its time in the Americas.

Matthew J. Smith's chapter goes beyond the revolutionary process to evaluate the relationship between the Haitian Revolution and Africa. For the author, Haiti has always provided the world with a counter-discourse to European racist discourse regarding Africa. Smith suggests that, throughout the twentieth century, political events and economic and environmental crises placed Haiti and the African continent in a position of mutual solidarity and mutual influence, in both the political and cultural realms.

In his study of strategies of resistance against enslavement in Colombia, Rafael Antonio Díaz Díaz says that the study of rebellion and *cimarronismo* must take into account more than just the formation of *palenques*, and he suggests other means and strategies used to achieve freedom. Beginning with a critical analysis of historiography since the 1950s and referring to the concept of amphibian culture, the author demonstrates that the various African cultural groups in the country developed a political cartography of resistance. This could be seen in cultural and political construction, the appropriation of territory along rivers and the development of solidarity and family ties. Women played a major role in these processes, particularly in the formation of extended families in Colombia.

Rafael Sanzio Araújo dos Anjos proposes other readings and representations of the Brazilian geographic space now characterized by the exclusion of the Afrodescendent population. In his chapter, he uses maps, graphs and photos to increase knowledge

of the territorial references associated with centuries of displacement from Africa to Brazil and to discuss the main configurations and spatial elements of the African matrix in Brazil, particularly contemporary quilombos.

This subsection concludes with Ana Lucia Araujo's contribution. In her chapter, Araujo suggests that the abolition of the slave trade in Africa and of slavery in the Americas resulted in long and complex social and economic processes which extended from the nineteenth to the twentieth century. Without the usual emphasis on political history, she demonstrates that the ending of these two activities was only possible through the actions of enslaved men and women who challenged their legal status and organized rebellions and mass flights. Araujo highlights the role of the enslaved in their emancipation, both in the Americas and in Africa, focusing more on the former, as well as worldwide elites' interest in creating other forms of exploitation, some of which involved forced labour.

Spirituality

Studies of diaspora religions are shaped by theories developed at least one century ago and concerning cultural encounters and their results. They can be categorized into two superficially conflicting options: one, the retentionist perspective, emphasizes what Africans were able to keep from their original traditions; the other, the creolization approach, focuses on the changes Africans went through as enslaved people in the Americas. This dichotomy has been shown to be unproductive. Present-day historiography seeks to identify transformations achieved in African contexts, as well as in the diasporas, considering the absence of pure cultures or cultures that remained stagnant during the diaspora formation processes.

Sylviane A. Diouf's analysis of Muslim resistance in the Americas shows that the large presence of Senegambians was an important ingredient in the revolts aboard slave ships and among slave societies in the Americas. In this sense, enslaved African Muslims from Senegambia were connected by their faith, knowledge of Arabic and religious networks. Her chapter, just as the one written by Reis, points to the revolutionary potential of Islam.

Lucilene Reginaldo looks at the religious brotherhoods dedicated to Our Lady of the Rosary in Angola, Portugal and Brazil. Beginning with an Atlantic angle, her piece shows that Catholic brotherhoods were important spaces for association and served to propagate black devotions, both in Central Africa and

the Atlantic diaspora. For Reginaldo, devotion to the rosary was not part of the agenda of colonial power, but rather the result of the people's experience with Catholicism in Angola and the Congo. In the context of the Middle Passage and the diaspora, the Angolans created an identity in which the brotherhood had specific African meanings for both new and old divinities, in the Old and the New World. Thus, Our Lady of the Rosary was transformed and associated with water spirits such as Kalunga, who could protect devotees at sea and beyond.

Luis Nicolau Parés covers African religions practised in the Gulf of Benin region and how they both endured and were transformed in Brazil. Parés analyses the concept of nation, using it to track people's origins and classify the African-derived cults from the colonial period to the present day. For the author, the identification of a group with a specific African nation, both in Brazil and other regions of the Americas, is a discursive and ideological resource that can be flexible and geared towards achieving social legitimacy and religious authority.

Languages

The previous subsection explains that a specific African vocabulary, particularly terms related to religion, gastronomy, songs and greetings, survived. This subsection focuses on the presence of African languages and their transformations in different diaspora settings.

Margarida Petter discusses the presence of African languages in the Americas as a whole and problematizes the fact that creole languages were not created in the majority of the countries in question. For Petter, this does not mean that African languages were not spoken in regions of the Americas or that they have completely disappeared. Much to the contrary, she points to the importance of the African lexical influence and grammatical interference found in Portuguese and Spanish in the Atlantic diaspora. Moreover, she highlights the survival of African languages in Afro-Brazilian cults (the languages have a liturgical function and their use is restricted to initiates and practitioners, in a context where language is understood as a symbolic vehicle of expression and not of 'linguistic competence') and in contemporary black rural communities.

Alain Anselin addresses the invisibility that the authorities created with regard to the languages spoken by enslaved Africans in the Americas. Despite this invisibility, there were/are clear links to African heritage '"inscribed" in the very materiality of crops', such as the names given to landscapes, tools and foods; this is also the case in the realm of intangible culture, which includes

songs, prayers, dances and so on. Anselin argues that the 'invisible ties' that link the diaspora to Africa refer not only to vocabulary, which in itself reveals many keys to transculturation, but also to the negotiation of codes in the formation of new languages.

Sônia Queiroz's chapter analyses, from a comparative perspective, oral narratives recorded in books, both in Angola and in Brazil, taking into account the hypertextualities and points of contact between those narratives. Whereas elsewhere there is a tendency to treat oral tales as children's literature, Queiroz shows that in Brazil, oral tales are the result of 'processes of transculturation and of dialogue between cultures and languages: Bantu and Latin peoples, African languages and Portuguese, oral and written'. The analysis of oral tales collected by Europeans in Angola and those compiled in books in Brazil shows the strong influence of Bantu languages in Brazilian oral literature. Unfortunately, Brazilian oral compositions tend to be marketed as children's literature.

Work and technology

This last subsection examines the African diaspora labour and technical know-how not limited to domestic chores and plantation work. Africans and Afrodescendants were involved in almost all activities in the societies in which they lived, working under the authority of others as well as with intellectual and technical autonomy. Not much is known about this subject; however, the books by Edda L. Fields-Black (2008) and Judith A. Carney (2001) are exceptional sources of information. They show how plants, food, techniques and technologies were transplanted by Africans to both the New and the Old Worlds.

Mariana P. Candido's chapter opens this subsection. In it, Candido discusses the role of gender, taking into account that the social division of labour is a historical construct, as are the perceptions of gender, masculinity and femininity. She observes that, although only a limited number of records are available, there are enough to show that women in Africa and the diasporas performed different functions. In the Americas, they worked in mining and in the fields; they also worked in urban settings as maids, seamstresses, street vendors, cooks, nurses, healers, midwives, nannies and such. In addition, Candido indicates that, although they experienced great seignorial violence, Africans and Afrodescendent women also played an important role in resistance against enslavement, participating in the planning of collective flights, conspiracies and other forms of disruptive activity.

Judith A. Carney demonstrates in her chapter that, as have the Americas and Asia, Africa has played a central role in domesticating food sources, despite Africa's marginalization in archaeobotanical research until recently. Using significant written and pictorial sources, she investigates which African foods were introduced in the Americas by enslaved Africans. Carney highlights the agency of Africans in the selection and cultivation of new tropical crops in the New World, for both their own subsistence and that of other inhabitants.

The study of material African culture by Luís Cláudio Pereira Symanski and Flávio dos Santos Gomes is rooted in the historiography debate in Brazil, the United States of America and the Caribbean. Using research on the production of ceramics in African and Afrodescendent communities, the authors examine African heritage in the Americas. For Symanski and Gomes, material culture is associated with motivations, contexts and identities in the slave quarters that were inside or close to the enslavers' residences. Material-culture analysis reveals a long process of redefining an African orientation. The questions surrounding the production and redefinition of material culture, construction technologies, and the intangible dimension of the quilombos and *mocambos* are also addressed.

In the chapter he has contributed, Jaime Rodrigues explores the experience of Africans as merchants and mariners and their contribution to modern maritime culture. By means of various documents (travelogues, trade records, correspondence and so on) and systematic debate with the historiography, the author presents the profiles of sailors, including their legal status (free, enslaved or freed), their origins, their occupations on board and the reasons behind their decision (when not enslaved) to engage in sea activities. Names of individuals who worked on both the African coast and transatlantic voyages emerge. The author says that involvement in maritime labour offered good opportunities for the exercise of autonomy or freedom in the case of both free and enslaved Africans.

Returnees

Africans and their descendants often returned to Africa, which in symbolic terms meant a return to the land of their ancestors. The return to Africa comprised different stages, reasons and circumstances. For Afrodescendants it was in fact their first trip to the continent of their forebears. There were also Africans who had been liberated from slave ships by British naval squadrons, who had never set foot outside their home, and who usually did not return

to their place of origin. Others, liberated in similar conditions, were sent to the East African coast and the English colonies in the Caribbean. The main motivation for voluntary migration back to Africa was, some scholars argue, the desire to return to an imaginary homeland. However, many also returned involuntarily, for example to escape persecution after the 1835 Malê Revolt in Bahia (Castillo, 2017).

According to Antonio McDaniel, the returnees constituted the first group of modern immigrants to West Africa from the Americas and other diaspora sites. They were people from different parts of Global Africa: Jamaica, Brazil, Cuba, Nova Scotia, Britain, the United States. The idea of return was also based on the belief that there was no possibility for Africans and their locally born children to be treated fairly in racialized societies (McDaniel, 1995, p. 20). Looking at the Indian Ocean region, Klara Boyer-Rossol examines the plans of the Makua in Madagascar to return to Mozambique at the end of the nineteenth century. Although, because of prohibition by the authorities of Madagascar, these projects were carried out on a small scale, they show that the Makua had a desire to return to the Africa of their imagination. The author thus corrects the misconceptions of academics (Campbell, 2008, p. 40) who suggest that the Africans located in communities on the side of the Indian Ocean had no homeland and thus had no desire to return to one.

The chapters in this volume move from the Indian to the Atlantic Ocean. Clifford Pereira writes that in the nineteenth century, the Indian Ocean witnessed another diasporic event in the return of African captives to their homelands. Royal Navy squadrons rescued Africans from the East African coast from slave ships operating in the Indian Ocean. With the supposed objective of protecting them from slave traders, these individuals were placed in Christian missionary orphanages in the Indian city of Mumbai (then Bombay).

Pereira traces the trajectories of individuals who returned from Bombay to Rabai and Frere Town in Kenya, such as Seedi Mubarak Mumbai (c.1820-1885), known as 'Seedi Bombay'. He accompanied European explorers and is considered one of the most travelled Africans of his day, easily exceeding any European 'explorer' in Africa. For the author, the young people who were rescued had 'African origin' in common and developed a sense of community without ethnic barriers and simply imbued with the idea of freedom.

In her chapter, Suzanne Schwarz analyses how the British colony of Sierra Leone emerged as an important site in the global diaspora of Africans uprooted and displaced by the Atlantic slave trade. Following the transfer of the settlement to British Crown control in 1808, the multi-ethnic composition

of the settlement was increased markedly through the forced relocation to Freetown of tens of thousands of Africans released from slave ships on the West African coast by Royal Navy patrols. Sierra Leone developed as an early and important site of experimentation in Protestant missions, which had an impact beyond the geographical limits of the small colony. Although earlier historical writing has placed emphasis on the work of European missionaries, this chapter emphasizes how an outstanding characteristic of activity in Sierra Leone was the extensive and independent roles of people of African origin and descent.

From another perspective, Sylvie Kandé analyses the same region. In her chapter she examines the construction of the Krio/Creole identity in Sierra Leone, referring to different local and Atlantic events and historiography, and its theoretical perspectives on the African diaspora. For the author, Sierra Leone is a space built on the hybridism that started early in the region, during the expansion of Islam and the arrival of European traders at the outset of overseas expansion. Hybridism began to intensify at the end of the seventeenth century, with the ebb of black populations from different parts of the diaspora and Africans freed from slave ships (after the abolition of the slave trade). Thus, Creole identity formed in the region is characterized as fluid and complex and understood through the prism of hybridity. For Kandé, expatriates and their descendants acquired a transnational identity without breaking with the concept of nation.

In his chapter, Milton Guran writes about enslaved Africans from Brazil, called 'Agudás' or 'Brazilians' returning to the West African coast. Guran shows that the Agudás integrated in an 'exemplary' manner into the region, where they played an essential role in the formation of the modern State of Benin. The author analyses the process of constructing the Agudá social identity in Benin from the end of the eighteenth century to the end of the nineteenth century. This process of identity construction was marked by elements of belonging, influenced by returnees' everyday life in Brazil before their return to Africa; these elements included enslavement, the Portuguese language and the Catholic religion. Guran shows that plans to return were also based on tensions between the people who returned and the people who lived in the cities chosen for the construction of new spaces for the diaspora.

The last chapter, by Mônica Lima e Souza, takes a broader approach. It shows that the return movement involved various stages, motivations and circumstances. In her historiographic review, Lima e Souza looks at the stories of returnees to concentrate on similar perspectives. She examines the case of Africans returning from Rio de Janeiro to Congo-Angola, shifting the focus from the West African coast as the point of return.

Conclusion

This section explores the formation of Global Africa and its consolidation throughout the world by means of its diasporas. The main features of this section are its interdisciplinary approach, the scope of the collaborators involved, and the great diversity of sources used. Our biggest challenges were covering the immense movement of Africans and Afrodescendants across the world and over a long time, and identifying the events and processes in which they took part and the meanings these processes gave to their lives. Here we looked at the experiences of African people in the diaspora, focusing on their capacity to create and endure in order to highlight their contribution to the formation of the societies into which they were inserted. Although we recognize the differences between the history of African people in the diasporas and African history, we understand that it is more important to highlight where the two subjects intersect than to show what divides them.

The shortcomings that the project presents are representative of the gaps that still linger in the disciplines themselves and in studies on the diaspora and other dimensions of human experience. The history of Global Africa in Europe, the Middle East, South Asia, the Pacific and Oceania still calls for greater attention from researchers. The history of women in the African diasporas warrants special attention in future research agendas. The history of material African-diaspora culture also merits greater attention, since objects and peoples cannot be treated separately. The current debate on the restitution of African artefacts kept in European museums and other museums around the world is essential to repairing the colonial violence associated with looting; it cannot take place separately from an enhanced social history.

Finally, we have advanced here the concept of Global Africa as an epistemological tool and a core element in the way historical knowledge can be constructed. Deconstructing imperial concepts in order to develop new knowledge represents a challenge to the decolonizing of minds.

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CHAPTER 1

AFRICANS IN ANCIENT CHINA (900–1600 CE)

Don J. Wyatt

Introduction

We should regard no cause as contributing more directly to the first appearance of Africans in Asia generally or China in particular than the East African slave trade, whereby captives were ferried into bondage in the various littoral regions that border the Indian Ocean (Harris, 1971, pp. 5–6; Beachey, 1976, p. 2; Beachey, 1976, pp. 1–2; Filesi, 1972, pp. 21–22, 25). The origins of this trade in slaves extracted from along the lengthy expanse of the territories composing the East African coastline are quite ancient, extending back some four millennia, with a plausible prehistory extending back even further (Campbell, 2008, p. 21). However, as shown below, despite speculations about it having occurred for much longer, we can only reasonably regard the trafficking of Africans into China through this trade as a phenomenon having commenced not much earlier than the eighth century of the Common Era.

By that time, many of the common and some of the uncommon conventions of slavery had long held sway in China. For example, exogenous (foreign) as well as endogenous (native) enslavement had been practiced from time immemorial, with some forms of the latter especially continuing even today.[1] Yet, ironically,

1 See, for example, the 'open' versus 'closed' system as discussed in James L. Watson (1980, pp. 1–15).

neither from the first occasion nor at any subsequent point were the Africans imported into and enslaved in China transported there principally by Chinese. Instead, there is a known and confirmable succession of groups that ferried Africans from west to east across the Indian Ocean into China and that profited thereby from their sale as slaves.

Included among the groups reputed to have first engaged in the trade in African slaves upon its inception were peoples of the East Indies or, in modern parlance, Indonesian heritage, such as those of the state of Śrivijaya and of Kalinga (then 'Heling' in Chinese; modern-day Java). Through one of the many nonofficial histories of the Chinese Tang dynasty (618–907), we are informed that, in 724, Buddhism-observant Śrivijaya dispensed an African female to the imperial Chinese court in homage to the reigning emperor Xuanzong (r. 712-756) in his role as *Devaputra* ('Son of Heaven') (Schafer, 1963, pp. 47, 291). Via both versions of the official history of the Tang, we are apprised that what is now the State of Java, within the six-year span between 813 and 818, dispatched three tribute missions to the court of then-reigning emperor Xianzong (r. 806-820), supplying the monarch with exotica comprising a live rhinoceros, a five-coloured parrot, and a collection of African servant boys and girls (Schafer, 1963, pp. 47, 103, 291; Wyatt, 2010, p. 155).

These recorded instances in which Śrivijayan and Javanese representatives purveyed slaves in tribute to the courts of the Chinese Tang dynasty during the early years of the eighth and ninth centuries, respectively, are surely informative. However, whether considered in tandem or separately, the episodes challenge us to discern across time just how African were the slaves described as being delivered. In other words, we must foremost ask: Were these slaves truly Africans? Removed in time as we are, absolute certainty on this question will always elude us. However, we can know that the Chinese of Tang times believed that they were because it is discernible from the names that they affixed to them.

The Chinese histories cited above and their corroborating sources are of course the products of the subsequent eleventh century. Nonetheless, all refer to the slaves transferred from Śrivijaya and Java on to China as either *sengzhi* or *cengqi*. These names are Chinese approximations of the then-contemporaneous term *Zanj* and its many variations, which was the name generically assigned by the Arab slave-traders to the Bantu peoples that they were engaged in steadily extracting and enslaving in considerable numbers from along the central and southern seaboard of East Africa (Wyatt, 2010, pp. 69–70, 111, 155).

Our recognizing this linguistic connection affords us two tenable answers to yet another seminal question, with one solution being somewhat more plausible

than the other. Given the vast distance separating the South China Sea region and the eastern equatorial coastline of Africa as poles at opposite ends of the Indian Ocean, how had these tribute-bearers of Śrivijaya and Java even come into possession of the slaves that they bestowed upon the two Tang Chinese emperors? One may contend of course that the Śrivijayans and Javanese had acquired the Africans they purveyed directly from East Africa, by travelling to and appropriating them from somewhere along the south-eastern shoreline or perhaps from slightly nearer Madagascar or Pemba. However, for them to have done so would require sailing a distance of over 4,000 miles (6,440 km) and then returning, with there being no evidence that the early inhabitants of the Indonesian archipelago ever developed and constructed ocean-going ships capable of such an extensive journey (Alpers, 2009, pp. 47–48; Anderson, 2015, pp. 254–58). Therefore, much more likely than the Śrivijayans and Javanese having procured the slaves referred to in the Chinese records themselves is that they had done so by purchase from Arab traders. Once in possession of them, they then had elected to trans-ship the slaves along as items of exotica to China.

A visitor from Zanzibar

The foregoing description of the entrance of the Zanj upon Chinese consciousness might well lead one to think that all of the earliest residents of Africa to enter China did so as slaves and thus against their will. To be sure, the portrait of the enslaved African has predominated throughout traditional Chinese history and literature. Nevertheless, there are exceptions to the prevailing rule and the most salient among the early ones is assuredly provided by a more expansive historical narrative concerning a certain visitor to China from what is now Zanzibar.

The Tang dynasty was succeeded by the Song dynasty (960–1279), and the sole official history of the latter recounts two intriguing visits to China in close succession made by a traveller who originated from Africa. The site of departure is indeed central to the account, serving as its starting point:

> Cengtan is on the Southern Sea, with its town about twenty li (about seven miles or eleven kilometres) inland from the seacoast. In 1071, Cengtan brought gifts to our court for the first time. Travelling by sea, with the favourable [monsoon] winds, the envoy took 160 days. Sailing by way of Wuxun [in the vicinity of today's Muscat,

> Oman], Kollam [in India], and Palembang [in Indonesia], he arrived at Guangzhou (Tuotuo et al., 1977, 490.14122).[2]

What is above described as the country or perhaps city of Cengtan, which also appears in the literature as the more common variant Cengba, is a name that in Chinese parlance of the eleventh century denoted Zanzibar – meaning literally in Arabic the 'region of the blacks' – from south of the Juba River to Cape Delgado along the eastern coast of Africa (Wyatt, 2010, pp. 69–70; Filesi, 1972, pp. 2, 18, 20, 21).

The official history of the Song dynasty conveys additional details about Cengtan. For instance, we are informed that its 'language sounds like that of the Arabs' and that its 'climate is warm year-round' (Tuotuo et al., op. cit.: 490.14122). Most important among these details, however, is that the initially nameless envoy of Cengtan becomes named:

> In 1083, the envoy Protector Commandant Cengjiani came [to China] again [bearing gifts] to court. [Our emperor] Shenzong [r. 1067-1085], recognizing the extreme distance he had travelled in returning, beyond presenting him with the same gifts as before, added 2,000 taels of silver (Tuotuo et al. 1977, 490.14123).

In Song times, a tael, being a liang in Chinese, was equivalent to 1.3 Western ounces.

We cannot ascertain whether the distinguished Cengjiani himself was African, or even if Cengtan in particular or Africa in general was his birthplace. Yet, even if he lacked African ancestry or provenance, we may be safely assured in believing Cengjiani to have come as directly as he could to China from Africa. Moreover, from the exaltedly prestigious title that the reigning Song emperor had bestowed on him, the latter half of which – 'commandant' (langjiang) – was granted only occasionally to aboriginal chieftains of the borderland west and southwest, we can detect that the Chinese regarded this emissary from Africa with high esteem. Yet, for assurance of his identity from the Chinese perspective as an African in China we can find no better proof than in his name itself. The Chinese – ceng-jia-ni – again appears clearly to be a phonetic approximation of the designation Zanj, which was likely meant at that time also to indicate his Zanzibarian place of origin (Filesi, 1972, p. 31; Dathorne, 1996, pp. 74, 83, 164). Thus, curiously, in the sole instance of Cengjiani, the term Zanj may very well somehow become dissociated from the condition of enslavement. However, given its literal meaning in Arabic as 'the blacks' (Snow, 2015, p. 9; Dikötter,

2 See also Philip Snow (1988, pp. 20, 196). Snow refers to Cengjiani as Zengjiani; strictly proper pinyin transliteration dictates the former spelling.

1992, p. 9), this same ascription Zanj would prove an inescapable marker of slavery for the increasing numbers of Africans in their midst that the Chinese would incrementally encounter.

From Guangzhou to Quanzhou

The foregoing record in the Song official history on the visits of Cengjiani contributes at least one last truly essential detail facilitating our enhanced understanding of the earliest presence of Africans in China. We can and should note that it identifies the major port city of Guangzhou as his arrival point on Chinese soil. In the reorientation of the African presence in China away from representing a pre-eminently Indian Ocean phenomenon toward its coming to constitute a nascent Pacific Ocean one, Guangzhou provides the initial locus.

Guangzhou is distinctive in the history of commerce in China for long being the only port of call wherein trade was permitted by and with foreigners (Fong, 2014, pp. 475–92). For our purposes, the most relevant among the many groups that was to be found collected there in pre-modern times was an amorphous catch-all category of foreigners that the Chinese called the Kunlun (Wyatt, 2010, pp. 2–8). Extant sources make clear that the Kunlun were in the first instance Malays and, curiously, when described in the literature as free individuals, we discover examples of the Kunlun referred to with the same matter-of-fact and neutral dispassion that applied to the sighting of any other foreign merchant at Guangzhou. During Tang times, in the year 750, the esteemed Chinese Buddhist monk Jianzhen (687–763), stated: 'On the river (Guangdong), there were commercial vessels of the Boluomen (Brahmins of India), Bosi (Persians), Kunlun (Malays), and others, whose number is difficult to determine' (Mabito Genkai, 1928, p. 466).

However, still more of the literature pertaining to the Kunlun at Guangzhou makes fully evident the fact that they were neither always free nor were they necessarily Malays. The most famous example to this effect comes to us from the Song era and from the brush of Zhu Yu (1075?-after 1119), who recorded first regarding the profusion of foreign slaves that:

> The wealthy in Guang[zhou] maintain numerous foreign slaves. These slaves are unequalled in strength and are capable of carrying – on their backs – several hundred catties. Neither their language nor their passions bear any connection to ours. Their natures are simple; they do not attempt to flee. For their part, the people of Guangzhou call them "wildmen".

> As for the colour of these slaves, it is as black as ink. Their lips are red and their teeth are white. Their hair is curly as well as ochre-coloured. They are both male and female, and they inhabit the various mountains across the sea (Zhu Yu, 1921, 2.4).

Zhu Yu concludes by also referring directly to the slaves that the Chinese specifically called by the name Kunlun, stating: 'There [also] exists a kind of wildman that lives near the sea. These slaves are able to immerse themselves in water without batting or blinking their eyes. They are called Kunlun slaves' (Zhu Yu, 1921, 2.4).

Zhu Yu above proffers the existence of two groupings or classifications of Guangzhou slave, and whereas the latter category might conceivably have consisted only or predominantly of ethnic Malays, the former one seems extremely unlikely to have. The looming but vexing question is whether Africans comprised any part of either group. Moreover, in hazarding to speculate, we find that resorting to a stereotypical racial characteristic so familiar as blackness of skin complexion is of no use to us because the Chinese considered it to be a trait common to all Kunlun.

Over the course of the Song era, the prominence of Guangzhou as a port city was eclipsed by the rise of Quanzhou, which is located about 450 miles (720 km) further north along the south-eastern China coastline. Once Quanzhou supplanted Guangzhou, the interstate nature of trade between them expanded exponentially. Yet, most important for the present, whereas ascertaining conclusively whether Africans represented any quotient of the Guangzhou slaves during Song times is beyond our capacity to determine, we find that we incur no such difficulty in connection with Quanzhou.

By far the most visible and influential of the foreign traders at Quanzhou were the Arabs, who were drawn there in great numbers by the profits to be had. The Arabs were also the most entrenched members of the Quanzhou foreign merchant community, for many of them – in direct contravention of Chinese regulations – purchased dwellings or even built homesteads. Archaeological discoveries such as the unearthing of a Muslim graveyard indicate that they also died there. Inasmuch as Arab merchants came to populate Quanzhou, so did their overwhelmingly African slave-servants, which lent the Chinese city a unique deservedly ethno-binary reputation. Or, as the scholar Zhu Mu (?-after 1246) framed the situation:

> The various foreigners are all of two types, black and white, and in every case they reside in Quanzhou, which is called "the foreigners' port". Every year, they come forth by sea aboard large ships, laden with ivory, rhinoceros [horn], tortoise shell, pearls, crystals, agate, exotic fragrances and black pepper (Zhu Mu, 2003, 12.208).

The persevering presence

Prior to its entrance into the early modern age, the African presence in China underwent a period of dormancy. For the less than a century of duration of the Yuan dynasty (1279-1368), for reasons such as the reopening of the overland Silk Roads as conduits of trade, there are lacunae especially in our knowledge of the extent to which Africans may have been imported into China by sea. For their part, the Mongol interest in seafaring focused more on the expansion of their empire, which was not advanced, than on mercantilism, which could have been advanced more so than it was (Wilkinson, 2015, pp. 777–78).

Nevertheless, once introduced into the Chinese context, the African presence would endure and, at times, quite vibrantly so. With the advent of the Ming dynasty (1368–1644), the African presence was reinforced in Chinese consciousness through the seven remarkable maritime voyages that the imperial grand eunuch commander Zheng He (1371–1435) undertook between the years 1405 and 1433. Being unprecedented in terms of size and scope, these expeditions – specifically the three latter ones conducted in 1417 and after – brought Chinese ships to African shores and African envoys as free men to China, both for the first time (Dreyer, 2006, pp. 82–91, 99–134).

In the tow of the Portuguese merchant-mariners at the turn of the sixteenth century, those Africans who did arrive in China came again as slaves. Like their Portuguese masters themselves, these Africans found their niche and lived out their days on the tiny peninsular outpost opposite Guangzhou known then as now as Macau (also Macao; in Chinese, Aomen). To slavery again they had indeed been consigned. Still, let us also be sure to note that, by the middle of the seventeenth century (1640), these Africans in China – 'number[ing] about five thousand' (Boxer, 1960, p. 143) – were more populous and therefore present than they had ever been.

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CHAPTER 2

THE AFRO-INDIAN DIASPORA AND THE RISE OF EUROPEAN INFLUENCE (1500–1700)

Faaeza Jasdanwalla

In the past two decades, there has been a steady increase in academic research and focus on the global African diaspora, particularly the African diaspora in the Indian Ocean region. Scholars such as Shihan de Silva Jayasuriya, John McLeod, Kenneth X. Robbins, Sylviane Diouf and Beheroze Shroff are but a few who have written actively and prolifically about, and promoted awareness of, the subject.

Scholars such as Shihan de Silva Jayasuriya explore the identity of Africans in the Asian trade routes, with special focus on cultural influences such as music and dance (De Silva Jayasuriya, 2010), while scholars such as Beheroze Shroff establish a link between African identity in India (especially in the Indian states of Maharashtra and Gujarat) and socioeconomic circumstances (Shroff, 2007); others, including Ababu Minda Yimene, associate African identity in eastern India with religion (Yimene, 2007). Many of the issues relating to African migrants in India who made their way up to the higher echelons are discussed in a single work entitled *African Elites in India: Habshi Amarat,* edited by Kenneth X. Robbins and John McLeod (2006). Most recently, the exhibition on the African diaspora in India launched in New York in 2013, curated by Sylviane Diouf and Kenneth X. Robbins, is travelling globally as well as within India. This volume of the *General History of Africa* will therefore raise awareness in an area of history that has received much interest in the past two decades

and bring together a variety of perspectives and research in this field in one comprehensive work.

Drawing on the theme of African migrants who went on to govern small princely states in India, this chapter focuses specifically on the kingdom of Janjira, located on the west coast of India, south of Mumbai. Apart from Janjira and the princely state of Sachin in the Indian state of Gujarat, there was only a brief spell of African rule, in the region of Bengal in eastern India. There were, however, several instances of Africans who played prominent roles in the politics of other princely states in India, such as Ahmadnagar and Hyderabad. For example, Malik Ambar, who was of African descent, was the regent of the minor Ahmadnagar king and de facto ruler of the kingdom of Ahmadnagar from 1607 to 1626. He was responsible for increasing the power of the Ahmadnagar dynasty and is also associated with the establishment of the city of Aurangabad (Robbins and McLeod, 2006, pp. 44–106, 128–138). In addition, in 1621, it was Malik Ambar who granted his capable African administrative officer, Sidi Ambar Sainak, the island off the coast of the village of Danda-Rajpuri on the west coast of India, which resulted in the establishment of the princely state of Janjira (Damad, *c.*1920, pp. 16–21). The African Sidis managed to rule over this region until it was eventually merged into the Indian Union in 1948. The etymon of Sidi is the Arabic word *sayyidi* meaning 'my lord'. In this chapter, Sidis refer to the sub-Saharan Africans who settled in India.

This chapter focuses on the establishment of the princely state of Janjira and explores the interactions of its rulers with its neighbouring powers, especially the Marathas and the British in the immediate vicinity. The sources for the history of Janjira are varied and include official government gazettes, works dedicated solely to the history of Janjira, by Peshimam and Chitnis (Chitnis, 2005; Peshimam, n.d.), and an unpublished and undated handwritten manuscript in Urdu from the early twentieth century, presented in the style of a court history, by Sidi Abdul Rahim Damad (*c.*1920). Foundational works such as those by Banaji and Ranade have also been consulted to obtain an in-depth understanding of the political and military interactions between the Sidis, Marathas, Mughals and the British, although it should be noted that relations with the British were consolidated only in the early nineteenth century, which is beyond the time frame of this chapter (Banaji, 1932; Ranade, 1999).

The Africans who eventually established their rule over the island fortress of Janjira originated from Abyssinia and arrived on the west coast of India in the fifteenth century. While some Sidis soon proved their abilities as sailors and naval leaders, others gained prominence as administrative officials, obtaining

significant posts with the existent Bahmani and Ahmadnagar kingdoms on the west coast of India (Banaji, 1932, pp. xix–xx).

The island fortress of Janjira (which originates from the Arabic word *jazira*, meaning 'island') lay off the coast of the village of Danda-Rajpuri, approximately 40 miles south of Mumbai. Initially under the suzerainty of the Sultan of Gujarat, it fell into the hands of the Bahmani kingdom and was later conquered by the Ahmadnagar ruler Malik Ahmad Nizam Shah in the early sixteenth century. Because of its strategic location, this island had already been earmarked by Sidi traders as far back as the fifteenth century. Once it was taken over by the Ahmadnagar ruler, the Sidi administrative officers in his service were appointed *thanedars* or governors of the island. The Sidi thanedar Bairam Khan (1527–1538) successfully removed Ram Patil, the local leader of the *Koli* or fishing community who occupied the fortress of Janjira and proved to be a thorn in the side of the Ahmadnagar kingdom. Thereafter, the wooden structure of the fort was replaced by a stone construction under subsequent Sidi thanedars (Chitnis, 2005, p. 1; Khanzada, 1950s, p. 2; *Maharashtra State Gazetteers*. *Kolaba District*. 1964, pp. 71–149; Peshimam, n.d., pp. 1–2; Thapar, 1992).

The Sidi general Malik Ambar referred to above effectively wielded power over the Ahmadnagar kingdom as the regent of the minor ruler Murtaza Shah in the early sixteenth century. He appointed another Sidi, named Sidi Ambar Sainak, to conduct an administrative assessment of Janjira. Sidi Ambar Sainak's report was so thorough and impressive that he was granted full control over the island as its effective ruler upon the death of the then thanedar Yakut Khan Shazli in 1621 (see Table 1). This marked the beginning of the princely state of Janjira. Over the next few decades, the Sidi rulers of Janjira conquered a 42-mile stretch of land along the Konkan coast (region along the west coast of India) encompassing approximately 325 square miles (Chitnis, 2005, p. 1; Damad, *c.*1920, pp. 16–21).

According to the account given by two English 'land soldiers' in the 1620s,

> The Castle of Danda is scituated in the sea upon a little hommock, distant from the shoare a little more than a muskett shot; by nature very strong; wherein are at least 400 men, six great peeces of ordinance, and some 16 or 18 falconet and ravenet; envyroned with a wall, of 18 or 20 foote towards the land and some 14 foote towards the sea, round about, with battlements and half moones; and upon the top and middle of it a great house, and by it a block house, from whence we sawe three peeces of ordinance shott over to the S. side unto two Mallabarr friggitts which were coming into the baye (Foster, 1909, pp. 252–253; see also Banaji, 1932, p. 3).

Table 1. *Sidi thanedars and rulers of Janjira (1508-1948)*

Thanedars	
Mirza Ali, Kalbe Ali	1508-1527
Bairam Khan	1527-1538
Fahim Khan	1538-1587
Arnay Khan	1587-1612
Ibrahim Khan	1612-1618
Surur Abdul Samad	1618-1620
Yakut Khan Shazli	1620-1621
Rulers of Janjira	
Sidi Ambar Sainak	1621-1642
Sidi Yusuf Khan	1642-1648
Sidi Fateh Khan	1648-1667
Sidi Khairat Khan	1667-1696
Sidi Kasim Khan (also known as Yakut Khan I)	1696-1707
Sidi Surur Khan (also known as Yakut Khan II)	1707-1732
Sidi Hasan Khan	1732-1734
Sidi Sumbal Khan	1734-1736
Sidi Abdul Rahman Khan	1736-1740
Sidi Hasan Khan (second term)	1740-1746
Sidi Ibrahim Khan I	1746-1758
Sidi Mohammad Khan	1758-1759
Sidi Ibrahim Khan I (second term)	1759-1761
Sidi Yakut Khan	1761-1772
Sidi Abdul Rahim Khan	1772-1784
Sidi Jawhar Khan	1784-1789
Sidi Ibrahim Khan II	1789-1794
Sidi Zamarud Khan	1794-1803
Sidi Ibrahim II (second term)	1803-1825
Sidi Mohammad Khan	1825-1848
Sidi Ibrahim Khan III	1848-1879
Sidi Ahmed Khan	1879-1922
Sidi Mohammad Khan	1922-1948

Source: Faaeza Jasdanwalla

The reconstruction of the exterior and interior structures of the fort of Janjira was finally completed in 1728 under the rule of Sidi Surur Khan, also known as Yakut Khan II (see Table 1), and the fort proved to be impregnable. The main and only entrance to the fort was flanked by a series of bastions and was constructed in such a way that it was not visible until a boat was in close proximity to it. This provided a clear advantage for the Sidis within the fort. Altogether, it had 22 bastions that were 80 feet high and formed the consolidated exterior of the fort, each comprising canons, vantage points and designated ammunition storage areas (Damad, *c.*1920, pp. 40, 41, 48; Peshimam n.d., p. 9). In total, 572 cannons were used to protect and defend the fort from attack, the largest of which was named *Kalal Bangadi*, measuring 17 feet in length and with a bore of 14 inches. The origin of this canon is disputed by historians (Naravane, 2001, p. 105). There were several carvings of animals and Persian inscriptions in various parts of the fort, including an inscription attributing the construction of the fort to Yakut Khan II (Chitnis, 1999, pp. 4–6; Kadri, n.d., pp. 70–71, 74–75). The fort was a self-contained township comprising two freshwater lakes, royal residences, tombs and mosques, as well as residences for retainers, soldiers and Sidi sardars or chiefs.[1]

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FIGURE 1. *View of the fortress*

Janjira stands out in early modern Indian history as possibly the only region that operated, in theory, on the basis of democratic principles, given that rule over the territories was not hereditary. Once a Sidi ruler died, a group of Sidi chiefs or sardars appointed the next ruler based on his qualification and abilities to take on the position. This method of selection often resulted in the appointment of the son of a Sidi ruler as the next ruler, but the idea behind it was still democratic, as it required general agreement on the part of the sardars. The

1 For a detailed description and illustrations of the fort of Janjira, see Jasdanwalla F. (2015).

drawback of this idea of meritocracy was that it also led to much factionalism, with some sardars pushing for the selection of a ruler who would best serve their interests, while other factions had the power to depose rulers with whom they were displeased. This method was implemented from the establishment of Sidi rule over Janjira in 1621 until the early nineteenth century when, after much chaos and upheaval, Sidi Ibrahim Khan II (see Table 1) agreed to become the next ruler of Janjira in 1803 only on the condition that the position of ruler or nawab would be a hereditary one thenceforth. The etymon of 'nawab' is the Arabic word *na'ib*, meaning 'deputy' (Jasdanwalla, 2011, pp. 41–58).

Often, the true mettle of the ruling Sidi nawab was revealed in his interaction with neighbouring powers and his competence in protecting the Janjira fort and adjoining territories from enemy attacks. As alluded to earlier, the structure and construction of the fort had potentially rendered it impregnable. This feature, in conjunction with the strategic location of the fort, had attracted at an early stage the attention of Shivaji, the overlord of the Konkan coast and founder of the Maratha kingdom in the seventeenth century. Shivaji had conquered much of the territory in the Konkan and Deccan regions[2] and wished to gain control over the lands occupied by the Sidi nawabs of Janjira – the prime target being their seat of power, the fort. Under the tenure of the third Sidi ruler of Janjira, Sidi Fateh Khan, there was much discontent among the Sidi ranks. Shivaji took advantage of this unrest and lay siege to the fort of Janjira in 1659. Notwithstanding Fateh Khan's mettle, he could not endure the extended siege of the Marathas and, in order to save himself, he decided to hand over the fort to the enemy. Learning of this intent, two discontented Sidi chiefs who had left the fort in disgust sprang into action to save the fort and the position of the rulers of Janjira. They returned to the fort and soon fought off the Marathas (Robbins and McLeod, 2006, pp. 179–180). This setback, however, did not deter the Marathas, who laid siege to Janjira several times until the nineteenth century, first under the descendants of Shivaji and then under the Peshwas who took over the seat of Maratha power; but the Sidis remained triumphant. Thus, despite numerous attempts, the Janjira fort sustained its invincible status (Damad, *c.*1920, pp. 22–34, 45–46, 72–76, 94–95; Peshimam, n.d., pp. 4–8, 9–10, 16–18).

It is therefore possible to argue that responsibility for the territory and subjects of Janjira lay not solely with its ruler, but also with the group of Sidi

2 The Konkan is a stretch of coastal territory in the present Indian state of Maharashtra. The Deccan refers to a plateau which covers much of central and southern India, with the Vindhya Range forming its northern boundary.

sardars who appointed him based on the idea that the chosen person was the most capable to rule. This was clearly evident during the Maratha siege of 1659, when the selected ruler, Fateh Khan, had proved to be self-serving and unable to rise to the challenge. The responsibility for protecting the fort from inevitable seizure by the Marathas under Fateh Khan rested with the Sidi sardars, who took immediate measures to ensure the defeat of the enemy. After the two Sidi chiefs Khairat Khan and Kasim Khan proved their military prowess against the Marathas, the election of both as successive rulers of Janjira was seen as not only inevitable but also prudent.

However, interaction and confrontation with the Sidis of Janjira was not limited merely to the Marathas. By virtue of their presence on the west coast of India, the Sidis were in direct contact with the British and the Mughals. When Janjira was handed over to Sidi Ambar Sainak by Malik Ambar in 1621, the relationship between the Sidis and the Mughals was initially tense. The Mughal emperor Shah Jahan had embarked on a conquest of the Konkan and had appropriated the village of Danda-Rajpuri – and the Janjira fort was located off its coast. The British too recognized the strategic location of the fort near the village of Danda-Rajpuri and coveted it for themselves as an advantageous trading base. Attempts to open negotiations with the Sidis were made in 1628 and again in 1639, both of which failed. In 1657, the British were even asked to assist the Mughals in capturing the fort of Janjira, but ironically they were not in a position to offer aid at the time. However, the greatly advantageous location of Janjira prompted renewed dialogue between the East India Company at home and its employees in India in 1659. In a letter dated 23 March 1659, the East India Company wrote to the Surat Council:

> wee desire you to take notice that wee have here againe reassumed the debate of this businesse, and doe conclude that Danda Rajapore will be a very commodious and secure place to settle upon, being soe scituated as that in respect of trade, both to Persia, Mocha, Acheene, etc., and the freenesse from troubles and dangers, that it is to be preferred farr belore Surratt (Foster 1921, pp. 207–208; see also Banaji 1932, pp. 5–6).

Finally, in 1660, the British received notification from higher authorities to take Janjira by force and formulated a plan to that effect which involved cutting off food supplies to the fort. An expedition was planned under the guise of bearing gifts to the Sidis, but with the true purpose of gauging the situation. For reasons unknown – given the silence in the records – the expedition and subsequent plan to storm Janjira were abandoned. Instructions and plans of this nature issued by the East India Company were often difficult to put into action for various practical reasons. However, the fort of Janjira remained desirable to

the British. Cognizant of the rising might of the Marathas – who, as we have already seen, were desperate to gain control of the strategic fort – the British considered assisting Shivaji in his mission against Janjira in the hope of gaining the fort. Nevertheless, the British contemplated the prudence of such a move, since having the Sidis as their enemy on the west coast could also prove to be detrimental to British interests (Banaji, 1932, pp. 1–12).

At around the same time, the all-important port of Bombay, which had hitherto been in the possession of the Portuguese, was transferred to the British in 1665 and handed over formally to the East India Company in 1668. This state of affairs coincided with a number of attacks by Shivaji on the fort of Janjira, all of which had been unsuccessful. In 1669, Shivaji attacked Janjira once again. Although the Portuguese had declared their friendship towards the Sidis, there was little sign of that friendship being honoured, as one of the Sidi vessels was captured by the Portuguese. This left the Sidis reliant on the goodwill of the British, to whom they offered their vessels for trading purposes. As highlighted above, however, it was clear that the British also had their eyes on Janjira in view of its advantageous position and were willing to grant concessions to the Sidis in the interim with regard to their presence in Bombay, albeit with utmost caution. By then, under the Mughal emperor Aurangzeb, the Sidis had been appointed as admirals to the Mughal fleet on the west coast on account of their naval prowess in 1660, and they proved their mettle not only in service to the Mughals but also in defeating Shivaji once more in 1672 under Sidi Yakut Khan.

The British thereafter faced a dilemma as both the Sidis and Shivaji appealed to them for help against the other. An additional dimension entered the equation at this point, namely, the Dutch – who desired Bombay and proposed that if Shivaji helped them to take over Bombay from the British, they would help him to capture Janjira from the Sidis. The British, having discovered the potential deal, appeased Shivaji by promising him the most beneficial terms in a settlement between himself and the Sidis. However, the British still found themselves in a predicament. If the Sidi requests for certain concessions were refused by the British, the former would inflict damage on the British through hostile inroads into Bombay. On the other hand, however, the British also had to contend with hostilities breaking out between the Marathas and Sidis in and around Bombay which undoubtedly proved damaging to the British in terms of property and goods. If concessions were granted by the British to the Sidis, Shivaji would threaten to accept the offer of the Dutch and assist them in taking over Bombay. Above all, by not granting the requests of the Sidis to anchor their vessels around Bombay, the British risked the wrath of the Mughal emperor

who had appointed the Sidis as his admirals in that region. A semblance of peace between the Sidis and the British ensued and lasted until 1683, when a series of incidents arose which resulted in hostilities between the two parties the following year (Banaji, 1932, pp. 13–25, 35).

Matters came to a head, however, between 1689 and 1690. There were signs that the Sidis were preparing for an invasion of Bombay and the British informed them by letter that any attempt by Sidi ships to make their way from Danda-Rajpuri to Bombay would be considered an act of aggression. Bombay was a relatively defenceless, and therefore tempting, target for the Sidis, who in this instance acted of their own accord – rather than at the instigation of Aurangzeb – in response to the provocation by the British. The British captured the Sidi fleet laden with corn and cloth and offloaded the goods in Bombay. The Sidis requested the British to return their fleet and goods, but the request and subsequent threats by the Sidis fell on deaf ears. As a result, the Sidis landed on the shores of Bombay on 14 February 1689. Their initial advances into Bombay and plunder of the surrounding area remained unchecked as the British deserted the Bombay forts, leaving behind treasure and ammunition that fell immediately into Sidi hands. It was not until the following day that the British governor decided to take action, albeit in vain, since the Sidis took hold of most of Bombay except Bombay Castle and remained stationed in Bombay for the ensuing months. The only means by which some semblance of order could be regained was through the intervention of Aurangzeb, who issued a *farman* calling for the reinstatement of privileges to the British with regard to trade, as well as the dismissal of the governor of Bombay, Sir John Child, who had clearly proved to be incompetent, and the evacuation of Bombay by the Sidis. The Sidis, however, were most reluctant to leave their gains in Bombay. It was only when the demand for treasure by the Sidis had been satisfied by the British that they finally agreed to depart from Bombay on 22 June 1690. Much of Bombay had been left in ruins and had resulted in heavy losses for the British, both in monetary terms and manpower (Banaji, 1932, pp. 40–58).

The ensuing 40 years saw a period of peace, or rather a period in which the British avoided hostilities with their neighbours, be it the – still powerful – Marathas or then the Sidis. They used this period to consolidate the administration of Bombay and presented a far more united front by deliberately abandoning internal quarrels (Banaji, 1932, p. 59). Anglo-Sidi interactions took the form of an alliance in the eighteenth century and, in the following century, it was the British who intervened in one of the most prolonged and strongly contested succession disputes, overriding the claim of the Sidi sardars to elect

the next nawab of Janjira. They acknowledged the hereditary rule of the nawabs which had been put in place in 1803 and approved the accession of Sidi Ahmed Khan, who ruled from 1879 to 1922 (Jasdanwalla, 2011, pp. 51–54).

Sidi Ahmed Khan was succeeded by his son, Sidi Mohammad Khan, who ruled Janjira until the princely states of India were merged into the Indian Union in 1948. For over three centuries, Janjira had withstood innumerable attacks upon it, survived despite setbacks and maintained its African roots. Until the late nineteenth century, Sidi nawabs married women from the Sidi community itself and maintained their biological links to their African heritage. In many other ways, they had embraced the cultural influences of the surrounding region, especially in terms of dress and food. The fort as the epicentre of the princely state and, later, the new Ahmedganj Palace on the mainland (constructed in the early twentieth century) were what appeared to secure the bond among Sidi inhabitants. It is therefore possible to argue that the identity of the Sidis of Janjira was closely linked to Janjira itself and to their hold over important and strategic areas in the face of their enemy, the Marathas – who were also the enemy of the powerful Mughal Empire, seated in Delhi. Although they had arrived at a late stage and were foreigners in the land in which they settled, they were assimilated into the native population in some ways but were always conscious of their African origin. The relatively small princely state of Janjira not only managed to hold out against local and European (including British) attacks but also stood out in India as the only princely state (apart from the princely state of Sachin, established by an offshoot of the Janjira Sidis) that was governed by rulers of African descent. Until recently, the history of the Sidis of Janjira had been inextricably linked to their interaction with the colossal forces in Indian history, namely the Mughals, the Marathas and the British. It is only in recent years that the history of the Africans in India has been researched and written with the Sidis as the central protagonists. No longer are they simply peripheral participants.

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CHAPTER 3

IRANIAN PEOPLE OF AFRICAN DESCENT

Local Boundary and National Unity

Behnaz A. Mirzai

Introduction

Scholars of slavery use terms such as 'slavery', 'abolition', 'emancipation' and 'diaspora' when describing the impact of population dispersal, socioeconomic conditioning, legal system transformation and changes in status on communities who have been forcibly relocated. It is therefore important to realize that a meaningful application of these terms is possible only if societal variations are explored.

For a critical analysis of enslaved Africans and their descendants in Iran, we must consider not only the geographical spaces in which unique subnational communities were formed but also the local socioeconomic, cultural, geographical, historical and legal specificities. It is important to note that the term 'African diaspora' is relevant only to the experience of people of African descent who lived in Iran in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Thereafter, these former diasporic communities incorporated subregional and subethnic diversities to such a degree that while some elements of African culture persisted into twenty-first century Iran, there is virtually no historical memory of 'Africanness' among these people. Moreover, as there is little visible connection between black communities within the country, it is misleading to suggest that they identify with or belong to the global African diaspora (and more appropriate, instead, to suggest that every Iranian province has its own unique diaspora). For black Iranians, identifying

with Africa is not relevant beyond basic physical resemblance and there appears to be a reluctance to do so because of the sense of detachment and alienation it would cause – possibly leading to a loss of Iranian identity. Accordingly, it is more important to study the transformation of the communities of African descent in Iran, historically located along the shores of the Persian Gulf that stretch across the country from south-west to south-east, in the provinces of Khuzestan, Sistan va Baluchistan, Bushehr and Hormozgan.

Iranian subnations

Iran is a multi-ethnic society consisting of thirty-one provinces. Each subsociety has its own unique local language, cultural traditions, economic systems, social patterns and customs. In the same way as the country's political divisions have changed over time, local socioeconomic and cultural structures have adjusted to and been transformed by new realities (Mirzai, 2014, pp. 351–376). Given the different patterns of slavery in the Indian and Atlantic Oceans, generalizations can lead to erroneous assessments and conclusions. For this reason, this paper focuses only on the formation of black communities in the aforementioned provinces, from the era of the slave trade to the present, and does not attempt to do so within a larger context.

Historically, enslaved people were transferred from East Africa to the coastal ports of the Persian Gulf, the Gulf of Oman and the Indian Ocean. The seaborne slave trade was largely dominated by Arab dealers, who had been using well-established maritime commercial networks for centuries (Archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran 1266, Q1263.6.15; Nicolini, 2004, p. 100). They relied on strategies ranging from exploiting long-established climatic patterns (e.g., monsoons and winds) to adopting the flags of other nations or hiring Iranian vessels to evade search and seizure by British ships following the implementation of slave-trade suppression legislation after the mid-nineteenth century (National Archives of the United Kingdom 1847, FO 84/692; Lorimer, 1908–1915, Vol.1: pt. 1A, pp. 339, 548–550). Because slave trafficking depended on this system rather than on organized internal networks, most communities of enslaved Africans were established at disembarkation points along Iranian southern coastal frontiers and ports (Mirzai, 2002, pp. 229–246).

After being delivered from sea slave traffickers to their new owners, the enslaved people began a new chapter of life. They were employed in a variety of occupations, from domestic employment to work in agricultural industries

and fisheries, the military, politics and entertainment. Although the concept of possession is fundamental to slavery, the domestic rules and dominant social, economic, communal and geographical orders were detrimental in defining local slavery. Enslaved Africans had to adapt to often quite different local cultural circumstances by learning new dialects and adopting new religions and communal mores. Labour realities differed profoundly in rural and urban settings. It is not surprising, therefore, that such varyingly different environmental and geographical paradigms resulted in such different communitarian experiences.

Sistan va Baluchistan

Sistan va Baluchistan is located in the south-eastern corner of Iran, bordering Pakistan, Afghanistan and the Gulf of Oman. There are two distinct ethno-religious groups: the majority Shi'a Sistanis of Sistan in the north and the majority Sunni Baluchis of Baluchistan in the south. The dress, language, food and customs of this province bear a stronger affinity with the neighbouring country of Pakistan than with other Iranian provinces. Moreover, a harsh climate along with a long history of high taxation, foreign control and emigration has meant that this region is one of the least populated, most desolate and underdeveloped provinces in Iran. Enslaved Africans were therefore brought to the region to meet labour shortages faced by affluent *khans* (local rulers) and they worked here, often alongside commoners and peasants in many different industries, as they had done for centuries (Vaziri 1386 SH, pp. 16, 26; Sykes, 1902, p. 106). From the early eighteenth century until the last decades of the nineteenth century, they came via a slave trade network dominated by the Sultanate of Oman, which extended from eastern Africa throughout the Indian Ocean and Persian Gulf regions (Landen, 1967, p. 63).

Groups with deeply embedded cultural mores and kinship networks (further bound by a common descent) tend to reinforce shared economic, cultural, historical and genealogical connections through marriage and other mechanisms of social mobility. Thus, it may be seen that social stratification strengthened principles based on kinship and descent. The ultimate result of such social arrangements was the political elevation of certain influential local groups, which consequently reinforced a sense of second-class citizenship among other groups. Importantly, such patterns were the result of specifically local social processes and were not mirrored elsewhere in society.

In general, the choice of a spouse was governed by centuries-old norms that prescribed consanguinity and endogamy and the eligibility of an individual member

of every *ta'ife* (community) to marry within her or his own kin and social group, while members of other communities were necessarily deemed ineligible. Combined with intermarriage traditions, this led to the development of visibly 'African' communities during the slave trade era, most often in village settlements. It is important to note that this kind of endogamous culture was characteristic of power structures, status and wealth – as could be seen in the ranking and hierarchy of other Baluch *ta'ifes* – and was not determined by race. Moreover, such prescriptive marriage customs existed elsewhere in Iran but their rigidity, standards and measures varied from one region to another over time. Based on customary oral traditions, these rules were independent of national and state laws and were promulgated by local leaders (*shaykhs* and *khans*) and chiefs of every village.

A close examination of local social structures reveals the historical processes that affected the status of enslaved Africans in Sistan va Baluchistan. These include a predominant pattern of 'assimilation' in cities and 'integration' in more remote areas and rural districts. In cities, freed slaves consciously or unconsciously lost their distinctive identities as they were assimilated into the host society while, in remote and rural areas, they consciously or unconsciously maintained some aspects of their ethnic identities as they were integrated into society. Again, it may be seen that this paradigm was the result of pre-existing local customs and rigid social hierarchies that defined relationships based on wealth, power, status, lineage and kinship in the *ta'ifes* (communities). The status of enslaved Africans was therefore based on their rank as 'slaves' and 'outsiders' rather than on racial characteristics or skin colour.

The stratified, hierarchical and endogamous nature of the rural areas of Sistan va Baluchistan persists to some degree to this day. Thus, its ethnographic paradigm and the categorization of descendants of enslaved people have not changed fundamentally. In addition, it is interesting to see the similarity between this social structure and that of the caste system in India; this may be explained by a shared history under British rule (Guha, 2013, pp. 31, 143–174; Dirks, 2001, pp. 213–243).

Governmental incompetence or reluctance to enforce laws in rural and peripheral areas helped to perpetuate traditional practices and customs and to reinforce the hierarchical nature of local culture. Until the Islamic Revolution in 1979, local ruling elites were obdurate about social reform. Recent globalization has accelerated political change, reform and social equality by helping to dismantle the *khan* system and replace it with local councils that support social mobility for descendants of former slaves. Thus, while endogamous marriages still occur within *ta'ifes*, there is much greater social and economic mobility and flexibility.

Khuzestan

The province of Khuzestan illustrates a quite different situation. As a neighbour of Iraq, its inhabitants are ethnically Arab through centuries of travel and immigration. An abundance of water and fertile soil suitable for agriculture, along with oil reserves and various industries, have provided job opportunities (Jamalzada 1384 SH, pp. 70, 108; Khazeni, 2009, p. 123). Most people belong to the Shi'a denomination and speak Arabic. Society was divided into the *ta'ife* (tribe or community), '*ashire* (clan), *hamule* (dynasty) and *beyt* (family). While not necessarily hierarchical, this system led to the formation of a few slave clans which adopted similar characteristics to those found in Sistan va Baluchistan. However, as illustrated by the enslaved people who joined the 'Abdulkhan community when it left the Iraqi part of the Ottoman Empire in 1856 and settled in Khuzestan, groups were able to form their own clan. The 'Abid or Kakahi clan are therefore descendants of enslaved Africans (Sistani 1366 SH, Vol.1, p. 417). Central government policies affected the local social system in this region in the twentieth century and the traditional social structure has now been transformed. For example, while many *shaykh*s still act as mediators in social, political and economic matters in their communities, their authority was officially abolished in the 1920s (Sanasarian, 2000, p. 14).

Southern coastal provinces

Together, the provinces of Hormozgan and Bushehr have Iran's longest coastline along the Persian Gulf, and this is where the greatest number of enslaved Africans disembarked until the mid-nineteenth century. Although most were engaged in the fishing industry, others were involved in the agricultural sector and domestic service.

The southern ports region has long been characterized as multi-ethnic and pluralistic. Moreover, while it is a predominantly Shi'a area, about one-fifth of the region's inhabitants are members of the Sunni sect, of which some 96 per cent belong to the Shafi'i denomination. Given the range of beliefs and ethnicities, groups tended to congregate in quarters. For example, in Bandar Abbas, Sunnis were concentrated in the Ozi, Soro and Shagho quarters, while the descendants of Africans had their own Islamic centre to perform rituals and lived in areas called *Blacks' Quarter*, *Blacks' Pulpit* and *Behind the City* (Kababi 1368 SH, pp. 157, 162, 158).

In the southern coastal region, kinship networks tended to be more fluid and symbolic and could therefore exert less of an impact on the way individuals interacted. Key factors were the area's extremely hot and humid climate – especially during the summer – and trade, which encouraged the migration of coastal peoples and communities throughout the Persian Gulf. Coastal communities, which were cosmopolitan and multicultural, tended to exhibit greater racial and religious tolerance (Mojtahed-Zadeh, 2003, p. 67). Peoples of African descent, therefore, tended to reside in non-hierarchical communities that practised mostly exogamous marital arrangements. Today, all the inhabitants of southern Iran, including descendants of Africans, are referred to as *Bandaris* (the people of the port) and those who remain visibly distinctive are known as *siyahan-i janub* (the blacks of the south). These terms are commonly used in popular culture, films and songs, highlighting their African origin. Ironically, many Iranians are wont to attribute the prevalence of either lighter or darker complexions to climatic variations, namely, darker skin to the south and fairer skin to the cooler north.

Cultural unity and diversity

Communal diversity is an entrenched phenomenon in Iranian society. In spite of ethno-cultural variety and overall heterogeneity, specific African traditions can be seen to have influenced Iranian culture, especially in the south. These customs, which cross social and geographical boundaries, connect individuals and communities both within Iran and in Africa. This is particularly apparent in various cultural elements with African origins and Iranian influences, from rhythmic music and song to healing rituals. They may differ from the original in name, symbol, performance and representation, but share common principles and concepts. For instance, the *bandari* music and songs characteristic of the southern coastal regions include *sabalu*, in which people sit in a circle, play the tambourine and shake their shoulders (Sistani 1369 SH, p. 499). In addition, the s*angali* song was traditionally sung by sailors while rowing or loading goods (interview with Esma'il Mubarak, an Afro-Iranian, in 2000; Eqtedari 2536, p. 251). Remnants of the Swahili language and belief systems are still apparent in healing ritual songs, including Zar and Gowat (Darvishi 1376 SH, p. 175). These traditions reveal the extent to which Iranian culture, shamanistic cults, Sufism and traditional African rituals have merged over centuries of interaction and migration.

Conclusion

The formation of heterogeneous communities of descendants of Africans has brought social, economic, ethnic and cultural diversity to Iran. This article has shown that various factors influenced the extent of assimilation and integration of these populations. For example, where social hierarchies tended to remain fixed – such as in the more rural areas of Baluchistan – endogamous marriages were encouraged and African communities tended to remain visibly distinctive. This was not so much the case elsewhere. However, it is crucial to note that any resulting social inequalities were not based on race but on class and power. Following the political transformations of the twentieth century and globalization in recent decades, the rigidity of local social structures and rules has waned. This has led to a significant increase in exogamous marriages and fuller social assimilation. With the loss of notions of 'Africanness', more emphasis has been placed on unique cultural identities and boundaries at the local and provincial level, and the multiple ethnic facets of a single shared identity have been crystalized in Iranians of African descent.

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CHAPTER 4

THE AFRICAN DIASPORA IN OCEANIA (1700–1800)

Cassandra Pybus

The earliest record of a person of the African diaspora in Oceania was an unnamed 'black servant' on Captain James Cook's second voyage to the Pacific. He was among a party of ten men from HMS *Adventure* sent ashore in a cutter to collect greens at Queen Charlotte Sound (in present day New Zealand) on 17 December 1773 (Beaglehole, 1969, pp. 749–52). All of these men were killed by Māori warriors, led by the chief Kahura and subsequently eaten in a whāngai hau ceremony, in which the participants consumed the spirit of an enemy and his ancestors (Salmond, 2003, p. 229). It is clear from the evidence that the Māori made no distinction between this African man and the other nine European men in the cutter with him. It is safe to assume that there were other men from the African diaspora on Cook's ships in his various voyages into the Pacific, but they remain even more anonymous than that unfortunate 'servant'.

Historians know much more about the African men who were aboard a fleet of eleven British ships under Captain Arthur Phillip that sailed into the Pacific late in 1797. This was the *First Fleet* sent to create a penal colony on the east coast of Australia that Captain Cook had named New South Wales. The ships carried 759 British felons sentenced to 'transportation beyond the Seas' and a few hundred marines to guard them. A decade earlier, these convicted felons would have been shipped to the American colonies, but since the American War of Independence, 1775-1782, the British Government had been desperate

to find a new dumping ground for Britain's unwanted felons. Several proposals for convict settlements on the west coast of Africa – near the slave factory of Cape Coast Castle, on the coast of Sierra Leone, or on an island miles up the Gambia River – were considered and rejected before the Home Secretary, Lord Sydney, chose the very distant and utterly unfamiliar place Captain Cook had found on the other side of the world (Christopher, 2011).

An African convict was among the very first to make landfall in New South Wales, as one of a small group of convicts sent ashore to cut grass for the horses on 20 January 1788. The officer who accompanied the group was aware of the watching Aborigines and he later wrote a rather fanciful account of the behaviour of these curious natives. They were 'much pleased' to see a 'man of their own complexion', he wrote, and appeared to be puzzled that the black man failed to understand when they called out to him in their language (Bradley, 1969, p. 62). This was hardly likely. What the Aborigines were calling out was later translated as 'go away' and was addressed to all the invaders. For the indigenous people of Australia, someone from Africa who had suddenly appeared on their shores dressed in a convict uniform would have appeared no less alien than those with pale faces dressed in the same strange clothes. On more than one occasion the Aborigines showed keen interest in the fact that the invaders came in different skin colours, but they gave no sign of cultural identification with anyone. None of the First Fleet diarists record which African man it was who first stepped ashore, but he would have been one of eleven African convicts aboard the First Fleet, less than two per cent of the convict cargo.

All these eleven men were illiterate. Their trial records provide no account of how they came to be in England and the sparse, one-line entries in their transportation indents provide few clues to their history. They had all been arrested in the period between 1782 and 1787, a time when the black population in England increased dramatically, especially in Greater London, where most were sentenced. By 1785, the black population in that city was around 10,000 and parish records indicate that the great majority were young black men concentrated in parts of the East End of London, such as Stepney, Minories, Wapping, Shadwell, Limehouse and Deptford. Analysis of records of black baptisms for 1770-1800 for the parishes of Greater London, using data supplied by the London Metropolitan Archives, indicate that about one per cent of baptised Londoners were black; however, this underestimates the black population, many of whom were not Christian. Analysis of trial records from the Old Bailey, the Middlesex and Kent Assizes in the period immediately after the American War of Independence, reveal about 0.9 per cent of indictments

were identified as black, but racial identity was not always specified in the court documents. In the more detailed records for the prison hulks the percentage of convicted black felons was two per cent. An average of all three indicators suggests a level of about 1.3 per cent of a population of 750,000, or just under 10,000 (Pybus, 2006).

It was the view of contemporary observers that this sudden influx of indigent black men, living by their wits and whatever they could steal, was a direct result of the American Revolution. Between 4,000 and 5,000 African Americans ended up in London in the aftermath of that war, nearly all of them runaway slaves who had deserted their masters when promised their freedom by the British. The runaways who sought protection from the British had been granted freedom by British proclamation, but in order for them to remain free once the conflict had ended, they had had to leave America and forge a problematic new life in far-flung corners of the British Empire, constituting a diaspora within a diaspora (Pybus, 2006). Regardless of where these African men came from, it is clear that they could not find any legitimate means of support in England, with a labour market flooded with returning soldiers and sailors. Having no home parish, they were unable to access relief under the Poor Law. A pauper was required to return to his 'parish of settlement' before being entitled to receive relief. The Scots and Irish were sent back to their country of birth, but it was neither practical nor desirable to return refugees to America (Braidwood, 1994, p. 32). It is not surprising that African American refugees ended up in the prison hulks charged with minor felonies, such as stealing food or clothing.

The majority of the Africans on the First Fleet came to Britain via the American colonies. John Moseley came from Virginia before defecting to the British forces in the American Revolution. He worked in New York until 1783 when he was recorded as leaving New York as a seaman on a British ship (Pybus, 2006). He was arrested in Portsmouth in 1784 for impersonating another seaman who had been kidnapped into slavery, in order to get his wages.[1] Daniel Gordon, formerly of Charleston, South Carolina, was arrested near Portsmouth in 1786 in possession of stolen clothing.[2] John Randall, originally from New London, Connecticut, was almost certainly from a disbanded British regiment when he was sentenced for stealing a watch in Manchester in 1785.[3] George Francisco was sentenced to seven years for stealing in 1784 after spending three years as

1 John Moseley, Old Bailey Session Papers, (OBSP) 1783–84, https://www.oldbaileyonline.org.

2 Winchester Quarter Session Records, 5 April 1875, Hampshire Record Office.

3 Manchester Quarter Sessions, 14 April 1875, Lancaster Record Office.

a prisoner of war in France, having been captured on a British warship.[4] Samuel Chinery had probably come from America when he was sentenced at Exeter, Devon in 1786 for the theft of a linen shirt.[5] It is unclear whether John Coffin was from America but he was working as a servant in Exeter in 1784 when he was arrested for stealing.[6]

Some of the African convicts appear to have been sailors who came from the Caribbean or the west coast of Africa. When Thomas Orford, described as 'a negro' who spoke 'broken English', was tried in London, he gave evidence that he had come off a ship.[7] John Martin, who was also sentenced for stealing clothing in London, appears to have been a seaman from the Caribbean, just off a ship.[8] Sixteen-year-old James Williams, known as 'Black Jemmy' was a serving seaman who was sentenced in 1785 at the Old Bailey to seven years' transportation for theft of clothing.[9] The youngest African transported was John Williams, who was also a seaman. He was fourteen when he was indicted at Maidstone as 'Black Jack', for breaking into a house and stealing alcohol, clothing and money.[10]

The most notable of the African convicts was John Caesar, sometimes called Black Caesar, who has a claim to being a historical figure of major importance. He was Australia's first bushranger.[11] Caesar was six feet tall and was aged about twenty-two when he was convicted of theft at the Maidstone court in 1786 and sentenced to seven years' transportation.[12] He was believed to have come from Madagascar and the name Caesar suggests that he was originally enslaved. Since people from Madagascar were not sold in Britain or the Caribbean in the eighteenth century, this suggests he came to Britain from the American slave colonies (Duffield, 1998, p. 57-93). Malagasy captives were highly prized as slaves in America, and both New York and Virginia had several shipments from Madagascar (Platt, 1969, pp. 548-577).

4 George Francisco: OBSP, 1784–85, https://www.oldbaileyonline.org

5 Samuel Chinery: ASSI 23/8, 24/26, NAUK

6 *Exeter Flying Post* 1784–86, vol. xxiii, no. 1141, 12 January 1786

7 Thomas Orford: OBSP – 1783–84 https://www.oldbaileyonline.org

8 John Martin: OBSP 1781–82 https://www.oldbaileyonline.org

9 John Williams: ASSI, 13/13; NA ASSI, 35/225, NAUK

10 James Williams: OBSP 1784 85 https://www.oldbaileyonline.org

11 The 'bushranger' is an armed outlaw who has become Australia's iconic hero. The most famous bushranger, Ned Kelly, is celebrated in Peter Carey's Booker prize-winning novel *The True Story of the Kelly Gang* New York: Knopf, 2001.

12 Assizes 35/226, 38, NAUK

At the penal settlement established in New South Wales, Caesar was reputed to be the strongest man in the place, and a hardworking convict, but 'incorrigibly stubborn' (Collins, 1975, p. 57). He managed to profoundly irritate the Judge Advocate, who penned an appraisal of this recalcitrant convict saying, 'in his intellect he did not differ widely from a brute' and concluding that the man was forced to steal to feed his brutish appetite. In May 1789, he was caught with stolen bread, and sentenced to be flogged with 500 lashes. Guessing that the terrors of the unknown hinterland were less terrible than a penal settlement, Caesar ran off into the surrounding bush, armed with a musket and cooking pot. He was soon caught and brutally punished, but no matter how many times he was caught Caesar always managed to abscond back to the bush. By 1795, he was still at large and providing encouragement to other absconders. Armed with stolen muskets, Caesar and his associates constituted a greater threat to the penal settlement than the local Aborigines (Collins, op. cit., p. 377). Australia's first outlaw was eventually shot and killed by a convict bounty hunter in 1796. Caesar's legacy, however, lived on. His daughter Mary Anne Poore, born in Australia, received a land grant in the second penal colony of Van Diemen's Land in 1813.

There can be no doubt that penal servitude in New South Wales was coercive and brutal. Convicts were torn away from their families, dumped at the end of the world and forced into backbreaking labour on State projects, without a wage, for a period of four to twelve years. Arbitrary punishment was meted out that could scar them for life. Yet for all its harshness, penal servitude was nothing like chattel slavery. Little distinguished the convicts from those who guarded them. Many of the marines at Sydney Cove, like the seamen on the transport ships, had been impressed into service and they too faced excessively brutal punishment for minor misdemeanours and were lucky if they were ever paid. Everyone, convict or free, had to labour on State projects in the first decade of settlement in order to create a place to live, just as everyone had to scrabble for subsistence in the face of famine. From the lowliest convict to the governor, everyone had the same allowance of food, even when the government rations were cut to a quarter.

Most significant for the African cohort was that children born in the penal colony had the same status and privilege of any freeborn British subject. Among the very first generation of Australian-born there were more than a dozen with African fathers. Among the first generation of freeborn settlers in Australia there were at least four with African fathers: Lydia Randall born in 1791, Mary Anne Poore born in 1792, Mary Randall born in 1793, and John Randall Jr.

born in 1797. In 1812, Mary Randall married another African, John Martin, and their marriage produced 13 children and 52 grandchildren. Descendants of that union are now said to number 25,000. For John Randall and John Martin, both probably born into slavery, to see their children with the privilege of the freeborn, guaranteed by custom and law, was a significant achievement, probably worth all the bitter tribulations that had brought them to this strange place at the very end of the world.

After the First Fleet, the ships brought a steady trickle of African convicts from England, although probably slightly less than one per cent of the 164,000 convicts transported. Among them was an African man who was celebrated as one of Australia's Founding Fathers, Billy Blue, who arrived in 1801. A commemorative portrait of Billy Blue hangs in the State Library of New South Wales. This portrait in oils is the work of J. B. East, an artist of some renown who had exhibited at the Royal Academy of Arts and who probably produced his portrait immediately after Blue's death on 6 May 1834. His painting captured a tall, graceful black man with intelligent eyes and a beatific smile, in rag-tag clothing made from bits of military uniform, with his signature top hat, carrying the accoutrements of a bag slung over his shoulder and a carved stick. Blue is standing at the monument known as Mrs Macquarie's Chair in the Governor's Domain, as an acknowledgement of Blue's patron, Governor Lachlan Macquarie, while the distant harbour reminds the viewer of Blue's position as the official ferryman on Sydney Harbour, a position he held for many years. Within days of his death, *The Australian* newspaper announced that East's painting was on public view and the *Sydney Gazette* newspaper produced two full columns extolling Blue as a founding father of New South Wales, whose memory would be 'treasured in the minds of the present generation, when the minions of ambition are forgotten in the dust'. Indulging in high-flown praise, the editor told his readers: 'the reign of Billy is coeval with the foundation of the colony' (*Sydney Gazette*, 8 May 1834).

At the time of his death, Blue was a very old man, believed to be aged somewhere between ninety-seven and ninety-nine. Some people believed he came from the Caribbean, but years after his death, his children revealed that he had told them his birthplace was New York.[13] A petition he wrote to the governor in 1823 reveals that he had been impressed in America to fight with the British in the Seven Years' War and he had subsequently fought with the

13 Susannah Scofield, granddaughter of Blue, provided a document, now lost, stating that Blue had told her father that he was born in New York. This account was reproduced in *The Star*, 21 September 1808.

British in the American War of Independence.[14] After being evacuated from America in 1782 he lived in Deptford, London, where he made a living working in various activities including chocolate manufacture.[15] In 1786 he was arrested and convicted of stealing sugar from a West Indian ship that he was unloading.[16]

Billy Blue lived in the penal colony of New South Wales for three decades, earning the affectionate nickname 'the commodore' for his increasingly eccentric behaviour. He adopted the habit of boarding ships that arrived in Sydney Harbour, wearing his tattered, mismatched uniform and top hat, to welcome the ship's captain in his official capacity as commodore. As the *Sydney Gazette* told its readers, Blue expected to receive 'suitable homage from all of His Majesty's subjects, as befitted a man of his position'. Twirling his stick and declaiming 'True Blue Forever', the old man demanded that men salute, children doff their hats, and women curtsy to him. This highly subversive performance had the curious effect of endearing Blue to all levels of Sydney society, who happily complied with his demands (*Sydney Gazette*, 15 December 1829). When Baron von Hügel landed in Sydney in 1834 he was confronted by an old black man standing in the middle of the street with a sack over his shoulder, 'saying something crazy in a loud voice at every passer-by'. On inquiring about this disreputable apparition, the European aristocrat could scarcely believe his ears when he was told that this was 'the old commodore whom Governor Macquarie appointed port captain'.

There continued to be a small trickle of African convicts from England, but after 1820 the penal colonies began to receive enslaved workers transported directly from Mauritius and the slave colonies of the British Caribbean. Their status as chattels was rarely stated on the official documentation, reflecting official squeamishness about complicity in the slaving business. An exception was a man sentenced to life in St. Vincent, known simply as Bruce. His owner had not managed to get his property returned and the British Government had to compensate the owner for the loss, so Bruce's offence was probably some act of rebellion. He was transported at some considerable cost to the British Government.[17] The same could be said for Sophie, an enslaved Malagasy woman who was transported after she set fire to her owner's barn in Mauritius. Likewise, Theresa, another enslaved woman from Madagascar transported from Mauritius

14 Petition of William Blue, CS R2052. 4/1764, Nov.1923, State Records of New South Wales.

15 Deposition of William Blue, 29 September 1786, Q/SB 225, Kent County Archives.

16 Indictment of William Blue, Q/SIW 422, Kent County Archives

17 Index to convict indents, 1788-1842, Fiche 5969-5979, Research Office of New South Wales.

in the same year, was found guilty of assault after she tried to hit her master's daughter with a hoe as retaliation for the brutal treatment she had received (Anderson, 1998, pp. 116–133). Two enslaved children in Mauritius, Constance, aged eight, and Elizabeth, aged twelve, were found guilty of trying to poison their mistress, and were transported for life (Pybus and Bradley, 2007, pp. 29–50).

The traffic in enslaved people convicted of felonies dramatically increased as the anti-slavery movement in Britain grew louder and more persistent, and the slave colonies saw transportation as a means to control a dangerously restive slave population excited by rumours of impending emancipation. In December 1831, 60,000 Jamaican slaves staged the largest slave rebellion in the British Empire at Montego Bay, which was put down with savage violence in January 1832. Subsequently, hundreds of slaves were vindictively condemned to death under martial law. After the orgy of execution, combined pressure from England to stop the killing encouraged white Jamaicans to rid themselves of enslaved troublemakers in other ways. Transportation was an attractive option because it permanently removed the people whose executions could incite more trouble (Duffield, 1986, pp. 25–45). Unlike the 344 enslaved rebels executed after the rebellion, eight rebels from Montego Bay were transported to the Australian penal colonies.

One such was Alexander Simpson, who arrived in Van Diemen's Land in 1833, having been convicted at a Jamaican Court Martial, on 20 January 1832, of 'making use of Seditious language, Joining and Engaging in Conspiracy, Traitorous, Rebellious or Hostile Acts against His Majesty's Government and against the peace and safety of the Island' and sentenced to death. His sentence was commuted and he was transported to Australia (Duffield, 1986). On his arrival he told the muster that his offence was: 'Mutiny and exciting the Slaves to Rebellion. I was a slave myself'. One of the most remarkable unintended consequences of penal transportation of enslaved rebels was that on conviction they became free subjects. So, when Simpson was granted a conditional pardon after a few years, he was able to live out the rest of his life in Australia with all the legal rights and protections of the freeborn British.

With the abolition of slavery and during the period of apprenticeships, convicts still came from the slave colonies. In these cases, the felonies for which they were convicted often masked the real crime, which was resistance to the continuation of unfree labour as forced apprenticeships, widely perceived as slavery in a new guise. These convicts were sent to the second penal colony established in Van Diemen's Land (modern Tasmania) in 1803. Convicts who came through the Van Diemen's Land system all had their bodies minutely

described and gave short biographical statements which were all noted in their convict record, so historians have evidence of physical descriptors, as well as self-identification, to help them establish the number of Africans in that penal system. The number in Van Diemen's Land who can be confidently identified was 283, comprising four women and 279 men.

Most were so-called 'apprentices' sent from the Caribbean colonies and Mauritius, but there were six military offenders from British army regiments who were court-martialled for desertion or mutiny in the Caribbean between 1833 and 1838.[18] There was nothing in their commonplace names to distinguish them from the great mass of English and Irish convicts arriving in the penal colonies sentenced by military courts, except that these men gave their native place as Africa. Moreover, they had distinct ritual scar patterns that indicated they had reached adolescence in Africa. Although it is not possible to say exactly where they were from, strong variations in their scar patterns suggest they came from various African locations. Given that the British slave trade had stopped in 1808, it was unlikely these men had come to the Caribbean as enslaved workers. In fact, they were 'liberated slaves', taken from impounded slave ships at Sierra Leone and then impressed into British military regiments. Between 1808 and 1825, 2,738 liberated Africans entered the services and most went into the West Indian regiments, with quite dramatic rises in 1827 and 1828 and further sharp rises in the mid-1830s.[19] As Roger Buckley has shown, the African soldier became indispensable in the defence of the British Caribbean slave plantations (Buckley, 1979, pp. 136–138).

In addition to providing a recruitment station, Sierra Leone also served the purpose of providing settlement for many others who were liberated from captured slave ships. One of these 'liberated slaves' was James Brown, who landed in Van Diemen's Land in 1833, having been sentenced to seven years for stealing shoes in London. To the clerk taking down his conviction he gave this mini-autobiography: 'I was taken when a child as a Slave from the Congo River and sold to a Spanish Slaver. Captured by a British King's Ship and liberated at Sierra Leone. [I was] brought away from thence as servant to Mr McCormack' (Duffield, 2001, pp. 117–135). Brown spoke the truth. John McCormack was an Irish trader who settled in Sierra Leone in 1816 before returning to London in 1830 with his 'apprentice'.

18 CON18/15, Archives Office of Tasmania.

19 CO 267/153/328, NAUK.

While it is rare to find such a direct statement of an enslaved slave past as that of James Brown or Alexander Simpson, for the majority of African convicts transported to Australia, their formative experience was of slavery, be they runaways from North America, liberated from impounded slave ships, chattel slaves on Caribbean plantations or 'apprentices' from Mauritius and the Caribbean. There were even a handful of enslaved people transported from the Cape of Good Hope with tell-tale names such as Adonis and Jacob.

Most convicts sent from the Cape Colony were indigenous Khoi who had been ruthlessly pushed off their lands in the eighteenth century and forced into debt peonage and near-slavery in which they were obliged to indenture their children up to 25 years of age. Most of the Khoi transported to the Australian penal colonies were impressed soldiers from the Cape Rifles who had been tried by court martial in the Cape, mostly for desertion (Malherbe, 1985, pp. 19-50). Other Khoi were among a group of offenders emptied out of Robben Island in the early 1830s, who were convicted of banditry and cattle stealing, which was colonial code for Khoi resistance. David Stuurman led a quixotic attempt to re-establish an independent self-sustaining Khoi community, for which he was dubbed 'the last chief of the Hottentots'. He and his followers were hunted down and imprisoned on Robben Island and it was from here that Stuurman was transported to New South Wales in 1823 (Malherbe, 1980, pp. 60-64). Several of his compatriots escaped from Robben Island and were recaptured a decade later and transported to Van Diemen's Land. Peter Haley was a transported Khoi man who became one of Australia's notorious outlaw bushrangers, until his flamboyant career was cut short by the hangman in 1836.

People of the African diaspora came to Australia and New Zealand as convicts and free settlers throughout the nineteenth century. These immigrants are much harder to quantify as they were often seamen who jumped ship. African seamen had been a feature of British maritime life since the Seven Years' War, and in the nineteenth century, they could be as much as a third of the crew. In the age of steamships, a high proportion of crew were African sailors called 'seedies', from the Swahili coast, especially Zanzibar, who fed the coal into the engines (Stanziani, 2014, p. 63). Desertion was a weapon in the limited arsenal of the seafaring man, but for an African man, desertion in any Atlantic port, or anywhere in the Caribbean, carried the very real fear that they would be caught and immediately re-enslaved or traded into slavery elsewhere. Such a man need not fear being caught in the illicit slave trade in the distant ports of Oceania. These were places where a man might get a new start, regardless of his background. This made Australia and New Zealand very likely places to

jump ship and many sailors did, evading immigration registration (Goodall et al., 2008, pp. 44–74).

Even more likely to jump ship were African Americans, who made up a third or more of the crew on the American whaling ships that were so common in the South Pacific in the nineteenth century (Bolster, 1997; Newton, 2013). Whaling concentrated the worst elements of the maritime industry, especially for a black sailor, and desertion rates were high, particularly in the Southern whale fishery. Sometimes American whaling ships found themselves entirely bereft of crew as men deserted throughout the Pacific: in Australia, in New Zealand, and in a whole raft of small Pacific islands. This rash of desertion among American seamen reached epidemic proportions during the gold rush that began in 1851 in the Australian colony of Victoria. Police records from the subsequent decade reveal dozens of African American men, often known as Black Jack or Black Harry or Black Pete, arrested in the goldfield regions for vagrancy or being a 'rogue and vagabond'.[20] These men invariably gave mercantile occupations, such as sailors, cooks or carpenters, and they probably jumped ship in the hope of finding gold, then found themselves stranded with no visible means of support. Thomas Johnson was one African American who was charged with vagrancy in 1865. This man, who gave his place of birth as North Carolina, was described as a woodcutter when he married the Irish woman Mary Gallagher in Melbourne on 16 April 1868.[21] Their son Thomas Creighton Johnson was born in 1874.[22] In his adult years, Thomas Creighton Johnson moved to Western Australia, where in 1924 he married. Already quite an old man, he had poor luck with farming and he died in 1937, leaving his wife pregnant with her fifth child and completely destitute. Four children were placed in care at St. Joseph's orphanage and nine years later, the last child, Colin, was also placed in care. Colin Johnson went on to transcend this miserable background, becoming internationally renowned as Mudrooroo, Australia's premier Aboriginal writer. Since the revelation in the 1990s that Mudrooroo's heritage was African, not Aboriginal, he had been ostracized by the Aboriginal community and went to live outside of Australia.

It is one of the many tragedies of race relations in Australia that history has not allowed for the stories of settlers from the African diaspora. The eliding of

20 Victorian Police Gazette 1853–1861 and Victorian Central Register of Prisoners, microfiche, McN1383, National Library of Australia

21 369/1868, Births Deaths and Marriages Registry, Victoria, Australia

22 1720/1874, Births Deaths and Marriages, NSW State Archives and Records, Australia

African ancestry began very early in Australia's history and has led to widespread misreading of racial identity: an Australian who had colonial antecedents could only be European or Aboriginal. The refusal to acknowledge that Australia began as a multiracial society crystallized with the federation and establishment of the independent Commonwealth of Australia in 1901, which immediately legislated to restrict immigration and expel non-European immigrants. This came to be known as the White Australia policy and lasted until 1973, when laws were passed to ensure that race would be totally disregarded as a factor for immigration to Australia. Two years later, the Racial Discrimination Act made racially based selection criteria unlawful. In the decades since, Australia has maintained large-scale multiracial immigration, but not until the 1990s did this include sizeable numbers of people from Africa. On a global scale, the African diaspora in Oceania is very small and concentrated on the large island continent of Australia. This may seem historically insignificant, but the mere fact that at the end of the eighteenth century Africans made it to the impossibly remote Southern Pacific Ocean is remarkable and indicates both the complexity and the vast scope of the diasporic process.

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CHAPTER 5

THE 'MASOMBIKA' OR 'MAKOA' IN MADAGASCAR

Klara Boyer-Rossol

Introduction

The history of migration between East Africa and Madagascar is at least as old as human settlement of the Great Island in the first millennium. In the debate on this settlement, two conflicting arguments emerged early in the twentieth century. The first tended to associate Madagascar with the Malay world (Grandidier, 1908), while the other emphasized Arabic and Bantu influences (Ferrand, 1909). The contribution of the African continent would manifest itself by the presence on the island of the 'Makoa' or 'Masombika' people, originally from East Africa. According to Deschamps (1959), at least some of the Makoa living in the twentieth century on the west coast of Madagascar originated from 'much earlier voluntary migrations'. This hypothesis is open to critical assessment. The crossing of the early Makoa differs from other East African migrations,[1] in that it was forced. Witnesses who claim a Makoan identity report that their ancestors, born on the continental mainland, were 'lost' (*very*) upon their arrival on the Malagasy shores. This term, which derives from the

1 East Africans who came on a voluntary basis to set up home on the west coast of Madagascar in the nineteenth century, including the Ajojo [Comorians], the Soahili [Swahili], the Ngodja [from Zanzibar] and the Ngodji [from Angoche in Mozambique] were Muslims and spoke Swahili. Their migration was often motivated by trade, including slavery.

slavery vocabulary of Madagascar, suggests a loss of liberty or kinship (Molet, 1974). Others have referred more explicitly to the servile condition of their ancestors, indicating that they had been 'purchased' (*novidiana*) or were 'slaves' (*andevo*).[2] The deportation of these ancestors from the continental mainland appears to have been relatively recent, as it took place during the nineteenth century, at a time when the settlement of the island was already established. All the East African captives imported and enslaved in Madagascar, as well as their descendants born on the island, were referred to under the generic terms of 'Masombika' or 'Makoa'. They derive their names from the Makhuwa,[3] the most common sociolinguistic group in North Mozambique. The word 'Masombika' derives from the island's name and the port of *Moçambique*, the former capital of the Portuguese colony in East Africa and a major slave trafficking hub. It is possible to link the use of slave labour imported to the Great Island with the advent of the Kingdom of Madagascar. The Masombika introduced into this kingdom since the reign of King Radama I (Grandidier, 1877) were the subject of specific legislation which was intended to secure compliance with the agreement concluded with the leading sea power of the day, Great Britain. Under the terms of the treaty signed in 1817, and ratified in 1820, Great Britain agreed to recognize the sovereignty of Radama I over the Great Island in return for the renunciation of the export of slaves. This period marked the reversal of the major influx of slaves to Madagascar. Although exports showed a declining trend over the nineteenth century, imports of captives grew in significance, possibly reaching their peak during the 1860s and 1870s, a period of economic prosperity in the Kingdom of Madagascar (Campbell, 1989). During these decades, the prohibition of the slave trade was invoked by the treaty of 1865 concluded between London and Antananarivo, and by a series of legislative measures that culminated with the collective emancipation of the Masombika, proclaimed in 1877 by Queen Ranavalona II in the territories over which she claimed control (approximately two thirds of the island). According to British Consul Pakenham, around 100,000 Masombika may have been liberated in 1877, or one third of the effective population of the entire island (Rakotondrabe, 1997), evaluated at approximately 300,000 towards the end of the nineteenth century. According to Campbell, at least 650,000 slaves would have been imported

2 Makoan narratives recorded in Morondava and Maintirano on the west coast of Madagascar in 2008.

3 I have distinguished between the Makoa (according to the Malagasy spelling), the population established in Madagascar, and the Makhuwa, from Mozambique. In the same way, 'Makoa' describes the language spoken in Madagascar, and 'Emakhuwa' describes that used in Mozambique.

from Mozambique to Madagascar between 1820 and 1890. This historian has worked partly on the basis of data produced by British officers, in an abolitionist context. These figures probably require some downward adjustment.[4] Given its clandestine nature, it is difficult to estimate the volume of slave trading imports with any accuracy. However, it may be estimated that the numbers concerned were considerable, involving up to several hundred thousand individuals. A proportion of East African captives (possibly 20 per cent) were only in transit on the Great Island; they were re-exported elsewhere. In practice, due to its partial escape from Antananarivo rule, the western coast of Madagascar played a key role in relaying slaves across the western Indian Ocean, feeding both the French markets for 'engaged labour' and the Malagasy slave markets (Boyer-Rossol, 2015). With the gradual decline of re-exportation to the French plantation islands of La Réunion and Nosy Be, and a decrease of imports to the Kingdom of Madagascar, East African captives were progressively retained on the west coast of Madagascar and enslaved locally. In the region around Maintirano, the illegal slave trade continued well beyond 1877 and the Makoa were kept in bondage until at least 1896, the year slavery was abolished in Madagascar. This emancipation involved approximately half a million individuals, out of an approximate population of 2.5 million on the entire island (Grandier, 1956). This figure, produced in a colonial context, may well require upward adjustment (Rakoto, 2014). It relates to the populations of territories formerly under Antananarivo rule, and consequently does not include the Masombika who were liberated in the Kingdom of Madagascar in 1877, nor persons who remained in servitude at the end of the nineteenth century in those regions which remained independent, particularly in the west. Accordingly, during the second half of the nineteenth century, Sakalava territories experienced a significant expansion of internal slavery.[5] Local slave markets were supplied by internal slave raids, and by external slave trading networks.[6] The slave trade

4 Other nineteenth century sources, specifically written Malagasy sources (including registers of the freed Masombika) suggest a more plausible minimum estimate of 350,000 East African captives imported and enslaved in Madagascar during the nineteenth century.

5 Although the servile population was numerically more significant in the central highlands (particularly in Imerina) than in the less densely populated western region, the proportion of slaves to the total population was probably equivalent in these different regions of the island, reaching a figure of between 20 and 25 per cent of the total population by the end of the nineteenth century.

6 Thus, in the western regions under Antananarivo rule, such as Mahajunga, where the Makoa were particularly numerous, the collective liberation of the Masombika decreed in 1877 dealt a blow to the institution of slavery itself, and numerous slave owners opposed this royal decree, specifically by moving to areas which were not under Antananarivo control.

ceased with French colonization, which also involved the closure of continental horizons for inhabitants on the west coast, with a substantial decline in traffic across the Mozambique Channel.

Enforced crossing of ancestors from 'beyond the seas'

On the west coast of Madagascar, the inhabitants continue to perpetuate the memory of their ancestors who came from 'beyond the seas'.[7] Questioned during the 2000s, witnesses who identified themselves as Makoan had, for the most part, known grandparents or great-grandparents who were born on the continental mainland. The deportation of their ancestors dates back to the second half of the nineteenth century, when the slave trade between East Africa and Madagascar intensified. It would appear that the majority of captives introduced at that time were mainly from the Makhuwa-Lomwe societies of northern Mozambique. In his life story, Kalamba (*circa* 1853–1903) retraces the major stages of his journey: a childhood in a country located within present day Mozambique, his capture, the trip to the coast, his sea crossing in a dhow, being sold and subsequent enslavement in western Madagascar (Boyer-Rossol, 2013). Notwithstanding the relative proximity of the East African and Malagasy coasts,[8] the sea crossing was fatal for large numbers of captives. Contemporary observers estimated that, on average, over a third of East African captives died before reaching the Great Island.[9] Starvation, promiscuity and disease had a major impact upon the survivors of the crossing. Kalamba recalls the terrible conditions he endured on the dhow. Captives were deprived of food and water. Some jumped overboard, preferring suicide to the fear of being eaten by the Malagasy.[10] Another testimony has reached us in the form of an account given by one Masombika, who describes the deplorable hygiene conditions and the survival strategies adopted by captives during the sea crossing. 'Horrified by the dirt and stink in the bowels of the boat', he managed to persuade the sailors to let him sit in the hold. This is how he witnessed the scenes of panic amongst the ship's crew as the dhow approached

7 Surveys were conducted in 2004 and 2008 in the coastal region between Morondava and Mahajunga, the last great bastion of the illegal slave trade in Madagascar.

8 Only 400 kilometres separate Mozambique from the Saint André Cape in Western Madagascar. The duration of the enforced crossing by dhow varied between 4–5 days to in excess of 10 days.

9 Natural History Museum of Paris (MNHN), Grandidier Foundation. 3259. Unpublished manuscript notes. Book 18, *Notes de Majunga à Tananarive. Du 15 au 30 août* 1869, p. 1043.

10 The myth of cannibalism was widespread on the slave trading routes of the Indian Ocean.

the north west of Madagascar and was surprised by a British warship (Houlder, 1877). In the context of illegal slave trading, shipments were riskier for traffickers, and more gruelling for the captives. In order to evade British patrol ships, the masters of slaving vessels would prolong the journey. Captives were disoriented by the numerous navigational manoeuvres. During the crossing itself, there was resistance among captives, creating connections between themselves that were recorded as a bond of kinship. Oral Makoan tradition recalls the memory of 'brothers' and 'sisters' transported in the same dhow. Established in conjunction with deportation, this notional kinship was socially reinterpreted in Madagascar in the form of affiliation. Any union between the descendants of these Makoan 'brothers' and 'sisters' continued to breach the taboo of incest, which lies at the origin of the development of the institution of kinship (Lévi-Strauss, 1949). The shared experience of the 'Middle Passage' forged links between captives that were sustained thereafter, notwithstanding their dispersion upon arriving in the Great Island.

Diversity in Masombika status

The Masombika in Madagascar experienced a variety of circumstances. Their legal status, social conditions and emancipation modes varied, depending upon where they lived and the period of time at which they were introduced to the island. In the central highlands, the majority of the enslaved came from inland (a large section of the servile population were former war captives), but on the west coast the Makoa were frequently the largest group amongst the slave population.[11] At the crossroads of various models of enslavement,[12] slavery practices and servile functions appear to have been very diverse in the west of Madagascar during the nineteenth century. Slaves were soldiers, craftspeople, cooks, sailors, porters, ox keepers or domestic servants. Royal slaves were assigned ritual or military tasks. Kings, chiefs and their entourages were surrounded by Makoa concubines.[13] The majority of Makoa slaves, both men and women,

11 Thus, in the western regions under Antananarivo rule, such as Mahajunga, where the Makoa were particularly numerous, the collective liberation of the Masombika decreed in 1877 dealt a blow to the institution of slavery itself, and numerous slave owners opposed this royal decree, specifically by moving to areas that were not under Antananarivo control.

12 A distinction may be drawn, amongst other practices, between plantation slavery, 'domestic' slavery and other endogenous practices which defined relationships of dependency in Madagascar.

13 The figures of the soldier slave and the concubine, common in the Sakalava kingdoms in the west, were unknown in Imerina. Soldiers were recruited from the free population.

were put to work on farms. Around Maintirano, in a region of the west which remained independent, there were 'plantations of rice, maize, sorghum and bananas that were cultivated by thousands of Makoa slaves. You would walk for two days without coming across an inch of unfarmed land and without meeting a free man', according to the French traveller Douliot, writing in 1892. While in some parts of the west the Masombika were kept in bondage until the end of the nineteenth century, in the territories of the Kingdom of Madagascar, the Masombika emancipated in 1877 were considered to be subjects of the Queen and, as such, indentured to her. They nevertheless remained at the bottom of the social scale, and were subject to a degree of endogamy within their group. In Imerina, the prohibition of marital union between freemen and slaves continued to influence social relations long after the abolition of slavery. Through the interplay of marital alliances, it is possible that the descendants of East African slaves in the west enjoyed a greater degree of social mobility than in Imerina. In the independent kingdoms of the west, as elsewhere in East African societies (Médard, Derat, Vernet and Ballarin, 2013), emancipation was not a legal act, but rather a slow process of integration into a kinship group. However, this process involved forgetting the past and/or a denial of foreign and servile origins, causing the rupture of the bond between these descendants of slaves and their ancestors born on the continent.

The issue of return to Africa

While the majority of the emancipated Masombika had no prospects other than to remain settled on the island, some endeavoured to return to the continental mainland. In Morondava, a western port controlled by representatives of the Antananarivo, the Makoa had been liberated by the royal degree of 1877. In the vicinity of the garrison town, they established a small community of freemen, living mainly from the land and including the early converts of the Norwegian Lutheran mission in western Madagascar (Boyer-Rossol, 2013). Missionary Jacobsen described Samuel, one of the first Makoa evangelists in Morondava, in the following terms: 'For him, as for other Makoa, the ache for Africa stemmed from deep within the heart and much could be written about their attempts to return to their native land' (Aas, 1919). The Makoa in Morondava were born in the hinterland to the west of Mozambique, in Makhuwa country (Last, 1895). During the 1880s, some endeavoured to return to this homeland by enlisting the support of the Norwegian Mission, wrote missionary Aas:

> A group of approximately 50 Christian Makoa came numerous times to the Mission to ask for permission to leave with a missionary for the highlands of Mozambique. I had a hard time trying to calm them down; they wanted to build a boat and leave. They were only placated when I promised to bring the matter up with the mother church back home [in Norway], and they said they would accept the will of God (Aas, 1923).

Any collective plans for a return were dependent upon certain logistical resources, the mobilization of capital and negotiation with the local authorities. The construction (or purchase) of boats depended upon a presumptive capacity for the accumulation of wealth by the emancipated Makoa, who did not shirk from paid employment. Within a few decades (1880–1900), the Makoa at Morondava accumulated 300 (Danish) krone, which were deposited, through the offices of pastor Aas, at a private bank in Stavanger in Norway (Aas, 1923). In 1889, a number of the Makoa at Morondava, also converted to the Lutheran faith, endeavoured to cross the Mozambique Channel, with the support of missionary networks. A group of 26 Makoa expressed their intent to travel to Natal, where the Norwegian mission was established. This request was rejected by the Malagasy authorities.[14] Following the emancipation of 1877, the *manamboninahitra* (officers) posted in the provinces received an order which forbade the Masombika from leaving the territory belonging to the Kingdom of Madagascar, on the pretext of preventing them from being exported beyond the sea.[15] The most propitious times to leave the island came during periods of crisis, when the tight grip of government authority was relaxed. In February 1893, the west coast of Madagascar was struck by a terrible cyclone that caused several hundred fatalities. 'Under these desperate conditions, the Makoa returned to their former dream of leaving Morondava and travelling back to their African homeland, but this notion did not result in a mass exodus' (Aas, 1923, p. 73). Pastor Aas suggests that some Makoa would have attempted to repeat their initially enforced crossing in reverse, all the way back from Madagascar to the interior of the African continent. After 1896, the French administration imposed conditions which rendered any departure from the colony impossible.[16] The Makoa therefore experienced an *enforced* long-term settlement in Madagascar.

14 A.R.M. III CC 246, Letter from Rainizafindrazaka 13H to Prime Minister Rainilaiarivony, Morondava, 1 Alahamady 1889.

15 A.R.M. III CC 81. Letter from Andriamasinoro 12H to the Queen, Anonibe, 26 Adijady 1877.

16 These included a demand by the colonial administrators that the boat on which the Makoa planned to cross the Mozambique Channel should be larger, and should be captained by a white man. Aas R.L., op. cit., vol 2, 1923, p. 175.

They nevertheless managed to maintain symbolic links with the African continent, mainly via the conduit of culture.

Sharing a common culture, imported from the continent and transformed on the Great Island

The Makoa and Masombika shared a common culture that transcended their differences in status in Madagascar. Although they came from different regions in East Africa, all of the captives deported from the continent to the Great Island spoke Makoa amongst themselves, a dialectal variant of Emakhuwa, which is spoken extensively in North Mozambique. In Madagascar, Makoa became the language of servitude, probably acquired during the enforced crossing, and particularly during the period of incarceration in barracks on the Mozambique Channel coastline. The Makoa language remained in use for a prolonged period on the west coast of Madagascar, where the Makoa experienced a degree of group autonomy. The early captives born on the continent imported and adapted very diverse cultural practices (songs, music, dances, special drums, culinary and decorative practices, etc.), mainly originating from North Mozambique (Macaire, 1996).[17] During the twentieth century, the gradual loss of the last Makoa born on the continent led to a decline in Makoan cultural practices and, finally, to the disappearance of the identity of the Makoa group itself. In an attempt to escape the stigma of servitude, the majority of the descendants of East African slaves on the Great Island forged links with other Malagasy group identities. Only a few inhabitants on the coast continued to perpetuate the memory of their ancestors.

17 On the western Malagasy coast, Makoan cultural practices were manifested in harvest festivals, funeral rites or ancestral cults.

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CHAPTER 6

MAURITIUS, BETWEEN COMMUNITY COMPARTMENTALISATION AND CULTURAL MELTING POTS

Catherine Servan-Schreiber

Introduction

Because of its colonial past and its geographical position, Mauritius is a meeting point for three continents - Asia (India and China), Europe and Africa - and illustrates the Indian presence on Creole land. Here, Indianness and creolity merge together, a situation not dissimilar to that in the West Indies and the Caribbean islands in general, though with a more prevalent Asian influence. Forged by the maritime history of Indian trade, particularly from Gujarat, and reinforced by the history of indentured servitude,[1] economic, political, religious and cultural ties between India and Mauritius have long been evident (Carsignol, 2010, p. 321; Grégoire, 2014). Yet as Dev Virahsawmy, the champion of the Creole language, proclaims, *lor nou lil, nou tou kreol isi*: 'On our island, we are all Creoles' (Virahsawmy, 2004, p. 37). Since the early days of indentured servitude, Indian communities have established unions with Mauritian women of African descent (Teelock, 2009, p. 254).

Between 1839 and the end of the nineteenth century, biological and cultural mixing continued and intensified, adding European, Indian and Chinese elements into the then mostly black and Malagasy population. Several

1 A system of hiring under contract started in colonial times, after the abolition of slavery in 1834.

waves of political struggle arose, particularly in the 1930s. Indian political awareness increased and class movements penetrated the Creole community, but the struggles remained compartmentalized. People of mixed race were still stigmatized, as shown by Mauritian novelists Carl de Souza (*Le sang de l'Anglais*), Marie-Thèrése Humbert (*A l'autre bout de moi*) and Ananda Devi (*Pagli*). The 1968 constitution recognized four ethno-religious groups: Hindus (52 per cent), Muslims (17 per cent), Mauritians of Chinese origin (3 per cent) and the general population (28 per cent). The fourth category grouped together that which remained of the former colonial society: white people of French and English origin and descendants of formerly enslaved black people, mostly of Afro-Malagasy or mixed-race descent.

Although Mauritius proclaims itself the archetypal 'rainbow nation', a multicultural land par excellence, Mauritian society has developed on community foundations that hinder the emergence of a strong national identity and limit economic development (Jauze, 2004). Religion, culture, skin colour and socioeconomic status have been sources of division since the country's colonization. Communalism, which governs everyday social relationships, is expressed as much in community life as it is in political life, where the makeup of the parties and the discussions they hold are based on identity. In Mauritius, ethnicity, upon the basis of which each community has developed a particular way of life, remains a factor in spatial, community and economic division. Thus, in the towns, a clear relationship is established between an individual's ethnic descent, activity, socio-professional category and occupation of space.

Although pertinent historical research is now beginning to emerge, it was previously lacking, and it is still necessary to delve back into literary texts and testimonials. When we do so, we see that Africa is little represented therein. It is rare for African or Malagasy names to be given to Creole children (Palmyre-Florigny, 2003, p. 15). For a long time, movements such as Garveyism, Caribbean pan-Africanism and American black consciousness have had little success in Mauritius. The self-styled 'King Creole', Gaëtan Duval, presented negative images of independent Africa. The 1968 Mauritian independence movement did, however, take a stand against apartheid. In 1977, Rastafarianism was more widely expressed in Mauritius, but it also relied heavily on biblical and Indian references. In 1980, awareness of Creole malaise stirred up emotions, but it was not until 1985 that the assertion of black identity was made manifest by the musician Kaya. On the one hand, the Christian church was said to be responsible for wanting to cut Creoles off from their African roots (Bunwaree, 2004, p. 53); on the other hand,

'the influence of Indianness could not be under-estimated in the cultural development of the Creole people' (Chan Low, 2003, p. 43).

The dynamics of miscegenation and creolization, which embody the particularity of the Indian Ocean region, were brought about in part by 'couriers' or 'cultural entrepreneurs' from all the communities in question. On a religious level, although Mauritius does not have the 'marriage of cultures' found on Reunion Island, where every member of a single family may adopt a different religion (Dumas-Champion, 2008), deep-rooted syncretisms between Hinduism, Christianity and the popular Malagasy religion of ancestor worship do exist there. The entire island celebrates both Indian (Cavadee, Maha Shivaratri) and Christian (Père Laval pilgrimage) festivals. Tamils are often baptized and Creoles take part in Hindu rituals from childhood.

Consequently, the term 'creolization' is covered by Édouard Glissant's concept of a process whereby different cultures are linked to one another but wherein no single culture is dominant (*Le Traité du Tout-Monde,* 1997; *Le discours antillais,* 1981; *Poétique de la relation,* 1990). When defined based on strictly economic issues, it also refers to how the Creole elite was limited (Allen, 1982). Creolization is seen as an alternative to colonial hegemony: 'The world of ethnicity and that of creolity will be viewed as two particular ways of denying the importance of economic differences and métissage in the transformation of Mauritian society' (Chazan-Gillig, 2003, p. 64). In a narrower, more literal sense, creolity, creolization and Créolie are related when considered in the Indian Ocean context of emancipation since 1978. In the case of Reunion Island, Créolie came to define a new form of writing (Samlong, 1989, p. 179). In the Mauritian experience, Créolie came to embody a specific culture, one that celebrated equality and fraternity and that was loaded with a poetic energy connecting the islands: 'Where, outside our Indian Ocean region, could a creative thought without exclusivity of language be found?' (Prosper, 2001, p. 110). Since the 1890s, 'the proliferation of the press, the increase in literary and philosophical circles, the rise in readership and its extension to the mixed-race population, through their constant interaction, are the very foundation for the Mauritian Creole literary project' (Furlong and Ramharai, 2005, p. 39). From this literary breeding ground, a minority of writers, visual artists and journalists campaign for the recognition of a global Creole identity that applies not only to the descendants of Africans, but also to Europeans and Indians. By opposing the idea that only the descendants of slaves can be custodians of creolity, Firoz Ghanty denounces a version that is 'a historical [and] which would negate the miscegenation', thus reinstating the idea of 'roots' to cement Mauritianness:

> There must be no confusion between the Creole community and Creolity. Creolity is different cultural roots which, over time, have consolidated to form a whole, a culture in its own right. Indentured servitude and the discord of trade with the outside world behind the closed doors of colonisation have helped and will further contribute to the structuring of Creolity (Ghanty, 2005, p. 4).

'What is the Creole identity? An eating habit? A certain type of behaviour? Some slave blood from Africa? If it is humour, everyday family life, spicy food or music, are we not all Creoles in Mauritius?' (Bhujun, 2006).

> The Creole [...] is a European, African or mulatto born outside his ancestral land and adapted to his homeland [...] By extension, a Creole is anyone who was born far from his ancestral land or any person who comes into contact with other cultures to create different configurations of the culture(s) of origin (Torabully, 2007).

The Creole identity did not take full hold. The process of identity reconstruction within the Creole community of Mauritius took place through the clearance of Africanity and its subsequent revival (Jocelyn Chan Low). This revival was accompanied by the creation of the Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture in Port Louis, aimed at encouraging direct contact between Creoles and Africans, which remained infrequent.

Since the 1990s, the meaning of the word 'Creole' has evolved; it now fully incorporates Africanity as much as it does the hybridity of the Creole identity. The way in which Creoles and Indians have worked with hybridity, within a composite culture, has encouraged a new way of looking at representations of the body and the person, thus contributing to modernity. Mauritius became 'an original mix of Creole and ancestral society' (Hookoomsing, 2003, p. 31). Françoise Lionnet adopts the term 'cosmopolitical Creole', criticizing the use of the term 'creolization' although this is a popular dynamic and cosmopolitanism when it comes to elite culture (Lionnet, 2012).

Mauritian aesthetics of creolity / cultural bearers of a mixed-race identity

Creolity as a global identity is perceived as a culture in its own right, one which has its own understanding of the world, life and things and expresses it through specific language, musical sound, visual art and iconography. It is seen primarily as an aesthetic (Ghanty, 1994) in literary creativity.

A series of journals, including *Revi Kiltir Kreol*, distributed by the Nelson Mandela Centre for African Culture, serve as a platform for discussion on the issues of Indianness, Africanity, miscegenation and creolization. Dev Virahsawmy, an advocate for cultural diversity and important intellectual figure, takes centre stage. He embodies the specific features of the Creole voice. In *Toufann: A Mauritian Fantasy*, his adaptation of Shakespeare's *The Tempest*, he establishes a dialogue with other African writers; he connects India and Africa using a play on words between *tūphān* ('tempest' in Hindi) and *tou fan* (Mauritian Creole for 'everything's falling apart', itself reminiscent of the title of *Things Fall Apart* by Nigerian writer Chinua Achebe). This is an original way of understanding history both from its culture of origin and in a context of contemporary ideas (1999) structured around a so-called 'transcolonial' logic (Putchai, 2003). *Namasté*, the famous novel written by Creole author Marcel Cabon, describes life in an Indo-Mauritian village, turning its back on prejudices (Joubert, 2005, p. 10). Through his travels in the Republic of South Africa, the poet Édouard Maunick restored the lost link with Africa. 'I am Negro by choice' (« *je suis nègre de préférence* »), he says in *Les manèges de la mer*. In Paris, meetings with *Présence Africaine* and the friendship of Aimé Césaire and Léopold Sédar Senghor made him conscious of this. Defying the island where Africanity was at best ignored, Édouard Maunick made it a concerted choice and not a legacy suffered. 'His negritude is neither colour nor race, but a celebration/forbidden to the border Creoles';[2] it is 'beautiful and good and legitimate' to be mixed-race: 'Give me my mixed-race kingdom started at the break of day / I predict mixed blood like a fiery tongue' (Joubert, 2009, p. 42).

In tribute to Léopold Sédar Senghor, Édouard Maunick coordinated UNESCO's publication of *Présence Senghor*, a collection of 90 poems selected to celebrate the ninetieth birthday of the Senegalese poet and president. The journey from Dakar celebrates his mixed blood:

> *sonore / le chemin pêle-mêle Tambacounda / Sangomar / Podor / et Sangalkam / sonore / Sebikotane / récitation pour mémoire du temps présent / complice / pour valider mon sang métis* [Sonorous path / Haphazardly Sonorous Tambacounda / Sangomar / Podor / and / Sangalkam / Sebikotane / Recitation for the record Time / present /complicit / To validate my mixed blood] (Joubert, 2009, p. 77).

2 Border Creoles are people of mixed-race origin with very pale skin.

Finally, Sedley Richard Assonne, a leading urban poet drawing inspiration from Baudelaire, Tagore, Senghor and old Tamil religious texts, personifies Mauritian mixed-race poetry. In *Les Salines*, dedicated to the neighbourhood of Port Louis where he was born, he describes his Indian, African and European descent:

> *Everything always brings me back to the Salines / I know every corner / The exact place where friendship grows / In the Western cemetery, only witnesses/the sleepers of the other bank / prayed for me at the foot of Amina Bibi / and between stags and tortoises / I explored the blossoming garden / Robert Edward Hart, dear voice fallen silent / I was born a poet by liberating a jabberwocky / Leaving the everyday mess for the freedom of the sky / I had the black of Africa on my skin / and in my words the sweetness of honey.*

Sega, seggae, chutney Bhojpuri: spicy Mauritian blends of Creole music

If there is one place where creolization takes on its full meaning, it is music. Music is used to identify common aesthetic components and/or specific features of Mauritianness. It is also through music that knowledge is shared, in addition to community-based endeavours, political instruction and segmented perceptions, and where Mauritianness is built.

As can be seen in European accounts, the importance of Mauritian sega music has been highlighted since 1832. Original sega was a chant, a tale given rhythm by the ravanne, a local percussion instrument which is a sort of flat tambourine, and sometimes by the maravanne, an instrument similar to the maraca. Sega narrates the legends of the African tribes deported into slavery and tells the stories of daily life on the plantations. Sega is not only Mozambican and Malagasy in origin; it also derives from musical sources in Senegal, the Gambia, the kingdom of Galam, Guinea, Côte d'Ivoire, the kingdoms of Loango and Angola and the kingdoms of Ardres, Juda and Benin (Didier, 1987; Massamba, 2003, p. 12). It is both a dance and a rhythm. 'Jazz, Mississippi blues, calypso, reggae and *séga* share a founding rhythm from ancestral Africa' (Police, 2001). Its most famous performer is the singer Ti-Frère. 'Listen to the voice of Ti-Frère, the voice of Africa, the magical voice' goes the poem *Lavwa Tifrer* (Sedley Richard Assonne). Through its freedom of expression, sega has come to influence the other forms of musical expression in Mauritius. It gave rise to seggae, the fusion of sega and reggae; seggae groups such as Otentikk Street Brothers, Les Natty Rebels and Racinetatane cultivate close

ties with Madagascar and Reunion Island. With his group Sagaï, Menwar, a spokesperson for the Mauritian Creole minority, developed a musical concept that he has modernized, enriching it with other African percussion music. Sega has, above all, transformed the Indian folk music of Bhojpuri, popular on the island since the time of indentured servitude, and made it a 'spicy' music, similar to the chutney music of the Caribbean. On the other hand, in the 1970s, sega, which had started out under the name of 'oriental sega', demonstrated even greater Indian influences. In the 1990s, the chutney style was claimed to be the herald of 'a home-made, mixed-race music', 'a music from the islands', a 'fusion music' (Servan-Schreiber, 2010) called 'Bollywood sega', confirming both the Indian dimension and the African character of the music.

In the context of the struggle to preserve a common Mauritian heritage centred on the popularity of sega, Mauritius boasts its own culture, separate from that of the United States of America, 'far from those crude copies of Afro-American urban culture, R&B, rap and the rest' (Ghanty, 2005, p. 91). It also denounces excessive Americanization, advocating a return to African roots (Assonne, 2003).

This promotion of Creole Africanity is confirmed in the musical forms of reggae and seggae. With the singer Tony Farla and his group Negro Pou Lavi, 'so-called black music is gaining in popularity among young people' (Hansley). Currently, West Indian and Caribbean music strongly influences representations of Mauritian identity. The most popular festivals in the Indian Ocean (Africolor, Musiques Métisses, Rythmes Caraïbes, Sakifo, Womex, Samemsa Muzik and so on) depend on Indian, African, Creole and European networks, without putting forward the idea of 'Afro-Indian-Oceanic' music as a style of its own which is comparable to that of Afro-Caribbean or Afro-American music; the concept of 'mixed-race' dominates.

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CHAPTER 7

AFRICANS IN PORTUGAL

Integration and Africanity (Fifteenth-Nineteenth Centuries)

Isabel de Castro Henriques

Introduction

The reconstruction and consolidation of an unprecedented Africanity that marked the lives of African populations settled in Portugal, in a situation of subordination resulting from a slave trade that stretched from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries, requires not only the study of the integration strategies used by Africans, but also a very particular attention to how these populations brought from Africa sought to preserve their Africanity, their values and practices in the framework of an inevitable process of social and cultural change, in Portuguese society and the new European world in which they were forcefully integrated.

Refusing the most archaic elements of a 'traditional' Africanity incompatible with the new social situation, adhering to Portuguese practices, men and women organized themselves to maintain control of their lives, remaking their cultural identities, and recovering and Africanizing values of modernity; that is, developing a process of modernization of their Africanity and thus contributing to the reconstruction of an innovative and participative global Africanity.

These populations, enslaved and free, who constituted the first African diasporic movement in Europe, played a key role in the renewal of Africanity, even if prejudices, images and negative representations of Africans marked a

long Eurocentric and European vision that excluded Africa from the history of the world, from the history of civilizations, from global history.

Integration processes

The dearth of research on the multi-secular presence of Africans in Portugal, their cultures and their participation in shaping Portuguese society constitutes an important gap in Portuguese historiography, as can be said for Europe, whose relations with Africa are also part of a long-term framework. This is a revealing situation on the lack of recognition and appreciation of Africa, which requires reflection and above all the revision of the classificatory operations that, from the 1800s marked and 'scientifically' ranked humans.

Studying the uniqueness of the African presence that has shaped Portuguese cultural and historical heritage requires a broad and rigorous analysis of the multifaceted path of Africans in the country, because of Portuguese history and Portugal's relations with Africa and the world. Such research should also contribute to the clarification of the active participation of the African diaspora in the construction of modern Europe, creator of world capitalism (Fonseca, 2011, Gusmão, 2004, Henriques, 1993 and 2009, Lahon, 1999, Lahon and Neto, 1999, Margarido, 1984, Pantoja, 2011, Pimentel, 1995 and 2010, Saunders, 1994, Tinhorão, 1988, and Vasconcelos, 1942).

The establishment of Africans: time and space

Historically, the memory of African presence in Portugal began to be organized in the thirteenth century, with the earliest references to this population in the Iberian Peninsula and more particularly in Galician territory. It is a written and iconographic memory that outlines the conditions in which some prejudices were born based on Africans' physical characteristics, their bodies devalued due primarily to colour, and negative connotations on other somatic characters such as hair, mouth, nose, smell and so forth, that set them closer to animality, opposing them to the superior normative white body (Margarido, 2003). Consequently, body and colour logic are inherent obstacles to full integration into the human (or 'white') society for Africans to be allowed to autonomously organize their lives.

In the historical framework of the populations that arrived in the Iberian Peninsula, by land or sea, as was the case of two of the most significant settlement

phases – the Roman and the Arab, in different and relatively short periods – which left numerous marks in the country, the presence of Africans in Portugal constitutes a fundamental differentiating element, part of another civilizational logic launched by Europeans from the fifteenth century onwards. Most of the men, women and children of Africa did not come of their own free will, but were captured or bought off the coasts of the continent to be landed as slaves at the western end of the Iberian fragment of Europe (Zurara, 1973). Stripped of everything, thousands of Africans from different regions and cultures were forcefully integrated into the country from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries, becoming a structuring presence of Portuguese society, leaving direct or indirect signs in its memory, imaginary, language and places.

Among the places whose strong African brand was (even up to today) revealed by eighteenth century toponymy, the neighbourhood of Mocambo in Lisbon stands out for its unprecedented and unique character at the European level. It is the African district of the capital, the sixth district of the city by royal charter of 1593, whose designation refers to Umbundu, one of the Angolan languages. Like the synonym *quilombo*, a term of the Quimbundu language also from Angola, which acquired in Brazil a unique historical dimension of African resistance to European colonization, *mocambo* designates a 'place of refuge', 'place of settlement', 'small village' or 'camp'. But Mocambo in Lisbon was, from the end of 1500s, an urban space where Africans, both free and enslaved, were settled and where from the seventeenth century, they cohabited with the Portuguese, especially people linked to sea-related activities. Little by little, the Africans abandoned this urban space, following the seventeenth century measures of the Marquis of Pombal that prohibited the importation of enslaved Africans into the country and abolished slavery in Portugal in 1773. The disappearance of Mocambo in Lisbon was progressive and rapid, turning first into a street, then the *Travessa do Mocambo* in the nineteenth century, and disappearing in the second half of the 1800s (Henriques, 2009).

The creation of a new identity

Disembarking continuously in Portugal from the mid-fifteenth century and for three centuries, one of the first tasks of Africans lay in the need to divest themselves of African identity, which was no longer adapted to the conditions of Portuguese society. It can be said that they were obliged to solve the fundamental problem of identity: having left Africa, lost their family, been forced to renounce their mother tongue and speak another language, Africans were obliged in these

circumstances to invent another identity, capable of enabling them to assert their originality. The Portuguese multiplied the obstacles: disqualifying Africans; condemning them to be captives, slaves, *alforriados* (freed), all statutes that contributed objectively to denying their autonomy. Keeping the memory of their country of origin, Africans were forced to devise survival strategies, beginning by inventing another personality closer to the values and practices of Europeans.

An important issue recognized and highlighted in the Portuguese texts is that these Africans belonged to different African societies and cultures. While for most Portuguese, Africans appeared as a homogeneous block, by colour and social practices, they were culturally distinct, carrying well-differentiated historical memories. Bearers of an identity inscribed in body and mind. They were subjected by the Portuguese to various rituals designed to move them away from their cultural values and practices to integrate them into the Portuguese norm. Adhering to the new social and religious forms, Africans accepted baptism and Christian names, the rejection of nudity, the body dressed, Christian marriage, affective relations, also adhering to Catholic organizations, practices and festivals, to ludic, political and military events, introducing marks of their cultural singularity into Portuguese life.

An essential aspect to the consolidation of their new identity was the learning and use of the Portuguese language. Since the fifteenth century, especially in cities, the 'language of black people', that is, a Portuguese language with important African phonetic, syntax and semantic innovations, was devalued and ridiculed. The fixation of this language was due to its use in the sphere of sixteenth century plays, having consolidated over the centuries, and translating the reductive and patronizing way in which Portuguese society classified Africans.

African intervention in Portuguese daily life: work and celebration

Present throughout the country from north to south, on the coast and inland, Africans performed a wide range of diverse and indispensable tasks for Portuguese daily life, in the fields, cities and maritime-colonial enterprises, particularly as sailors in the Portuguese caravels. While they carried out most domestic activities, agriculture, fishing, craft activities and commercial tasks such as retailing essential products, characterized their spheres of integration and participation in the lives of the communities in which they lived. This included, for example, constant and essential intervention in the maintenance of urban structures – such as water supply, waste disposal, street cleaning and transport – on which Portuguese cities

and towns depended. More than in rural areas, it was in cities that Africans, both enslaved and free, had a wide range of tasks that allowed them a certain autonomy. In addition to the tasks associated with urban management and hygiene – sweepers, carriers, handlers – as well as indispensable services such as water supply, which led the authorities to build, manage and control the use of spouts, mainly by women, they were also engaged in commercial activity focused on food goods – agricultural products, fish and manufactured products – as well as the sale of other consumer goods, such as charcoal. Men were given heavier tasks, including transport of people and goods, information dispatch and distribution of messages, as well as craft production, such as pottery, carpentry, iron and leather work, goldsmithing, weaving, shipbuilding, working in the navy and fishing.

Free Africans specialized in certain trades. They integrated into society, having learned profit-making activities, the imposed rules, prices and forms of relationship, thus achieving membership in Portuguese society. Integrated into all wealth-building sectors, Africans were a structuring element of the country's urban life. If economic activity constituted the main participation of Africans in Portuguese daily life, they were also organized around many other events of a social nature, especially ludic religious festive ceremonies where they found a privileged space of integration. Africans of various social statuses – although most were enslaved or sailors, it is important to emphasize the presence of other Africans as diplomatic representatives or senior religious dignitaries – participated intensely in Portuguese public and private life. Processions, bull-fighting, collective shows, celebrations associating the religious and the profane highlighted the strong African involvement, through dance, music and its religious manifestations. This range of activities lead to the creation and consolidation of religious and cultural forms that persisted in Portuguese imagination and practices.

The 'mulattos': an unprecedented integration

One of the least studied but very significant problems lies in the formation, from the end of the fifteenth century, of a large minority of mixed-race populations, which caused great perplexity in Portuguese society. They were inserted into a zoomorphic classification structure designed to add the men and women designated as *mulattos* to the vast category of Muslims, and in so doing, refusing to accept them as Portuguese. In this way their classification based on the assumption of their sexual hyperactivity – especially the *mulattas* – derived

from their African blood, marked the construction of a lasting and devaluing archetype that has not yet completely disappeared.

While some Portuguese mestizos had asserted themselves in society – through marriage with high-status Portuguese, as was the case of Dona Simoa Godinho, of Santomense origin (sixteenth century), professional prestige, for the playwright Afonso Álvares and the painter Domingos Lourenço Pardo (seventeenth century), or religious status, for Mother Cecilia of Jesus (seventeenth century) – it was in the late eighteenth century that two operations, whose antagonistic complementarity deserves to be mentioned, took place. Gradually overcoming the harshness of prejudices, many 'mixed-race' children of white and socially recognized parents, obtained social and financial support to enter Portuguese universities or clergy. While family protection, money, literary or professional prestige and careers in public administration were factors of some dilution of somatic stigma, they also caused headaches for political leaders of the following centuries, to the extent that they managed to acquire positions of arbitration in the Portuguese relational fabric. Much criticized by different sectors and personalities of Portuguese society, the mulattos, considered blacker than white, were able to strengthen their position in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, despite the emergence and consolidation of scientific theories that legitimized the hierarchization of races, geographies, and civilizations. From Pai Paulino to Fernanda do Vale (known as Preta Fernanda), Honório Barreto, Sousa Martins, Gonçalves Crespo, Costa Alegre and Virginia Lent to many other intellectuals and great professionals of the 1900s, it can be shown how important was their intense participation in Portuguese collective life. This, however, did not eliminate the ferocity of value judgments from society concerning the 'half-breeds'. In 1925, the poet Mário Saa stressed that the 'influence of black blood in Portugal, is in many people, [...] the half-breeds dominate in Portugal by population element more than in any other nation in Europe, with increased bulge and reduction of the brain index'. This very popularized value judgment served to feed the fundamental principles of racism, presenting Africans as a teratology: the mulattos would be inscribed in the framework of the monstrosities capable of macular effect on the human species, because despite having a white father or mother, they reflected the African structural inferiority.

A reinvented Africanity

Integrated into Portuguese society, Africans organized the conditions to ensure the preservation of their Africanity, adapting it to the new realities they faced and renewing their cultural values and their identity forms, leaving, through their social practices, structuring marks in the cultural fabric of Portuguese society. The knowledge of this process of reinvention of Africanity requires the study of the strategies thought up and used by these men and women, brutally removed from their native land, family, social and cultural space, to ensure their physical and cultural survival. The forms of adhering to Portuguese practices, complicity and syncretic creations, must be considered in two perspectives: on the one hand, they translate an intelligent way of responding to violence, integrating, reconstituting their identity and preserving fundamental values of their ancestral cultures; on the other hand, they allowed the fixation of African cultural marks in Portuguese society, sometimes in the form of syncretism, particularly in the ludic, magico-religious, linguistic, toponymic spaces (Costa, 1947), constituting, today as yesterday, intangible cultural heritage in Portugal.

The reconstruction of the religious space

While the slave trade turned Africans into a commodity, Portuguese society organized operations aimed at strengthening their depersonalization and de-socialization, in order to eliminate their Africanity. Having lost the land, lineage, language and name, Africans sought to reconstruct a new and autonomous identity, associating Portuguese cultural practices with African civilizational values, deeply marked by their own historical singularity, creating unprecedented socio-cultural forms.

Since kinship, religion and music form the foundations of the existential forms of Africans, it is understood that the conditions under which they were transferred to Europe, as well as to the American colonies, were manifestly antithetic to the maintenance of such structures. In the absence of kinship – that is, of the extended family, which includes both the living and the dead who remained in Africa – Africans, culturally very diverse, adhered to Portuguese ludic and religious spaces, associating themselves through religion, which by its invisible nature could remain in the tight frame of their experiences, not forgetting the fact that religions are almost always marked by religious tensions.

If the sacred territories of the Portuguese and the African did not coincide and if it is easy to see that authorities and the clergy had sought to dismantle African religions, claimed to be too dependent on 'spells' or 'idols' – so-called

African objects of worship – it is also certain that Africans sought to find in Catholicism the social niches capable of providing a certain religious autonomy. It should be emphasized how Africans sought to transplant to Europe, and Brazil, the organization of festivals designed to honour the ancestor spirits, who, in return, should ensure their protection. This fact features the vigour of African religions, which have shown themselves capable of integrating a number of Christian practices while asserting their religious practices, characterized by the conjunction of theological discourse, music and dance. The regulation of religious fact proved to be fundamental because, on the one hand, it made it possible to recover the order organized in Africa and, on the other hand, it took account of the religion dynamics in Portugal, which, while it did not create new religions, forced some European and African religious codes to be modified.

New religious forms: syncretism and Africanization

The profound religious dissociation between Africans and Portuguese did not prevent the appearance of religious forms, clearly visible through the presence of black religious figures in the churches – which accounts for the dispersion of Africans throughout the country – as well as the brotherhoods and the many Catholic religious festivals that were taking place, according to the religious calendar, in Portuguese cities, towns and villages. Estranged from their religious leaders, Africans found themselves in the need to invent other forms of religious authority, such as black holy figures, venerated by Africans and Portuguese, who highlight not only the capacity for integration of the African community into the country, but also a particular aspect of religious syncretism resulting from the construction of an 'Africanized' Christianity.

Accepting the Portuguese initiatives, Africans joined the brotherhoods from an early age, participating in the many organizations and activities of the Church, thus creating a space for the preservation of their specifically African values, leading the more conservative clergy to denounce the existence of religious practices, where the African structure sought to dissolve European rules. Among the confraternities, institutions of a religious nature, which aimed to protect their members, organize celebrations and actions of support and solidarity, consecrating themselves to the cult of a religious figure of Catholicism, the Brotherhood of Our Lady of the Rosary of the Blacks, founded around 1520, bringing together black and mixed-race men and women, enslaved and free, performed a social, economic, moral and religious function that was fundamental in the life of Africans.

First in Lisbon, then in Évora, the brotherhoods multiplied throughout the country, often bringing together Africans from the same 'nation' – Mina, Congo, Angola, Benin – and setting themselves in places where African population density was most significant to generate a community of interests and practices. If the confraternities did not prove the Christianization of Africans, they highlighted the way they used a Portuguese-rooted association that allowed them to organize defensive systems, providing the possibility to recover money to ensure the survival of their members and develop strategies for cultural preservation. Participating in the many religious ceremonies, Africans introduced practices considered profane, such as their dances, much appreciated by the Portuguese population and censored by the political and ecclesiastical powers, but not banned.

Up to the beginning of the twentieth century, the brotherhoods participated in the numerous processions – religious, ludic, social events revealing social hierarchies and economic power – organized in honour of catholic cult figures, such as Our Lady of the Rosary or the Body of God, which marked the Catholic calendar. But the presence of Africans in these events did not fit a single purpose. While some participated as members of the brotherhoods, others were part of the body of the processions with their instruments and their rhythms, their behaviours and their offerings, always counting on the agreement of the organizers. It is one of the most characteristic aspects of this situation that entrusted Africans with festive and musical production, creating spaces of street fun and spectacle, indispensable to the success of the initiative, evidencing a process of Africanization of a Catholic ritual. Music and dance were not only African ludic manifestations, they were part of the social relationship between peoples, also organizing their relations with deities.

Religion and social practices

Religion, however, was also the space where Africans were able to reorganize the family, a new group, providing through the initially religious festivals, the necessary framework for maintaining their historical-cultural dynamics. The remarkable fact that the Mocambo neighbourhood in Lisbon or, where appropriate, other urban concentrations of Africans, should be created and the minimum forms of kinship should be upheld, contributed to the preservation of certain African social practices. The very fact that Africans had enough ingenuity to create Mocambo in Lisbon highlights an ability to define strategies of total non-dissolution in Portuguese space, thus creating a space of their own,

probably from free or hard-won Africans. Mocambo, and other urban spaces concentrating Africans allowed communities, for example, to handle births, marriages and deaths, since African rules imposed rituals that diverged from Portuguese practices.

It is noteworthy that African polygamy, which has remained in Mocambo, will have joined wives from various backgrounds and speaking different languages, as was common in Africa. Given the classificatory kinship, each woman of the patriarch was at the same time the mother of her own children and the other patriarch's children. Women, more than men, acted as guardians of cultural values, that is, their traditions were naturally contradicted by the conditions of the functioning of Portuguese society, but were preserved in part through African religious strategies.

Feasts, historical memory and reinvention of Africanity

Dances, songs and African characters marked the Catholic religious ceremonies, where the feasts of the Brotherhoods occupied a privileged place, integrating Africans in the Portuguese space, allowing them to recover and live some of their cultural practices that were based on fundamental pillars of their historical memory. Since the Confraternity of Our Lady of the Rosary of Blacks is the most relevant to the African community, the feasts consecrated to this Virgin Mary were of particular importance, because for all the brotherhoods, the annual feast of her saint was the most important moment of the institution's life. Throughout the country, there were the popular feasts of the black brotherhoods of Senhora do Rosário, who, as is still the case today in Brazil, elected a black man from his 'nation', to whom they gave the honorary title of king. The Congo and Angola were the most attached to this tradition. It highlights their demographic importance, organizing the festivities, making invitations to the ceremonies for important personalities, electing the kings, and seeking to occupy a privileged position vis-à-vis the other Africans. They intended to establish a secular history of relations between the kings of Portugal, the Congo and the N'gola, a tradition that marked in a profound and lasting way the conservation of historical memory. The example of the kings and queens of the Congo was unique, for its long duration, but also for the many situations created around these African royal figures in Portuguese society.

The election of an African king or queen in the framework of Portuguese religious ceremonies revealed an African strategy of historical, cultural and identity revitalization. The African importance of these royal figures, who

possessed a restricted and abstract power, limited by the borders of African spaces and practices, was based on the evocation of the African past and stressed the existence of a history that ensured the long autonomy and hegemony of Africans. However, the maintenance of these kings and queens, political leaders, but above all links with their history and religion, resembled the past and did not lose sight of the present, nor the future: the 'real' acts, accompanied by the constant presence of music and dance, appear as means of ensuring the integration of Africans in Portuguese cultural practices.

A long description of 1731, reported by an ecclesiast, which took place in the city of Braga in northern Portugal entitled, *Bayle dos Negros*, highlights the complexity of articulating the African cultural and identity aspects in Portuguese religious events. It also reveals the integration of other communities settled in Portugal. The description of this particular procession, an unholy parade that follows the religious gathering, gives an account of the prominent place given to the king and queen of Angola, accompanied by many participants who presented their dances and sang their oath of allegiance simultaneously to the Church and its Angolan sovereigns. African singing, dancing, historical memory and identity sentiment characterized this event, associated with the 'language of black people' and the Portuguese religious organization, highlighting the festive syncretic forms that marked Portuguese society.

Also, the parties and public and private dances centred on the character of the king and the kingdom of the Congo were frequent in the nineteenth century, as reported in Portuguese periodicals. This tradition was reported in the *Jornal do Comércio* (1860), which described a ball of

> the Congo in Lisbon [...], given by Princess Sebastiana Julia, regent of the Congo empire [...] very crowded with whites [...]. After midnight, the guests left, who had paid for their entrance tickets, and only the princess and her court remained [...] and some whites. Pretaria danced to her Congo dance and other dances in Europe.

The African importance of the relationship between party/history/religion, the reconstruction of a new African identity based on the past but inserted into the Portuguese present, is underlined, as revealed by the adhering to elements of Portuguese modernity – such as the financial element or the police protection available to these festivals – resulting in the creation of unprecedented synchronous operations.

Conclusion

The African diaspora in Portugal, which spanned several centuries, sought to integrate itself by creating forms of coexistence and participation in different spheres of Portuguese life. The many operations, resulting from Portuguese impositions and projects, were not passively accepted by Africans, limiting their reactions to the primacy of flight or violence, but, given the inevitability of the situation of domination, they developed strategies of support aimed at preserving, in a dynamic of change, their cultural roots and inventing innovative situations of Africanity. This effort allowed them an autonomous identity reconstruction, associating Portuguese cultural practices with African civilizational values, deeply dependent on their own historical singularity, creating innovative cultural forms, marking a strongly synchronistic Portuguese heritage that has remained up to now, and opening paths for the understanding of a global Africanity.

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CHAPTER 8

AFRO-ATLANTIC COMMUNITIES IN THE ATLANTIC WORLD

Roquinaldo Ferreira and Carlos da Silva Jr.

Introduction

In a seminal article that drew extensively on Pierre Verger's pioneering scholarship, historians Robin Law and Kristin Man coined the term 'Atlantic community' to refer to the historical and complex ties between the slave coast and the northern Brazilian region of Bahia (Law and Mann, 1999; Verger, 1987). Law and Mann viewed the Afro-Atlantic world as an integrated space by virtue of the constant circulation of people, ideas and goods. In their estimation, despite the oppression and violence brought about by the slave trade, it was a world marked by remarkable cultural fluidity and dynamic political configurations. Left unanswered is whether Afro-Atlantic communities also developed elsewhere in Africa.

This chapter takes a trans-imperial approach to survey the creation of Afro-Atlantic communities across Atlantic Africa. Philip Havik has pointed out that Afro-Atlantic communities were 'particularly active in the case of areas of Portuguese influence including the Upper Guinea coast, the Bight of Benin, and Angola' (Havik, 2018, p. 60). First, historians must inquire whether such communities existed in African regions such as the Gold Coast and the Loango coast, where the Portuguese were also active. Second, they must also probe Afro-Atlantic communities in the context of Africa's engagement with European

nations other than Portugal. More importantly, scholars must also seek to restore the place of African agency in the formation of Afro-Atlantic communities.

As early as the sixteenth century, the Spanish colonization of the Americas drew extensively on transatlantic commercial and social ties with Senegambia and Central Africa (Angola and the Congo), anticipating the sociocultural dynamics that would later characterize the broader Afro-Atlantic world (Green, 2016; Wheat, 2016; Gómez, 2017; Schultz, 2016). Transatlantic ties underpinned the trajectories of Gold Coast African missionaries who helped spread Christianity in the Danish Caribbean (Sensbach, 2005; Simonsen, 2015). They also lay at the heart of the experience of two African nobles from Old Calabar who were swept by the slave trade into the British Atlantic world (Sparks, 2004; Sparks, 2014, pp. 1–3, 46–8). In the Dutch Atlantic, they facilitated the return to Elmina, in West Africa, of free Africans taken as slaves to Suriname in 1746 (Kok and Feinberg, 2016). In the French Atlantic, they are epitomized by the voluntary migration of Senegalese families to French Guiana, which challenged the deeply-entrenched racial structures of French colonialism (Traver, 2016).

In many ways, the formation of Afro-Atlantic communities was a function of the early interaction between Africans and Europeans, a distinctive feature of which was diplomatic, economic and cultural exchanges that granted Africans significant economic and political leverage. In Senegambia, trade relations were largely managed by *tangos mãos, lançados* and local traders based out of the Cabo Verde islands (Boulègue, 1989; Mark, 1999; Brooks, 2003; Green, 2012; Gijanto, 2016, pp. 40–1). Along the Gold Coast, coastal communities comprised of culturally mixed individuals played a key role in trade and provided food supplies and labour to European coastal forts (Daaku, 1970). Similarly, African kingdoms leveraged significant power in the Bight of Benin, establishing the framework within which trade and cultural exchange took place and benefiting greatly from the trade with the broader Afro-Atlantic (Law, 2005*a*).

Afro-Atlantic communities on the Gold Coast

Early African interaction with Europeans along the Gold Coast illustrates the social, economic and cultural dynamics that undergirded the creation of Afro-Atlantic communities. Portuguese merchants were lured to the Gold Coast because of the region's large production of gold. An existing gold trade had long connected the region to the great empires of the Sahel. Mande traders travelled from the Gold Coast to Djenné, Timbuktu and other regions in western and

central Sudan (Abaka, 2012, p. 82). African gold was the central pillar of a 'pre-sixteenth century world economy', and at least eleven coastal trading settlements existed by the time the Portuguese arrived (Kea, 1982, p. 58; Kea, 2012, p. 348). With the collapse of Songhay, Atlantic trade with the Portuguese became key to the Gold Coast economy (Dantzig, 1980a, p. 86; Gomez, 2018, p. 332). Despite Portuguese and Dutch attempts to reach gold mining regions directly (one Portuguese traveller ventured approximately 400 kilometres inland), African states, including Akwamu, Denkyira and Asante controlled the flow of this mineral from the interior to the coast (Dantzig, 1973, pp. 169–85; Valsecchi, 2013, pp. 35, 46).

The Castle of São Jorge da Mina (in present-day Ghana), which was built in 1482, embodied Portuguese power on the Gold Coast and allowed them to control the coastal gold trade while also developing diplomatic relations with African polities inland (Vogt, 1979; Ballong-Wen-Mewuda, 1993; DeCorse, 2001). Elmina provided a framework for commercial, political and social exchanges with Africans that outlasted Portugal's presence as a major power on the Gold Coast. Europeans sought to influence African politics, but their power was largely limited to the coast. From the mid-sixteenth century, other European nations challenged the Portuguese grip and sought to make headway on the Gold Coast (Klooster, 2016, p. 24). However, they largely replicated the Portuguese model of trade and social relations with Africans (Valsecchi, 2013, p. 41).

What Europeans did control was an early trade in human beings to the Gold Coast, which satisfied a large demand for labour generated by gold mining activities. The Portuguese brought enslaved Africans from the kingdom of Benin and central Africa to work as porters in trade caravans that transported gold from the interior of the Gold Coast and laboured on Elmina and other forts and lodges (Daaku, 1973, p. 24; Vogt, 1973, pp. 453–67). It is notable that enslaved work would remain a key feature of labour relations in coastal trading hubs even after the arrival of other European nations in the mid-seventeenth century. Like the Portuguese, the British and the Dutch took enslaved Africans from Allada and Benin to work on the Gold Coast (Reese, 2010; Shumway, 2013; Rönnbäck, 2015).

The Portuguese initially relied on various goods to engage in trade with Africans, but by the 1650s, English traders had introduced large quantities of weapons to the Gold Coast (Kea, 1971, pp. 187–9; Thornton, 1999, chapter III; Daaku, 1973, pp. 149–52). A military revolution was then set in motion that significantly impacted social and political dynamics among the African kingdoms. European firearms spread to forest kingdoms and became pivotal

to the prosecution of warfare. New military techniques were first adopted by Akwamu, but Denkyira took the process to a new level by importing large quantities of weapons (McCaskie, 2007, p. 10). African polities relied on Europeans not only to acquire gunpowder and firearms but also to obtain military support in the form of mercenaries to fight local wars (Dantzig, 1980*a*, p. 199; Law, 2008; Law, 2012, pp. 45–6, 74).

Afro-European relations were built upon multiple ties between the Gold Coast and the Bight of Benin. Slave ships would at times seek food provisions on the Gold Coast prior to sailing to the Slave Coast (Law, 2018, p. 8). Following the Europeans' example, African rulers recruited soldiers and obtained military support from polities on the Gold Coast (Dantzig, 1980*a*, p. 215; Law, 1991*a*, p. 229). By the mid-seventeenth century, Gold Coast African merchants had come to control the supply of akory beads, which were obtained on the Slave Coast and widely used on the Gold Coast (Law, 2011*a*, p. 8; Daaku, 1970, p. 25). The majority of the canoe men working for Europeans on the Slave Coast were recruited on the Gold Coast (Dantzig, 1975, p. 265; Law, 1989; Strickrodt, 2015, pp. 68–71; Heijmans, 2018, p. 131). By the early eighteenth century, diasporic movements by Gold Coast Africans seeking to escape the rise of Akwamu had prompted the foundation of Little Popo and other settlements on the Slave Coast (Law, 2005*b*, pp. 251–53; Gayibor, 1995, p. 200; Strickrodt, 2015, pp. 29, 75–8).

By paving the way for the establishment of coastal forts along the Gold Coast, the arrival of several European trading companies further transformed the landscape of society and trade along the Gold Coast and the Slave Coast. While the Dutch controlled fifteen forts, the British possessed nine establishments along the Gold Coast (Dantzig, 1980*b*). Embodying a complex set of Afro-European military, diplomatic and commercial relations, coastal forts were also focal points of European wars (Hair and Law, 1998, vol. I, p. 250; Deveau, 2005, pp. 130–5; Davenant, 1709, p. 6; Klooster, 2016, pp. 101–3; Sutton, 2014, pp. 56–91; Shumway, 2014, p. 65). Often built only after the Africans granted permission, their existence was sometimes predicated upon payment of rent by the Europeans (Valsecchi, 2011, p. 45; Makepeace, 1989, pp; 237–84). As stated in a contemporaneous account, 'every inch of ground is the property of the Negroes – and they are sufficiently tenacious thereof. The very castles pay them ground rent' (J. S. G., 1753, p. 12-13; DeCorse, 1992, p. 164; DeCorse, 1998, p. 222; DeCorse, 2018).

Most importantly, these coastal hubs ushered in an era of unprecedented urbanization and cosmopolitanism, while also setting the stage for the formation of small, yet highly influential, African trading families. A case in point was

Edward Barter, a mixed-race man educated in England who built himself a fort and dominated trade on the Gold Coast in the late seventeenth century (Daaku, 1970, pp. 98–9). Another example was John Conny, who played a key role in trade relations in a Brandenburg fort and once refused to turn it over to the Dutch (Jones, 1985, p. 11). At Anomabo, John Currantee skillfully played the British off against the French to maximize his leverage in trade and politics (Shumway, 2014, pp. 33, 42, 76–9; Kea, 2000; Everts, 2009; Weiss, 2015; Everts, 2012; Ipsen, 2015; Sparks, 2014, chapter 2).

In this context, Africans retained significant bargaining power vis-a-vis Europeans (Chouin, 1998; Law, 1994*b*, pp. 51–64; Feinberg, 1976, pp. 618–30). Not only did African kingdoms control internal trading routes to the coast, but African religious authorities played a critical role in determining which European traders would be allowed to participate in trade on the coast (Law, 2013*a*, pp. 39–40). This pattern of African-controlled exchanges extended to religion and legal matters, with many Europeans participating in the religious ceremonies of 'many coastal polities engaged in Atlantic trade', submitting to African legal practices, and seeking to gain favour with African polities in the forest interior (Apter, 2017, p. 42; Shumway, 2014, p. 67; Yarak, 1990).

Afro-Atlantic communities in the Bight of Benin

Similar patterns of cross-cultural and social interactions developed in the Bight of Benin. There, the first contacts between Europeans and Africans dated from the 1500s, when Ijebu merchants sold ivory, pepper and locally produced cloth to the Portuguese (Law, 1991*a*, p. 118). Beads and enslaved Africans were later sold on the Gold Coast in exchange for gold or shipped to the Portuguese colony of Sao Tome and Principe. The Allada kingdom dominated this early trade, and by the 1620s it had become a major source of labour for Spanish America and particularly for the sugar plantations in northeast Brazil and Spanish America. Tellingly, Jesuit priest Alonso de Sandoval wrote a treatise (published in 1627) and noted a great number of Gbe speakers (from the Bight of Benin) in Cartagena de Indias.

By the 1630s, the Allada kingdom had engaged in commerce with the Dutch, then seeking to obtain labour to develop sugar plantations in recently occupied land in Brazil. As the Dutch took on Portuguese possessions in Central Africa and Brazil, this trade was deeply influenced by events taking place elsewhere in the Atlantic. The Dutch takeover of Luanda, in Angola, prompted a decline of

shipments of enslaved Africans from Allada. Later, the expulsion of the Dutch from Brazil and Sao Tome and Principe drove the Allada slave trade downwards. By the 1670s, however, the arrival of British and French traders had transformed Allada into the most important supplier in the Bight of Benin. In both cases, slave trade activities were dictated by the demand for labour in the Americas as both French and British sought to provide labour for colonies in the Caribbean, where sugar production was heavily dependent on enslaved labour (Law, 1991*a*, pp. 157–63; Law, 1994*a*, pp. 59–92).

Religion was a key feature of Afro-European exchanges on the Slave Coast. A Catholic mission was sent to the kingdom of Allada in the late 1650s with the goal of converting the kingdom's elites and fostering trade relations (Law, 1991*b*, pp. 46–9). In an interconnected world, this mission also reflected disputes between Portugal and the Vatican over control of missionary work in Africa. These, in turn, cannot be fully understood without factoring in events taking place in Central Africa, where the kingdom of Kongo was at odds with the Jesuits and seeking to strengthen direct ties to the Vatican (Chouin, 2016, pp. 108–9; Valsecchi, 2013, p. 52). Against this backdrop, an Allada ambassador was baptised and a catechism was published in an Allada language – probably Aïzo (Law, 1991*a*; Parés, 2016, pp. 99, 100, 374–5, footnote 23).

To a degree, Allada's diplomatic manoeuvring reflected Portugal's diminished standing on the Slave Coast, as well as the lack of interest on the part of the Dutch in developing trading connections with the kingdom after the loss of Brazil. By the second half of the seventeenth century, however, the arrival of French and British merchants had prompted an increase in Atlantic trade. Accordingly, not only the Dutch but also representatives of British and French trading companies openly courted Allada's rulers, frequently sending luxurious gifts to the kingdom (Brauner, 2016). In response to diplomatic overtures, the Allada king wound up dispatching Afro-Portuguese Matteo Lopes to Paris as an envoy (Brauner, 2013, p. 7; Heijmans, 2018, p. 100)

As Allada and Hueda gained prominence in Atlantic trade, African rulers clearly had the upper hand vis-a-vis the Europeans. 'In 1703, the king was even in a position to enforce on the French, Dutch and English a peaceful co-existence', despite their wars in Europe (Dantzig, 1975, p. 258). Despite the existence of European coastal forts, these were not actually fortified, nor did they provide much in the way of military assistance. Spaces of cultural exchange existed on the coast, with creole Portuguese as a lingua franca widely used in commerce by Europeans and Africans (Tilleman, 1697, p. 30; Law, 1991*a*, pp. 116–9; Hair, 1997, p. 18). However, African rulers and their representatives

remained fully in control of business, fending off European attempts to establish zones of exclusive trade, and imposing free trade.

In this context, the Hueda kingdom showed great aptitude for political and economic diplomacy, regularly receiving European emissaries and sending its own emissaries abroad. In the 1690s, for example, British traders reported that the Hueda ruler had taken 'us by the hands, snapped our fingers, and told us we were very welcome, that he was glad to see us, that he longed for it, and that he loved Englishmen dearly, that we were his brothers, and that he would do us all the good offices he could' (Phillips, 1732, p. 217). In 1721, a Hueda ruler played a central role in the construction of a Portuguese fort in his territory. In addition to sending a letter to Brazil to invite the Portuguese to establish themselves in Hueda, the ruler furnished labour to build the facility.

Hueda's diplomatic overture to the Portuguese authorities in Brazil coincided with the rise in the demand for enslaved labour in the wake of the discovery of gold in Brazil. The kingdom's coastal port of Ouidah played a critical role in the supply of enslaved labour to the Portuguese colony in South America. Fifty per cent of all enslaved Africans taken across the Atlantic between 1700 and 1730 were shipped from there. The capital of colonial Brazil, Salvador, both hosted a large, enslaved population and became an important entry point for enslaved Africans eventually taken to Minas Gerais, making its social and religious fabric distinctly African (Reis, 2013; Richardson, 2009, p.161).

If Salvador became the centre for dispersal of captives in Portuguese America, Ouidah was converted into a multi-ethnic community and a centre of trans-imperial trade (Law, 2013*b*). Against the backdrop of fierce competition from British, French and Dutch merchants, the Portuguese managed to remain competitive in the slave trade by relying on two types of goods brought from their Brazilian colony: smuggled gold and tobacco, both highly sought after by Africans and Europeans along the African coast (Ferreira, 2014).

The rise of Dahomey, the leading African polity in the region after the conquest of Allada (1724) and Ouidah (1727), marked a new chapter in the Afro-European relations in the Bight of Benin. However, trade relations along the Slave Coast were by no means dominated by Dahomey alone. The intensity of the slave trade prompted the rise of alternative commercial outlets at Badagry and Porto-Novo (the latter founded by refugees from the destruction of Allada). This, in turn, provided European merchants with a variety of business-friendly outlets to develop their business (Silva Jr., 2017, pp. 87–8). In the 1760s, large numbers of Africans made captive in wars waged by the inland kingdom of Oyo were deported through Badagry and Porto-Novo.

Dahomey's geopolitical interest in the Atlantic trade drove intense diplomacy along the coast as well as across the Atlantic and Europe. To channel the slave trade away from rival ports on the Slave Coast and back to Ouidah, Dahomey ruler Tegbesu dispatched an embassy to Salvador in 1750 (Lara, 2001, pp. 151–65; Sweet, 2011, chapter 10). Other embassies followed in 1795, 1805 and 1811 (Araújo, 2011; Parés, 2013; Soares, 2014). Interestingly, other African polities also engaged in diplomatic exchanges, inviting Portuguese authorities to build fortresses in their territories and sending envoys to Brazil to discuss the trade in human beings at a time of nascent abolitionism. Similarly, the increasing participation of Onim (Lagos) in the Atlantic trade resulted in attempts at establishing diplomatic relations with colonial and independent Brazil (Verger, 1987; Santos, 2012; Guizelin, 2015).

Another outcome of the increased slave trade was the emergence of Afro-Atlantic communities along the Slave Coast. While first established by agents of merchants based out of Brazil, these communities would later comprise a wide variety of individuals, including both enslaved and freed individuals. Some had first gone to Africa as crew members of slave ships or to work as translators at trading stations along the African coast (Fayer, 2003, pp. 281–95; Christopher, 2006, pp. 85, 66; Rodrigues, 2005, pp. 191, 205; Klein, 2010, p. 86). One example was João de Oliveira, an enslaved African from Brazil who settled in the Bight of Benin in the 1730s. As an ambassador of sorts for Portuguese interests, Oliveira played an important role in the opening of two major enslaving ports, Porto-Novo and Lagos. When he returned to Salvador in 1770, Oliveira had become a wealthy man and the owner of a considerable number of captives (Silva Jr., 2017, pp. 82–3).

Oliveira's life story provides insights into a larger pattern of mobility across the Atlantic. This pattern is also illustrated by the trajectory of Antonio Vaz Coelho, a black freedman born in Brazil, who 'made several voyages to Ardrah [Porto-Novo], where he at last settled, and became a very respectable trader' by the end of the eighteenth century (Dalzel, 1793, p. 169). Others used membership of brotherhoods in port cities in Africa and Brazil to travel back and forth across the Atlantic (Parés, 2014).

Such Atlantic crossings were furthered by a backlash against free blacks in the wake of the 1835 Muslim rebellion in Salvador, Bahia (Reis, 2003, pp. 465–7, 479–95; Castillo 2011, Vol. 2, pp. 27–51). Noticeably, they overlapped with the rise of anti-slave trade activities, which prompted the decentralization of shipments of captives along the African coast. Against this backdrop, some returnees settled in coastal communities and became active in the illegal trade

(Costa e Silva, 2004; Law, 2004, pp. 186–211; Law, 2016). However, it would be mistaken to associate the back-to-Africa movement only with the slave trade. While transatlantic voyages, mostly to Lagos, were fuelled by Afro-Brazilian religiosity, they were also driven by continuing social and trading ties between Africa and Brazil (Matory, 2005; Parés and Castillo, 2015, pp. 13–43; Cunha, 2013; Lindsay 1994; Guran, 2000; Strickrodt, 2015; Souza, 2008; Mann, 2013; Falheiros, 2013; Castillo, 2016; Silva, 2016; Parés, 2017). In Africa, a strong sense of religiosity, particularly around Catholicism, was central to the making of an 'Agudá' identity (Parés, 2015).

Afro-European relations in Central Africa

A similar mix of cultural exchange and diplomatic relations characterized Afro-European relations in Central Africa, which stretched from Malembo to the south of Angola. Here, two patterns of engagement soon emerged. On the Loango coast, from Malembo to the Congo River, African rulers successfully dictated the terms of trade and social relations. While Portugal pioneered contacts with Africans, it later lost ground to Dutch, British and French merchants (Sommerdyk, 2012). As the British and French dropped out of Atlantic slavery, the Loango coast came under the influence of the merchants from Rio de Janeiro, signalling the importance of Brazil – the largest destination in the Americas for captives – to the overall management of the South Atlantic networks in the trade in human beings.

Notably, Afro-European relations were far from being defined by trade alone. In the kingdom of Kongo, the first major Central African polity to make contact with Europeans, rulers (*manikongos*) used Christianity to strengthen their power soon after establishing ties to the Portuguese in the 1480s. From agricultural crops to military hardware to prestige goods, the Kongolese elite quickly incorporated elements of European culture and technology (Heywood and Thornton, 2007, pp. 199–200). Several members of the Kongolese elite became diplomats (dispatched on missions to Lisbon, Brazil, and the Vatican), military strategists and aides to missionaries seeking to spread Christianity in Central Africa (Thornton, 1984; Thornton and Mosterman, 2010; Thornton, 2013; Almeida, 2009; Brinkman, 2016). To dampen Portuguese interference in their internal affairs, Kongolese rulers sought to strengthen ties to the Vatican and other European powers. They provided the Dutch with military support to break Portugal's grip on Angola (Thornton, 2016, pp. 189–213).

While the kingdom of Kongo soon became a focal point of the slave trade, with a devastating impact on its social and political fabric, the Loango coast was not seriously affected by the trade in human beings until the early eighteenth century. There, trade relations initially revolved around products like ivory and locally produced cloth sold in Luanda (Martin, 1972; Soares, 2017, pp. 59–86). By the mid-eighteenth century, however, the demand for enslaved labour in the Americas had brought French and British merchants to regions including Cabinda and Malembo, which accounted for more than half of enslaved Africans taken to the French Caribbean (Mobley, 2015, pp. 123–6).

The Loango coast shared traits with the Slave Coast as both regions saw African kingdoms playing a pivotal role in the Atlantic trade. Another commonality was the rise of cosmopolitan trading groups which derived power and wealth from commercial exchanges with Europeans. However, key differences stand out, particularly with regard to the impact of the slave trade on African polities. While Slave Coast kingdoms kept a tight grip on Atlantic trade, the rise of trading families took a direct toll on the centralized power of the Loango kings. A case in point was the Ngoyo kingdom, whose royal elite lost power as members of its state apparatus gained wealth and power along the coast. In contrast to the power and wealth of coastal trading families including the Franque and Puna families, 'the last invested king of Ngoyo died in 1830' (MacGaffey, 2000, p. 192; Serrano, 1983; Martin, 1987, pp. 65–86; Pinto, 2006).

South of the Congo River, Afro-European relations were distinctive in nature because of Portuguese success in establishing a coastal enclave around the cities of Luanda and Benguela as well as the region's deep ties with Brazil, Portugal's colony in South America. Luanda displayed noticeable commonalities with coastal hubs on the Gold Coast. While both were undeniably under the control of Europeans, their social and economic fabrics were heavily dependent on slavery. In both places, a cosmopolitan coastal elite dominated the operation of the slave trade. As on the Gold Coast and the Slave Coast, members of Angola's coastal elite travelled across the Atlantic and dispatched their offspring abroad for education and professional training (Candido, 2011; Candido, 2013).

In many ways, however, Luanda and Benguela made for truly unique environments. First, by hosting a permanent civilian, religious, judicial and military apparatus, they were urban settings unlike anything ever created in continental Africa. They served as springboards for networks of trade and influence well beyond the African coast, allowing the Luanda administration to project power into the city's hinterland. Far from uniformly European, they gave rise to deeply amalgamated social and cultural landscapes. Second, while

both cities were taken over by the Dutch in the 1640s, Portuguese sovereignty was otherwise uncontested (Boxer, 1952). In contrast to the Slave Coast, coastal elites did not necessarily represent the power of African kingdoms, nor did they always advance Portugal's commercial and political interests. In fact, they often pursued their trade interests at the expense of Portuguese strategic goals, building close transatlantic connections to Brazil, Portugal's colony in South America.

Conclusion

This chapter provides an overview of the formation of Afro-Atlantic communities across Atlantic Africa. These communities initially grew out of Africa's ability to dictate the terms of social and commercial interaction with outsiders from the outset of the European presence in Africa. They were characterized by the emergence of individuals and trading families adept in Atlantic trade whose identities reflected extensive exchanges with the outside world. These individuals' command of elements of European culture such as language, and their adroitness in African culture made them pivotal actors in the construction of the Afro-Atlantic world. Transatlantic ties with European colonies in the Americas were another key element explaining the formation of Afro-Atlantic communities. In this regard, the scale and longevity of the slave trade to Brazil set the Bight of Benin and Angola apart from other African regions affected by the slave trade.

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CHAPTER 9

CREOLIZATION IN EARLY MODERN WEST AFRICA AND AFRICAN DIASPORA

Lowcountry Creola' and the Making of Gullah Geechee *c.* 1500–1860

Edda L. Fields-Black

Introduction

In a 1946 publication, Melville Herskovits, eminent anthropologist, ranked the 'Gulla Islands' as having the most 'New World Africanisms' among people of African descent in the United States and the Virgin Islands. Today, the descendants of enslaved Africans who laboured on rice, indigo, Sea Island cotton and naval stores plantations, located on the islands and coastal plains along the Atlantic shores – measuring 30 to 40 miles into the interior and stretching from South Carolina to the St John's River in Florida – are called 'Gullah Geechee'. 'Gullah' primarily refers to African-Americans in coastal South Carolina and 'Geechee' refers specifically to the African-American inhabitants of coastal Georgia. Gullah Geechee are also the names given to the English-based Creole languages spoken by the descendants of enslaved Africans in these regions (Figure 1).

Theories abound on the origins of the Gullah Geechee. Before the twentieth century, Gullah was tied to African origins in one of two Western African subregions. A runaway slave advertisement for an enslaved man, 'Golla Harry,' is one of the earliest appearances of Gullah in print. John Bennett, the artist and writer who made Charleston his home, 'placed the Gullahs among the Liberian group of tribes', the Gola. Ambrose Gonzales considered Gullah to be a 'corruption of Angola'. He cited the court proceedings of the Denmark Vesey slave insurrections

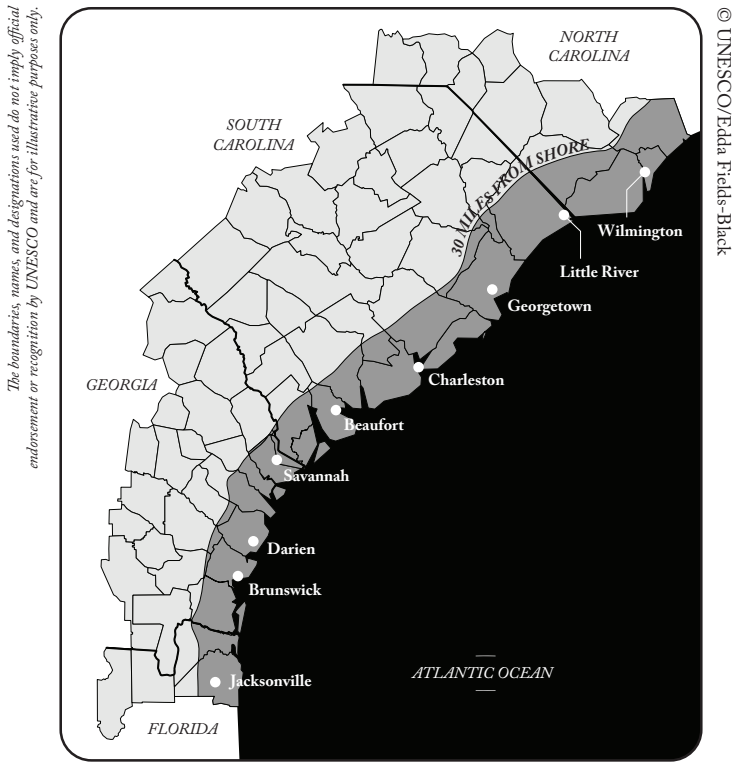

FIGURE 1. *Map of the "Lowcountry"*

(Gonzales, 1924, p. 9). In the Denmark Vesey Conspiracy, enslaved people born in Angola identified themselves – this very rare glimpse gives the historian a peek at how a select group of enslaved blacks identified themselves – and slaveholders identified them as 'Gullah'.[1] In 1850, 'Gullah Jem' was one of seven enslaved men and women photographed for Louis Agassiz, a world-renowned naturalist and ethnologist. Labelled 'Gullah', Jem became representative of a racial type on par with the ethnic groups of enslaved people who were born in Africa (Rogers, 2010, pp. 227, xvi, 25, 28). These daguerreotypes are the 'earliest known photographs of identifiable American slaves' as well as the 'earliest anthropological photographs' (Rogers, 2010, pp. 17–18).

Linguist and contemporary of Melville Herskovits, Lorenzo Dow Turner conducted the first scientific study of the Gullah Geechee languages, tracing over

1 'Enclosure B, Court Proceedings and Testimony Regarding the Denmark Vesey Rebellion. Senate Copy' in *Legislative Papers, 1782-1866* (South Carolina Department of History and Archives), pp. 145–48, 49, 52, 49, 205, 05, 08–09, 11–14, 153, 67, 201, 22, 197, 91–92.

3,000 words and hundreds of 'basket names' from Gullah Geechee to West and western Central African languages and recording texts in the Mende language, spoken in Sierra Leone, which were passed down by Gullah-speakers. Turner pioneered the study of Western African substrate languages as important to the formation of Gullah and other African-American Vernacular English varieties. He found Western African languages were one of several influences on Gullah. Thus, Gullah Geechee language is a Creole language, not an African language,[2] forged from Western African and European elements (Mufwene, 2001, p. 95). Despite a few interventions by historians, such as by Margaret Washington Creel and Philip Morgan (Creel, 1989; Morgan, 2009), Charles Joyner and Ras Michael Brown,[3] the overall Gullah Geechee literature is relatively ahistorical. A fresh historical perspective on the historical development of Gullah Geechee language, culture and communities is long overdue.

Gullah Geechee and the meanings that these terms hold today cannot be projected backwards in time before the twentieth century. In the nineteenth century, the meaning of 'Gullah' was contested. Despite 'Gullah' appearing in print media in the nineteenth century, the masses of Africans enslaved in the Lowcountry did not think of themselves as one group of people. Nor did the enslaved masses or their descendants identify themselves as 'Gullah' or 'Geechee'. Those who did, like 'Gullah Jack', did not infuse the term with the same meaning as we do today. This conundrum raises the question of how historians conceptualize folks who were enslaved on plantations in the SC, GA, and FL Lowcountry and how a historian can reconstruct their history. A new term, 'Lowcountry Creole' will be used to describe blacks in the region in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Linguists, anthropologists and historians have employed the concept of 'creolization' to theorize about enslaved societies' creation of new cultures and languages in the New World. Much of what historians can take from Creole linguistics is encapsulated in the 'ecological approach' to language development coined by Salikoko Mufwene, a genetic linguist who specializes

2 Anthropologists and folklorists writing after Turner's watershed study have used his work to continue a search for Herskovits' 'Africanisms', African 'survivals' and 'retentions'. Herskovits, M. 1940, pp. 6, 7, 16, 18–20; one example of this voluminous literature is Jones-Jackson (1987).

3 Joyner's micro-study (2009) of the Creolized enslaved community on one portion, the Waccamaw Neck along the Cooper River, in the South Carolina Lowcountry, made explicit connection between linguistic and cultural creolization. Brown (2012) suggests that historians have used the concept of creolization to resolve the dualism between Africanisms and continuity vs American influences and creativity, which dates back to the debate between Melville Herskovits and E. Franklin Frazier.

Table 1. *Scale of intensity of New World Africanisms*

a: very African b: quite African c: somewhat African d: a little African e: trace of African custom, or absent ?: no report	Technology	Economic Life	Social Organization	Non-kinship Institutions	Religion	Magic	Art	Folklore	Music	Language
Guiana (bush)	b	b	a	a	a	a	b	a	a	b
Guiana (Paramaribo)	c	c	b	c	a	a	e	a	a	c
Haiti (peasant)	c	b	b	c	a	b	d	a	a	c
Haiti (urban)	e	d	c	c	b	b	e	a	a	c
Brazil (Bahia)	d	d	b	d	a	a	b	a	a	a
Brazil (Porto Alegre)	e	e	c	d	a	a	e	?	a	c
Brazil (north-urban)	e	d	c	e	a	b	e	d	a	b
Brazil (north-rural)	c	c	b	e	c	b	e	b	b	d
Jamaica (Maroons)	c	c	b	b	b	a	e	a	a	c
Jamaica (general)	e	d	d	d	c	b	e	a	b	c
Trinidad (Toco)	e	d	c	c	c	b	e	b	b	d
Trinidad (Port-of-Spain)	e	d	c	b	a	a	e	b	a	e
Cuba	?	?	?	c	a	a	?	?	b	?
Virgin Islands	e	d	c	d	e	c	?	b	?	d
Gulla Islands	c	c	c	d	c	b	e	a	b	d
United States (rural south)	d	e	c	d	c	c	e	c	b	e
United States (north)	e	e	c	d	c	c	e	d	b	e

Source: Edda L. Fields-Black

in the development of new languages, including Creole languages.[4] Mufwene's 'ecological approach' draws on population genetics to explain the complexities of all languages, not only Creoles. Mufwene (2001, pp. xii, 21, 25, 95, 113) argues that the only thing special about so-called Creole languages is the ethnicity of their speakers; the same processes are at work in the development of all of the world's languages. On the one hand, the 'ecological approach' analyses the 'external ecology' in which languages evolve, i.e. language contact among groups,

4 Mufwene has also conducted extensive research on the Gullah Geechee language: Mufwene, 1986; Mufwene and Charles Gilman, 1987; Mufwene, 1989; Mufwene, 1991; Mufwene, 1992; Mufwene, 1994a; Mufwene, 1994b; Mufwene, 1995; Mufwene, 1997.

the setting where contact takes place, and the power relations among the groups. On the other hand, it also examines the 'internal ecology' in which languages evolve, such as the contact among linguistic systems before and during the language's evolution (Mufwene, 2001, pp. xii, 21, 25, 95, 113). At the core of Mufwene's approach is the understanding of languages as complex, adaptive systems. Much of the historical literature on creolization has been focused on African or European influences and not New World African cultures as complex adaptive systems, which are influenced by many factors.

As a first step to defining 'Lowcountry Creoles', this article focuses on creolization as a social and cultural process, investigating social processes in Western Africa (Table 1). It argues that the seeds of creolization actually lie therein. To begin to understand the Creole cultures crafted by Lowcountry Creoles, it is important to get a better understanding of their Western African heritage and how it changed over time. Both are important elements in redefining who were 'Lowcountry Creoles' and how their descendants became the Gullah Geechee.

Precursors to creolization in early modern Upper Guinea Coast

The latest evidence to date on the transatlantic slave trade into the Carolina, Georgia and Florida region gives historians new insight into the Western African cultural heritage of the people who are today called the 'Gullah Geechee'. On 824 slaving voyages between 1710 and 1860, an estimated 150,130 African captives were captured, purchased, imprisoned and transported against their will from ports in West and western Central Africa disembarking slaving vessels in South Carolina, North Carolina, Florida and Georgia ports. Of the total number of captives directly imported into this portion of the American colonies, roughly 43 per cent originated in the Upper Guinea Coast and roughly 42 per cent originated in western Central Africa, a statistical 'dead-heat'. The slave vessel records reveal the percentage of captives which originated in the Upper Guinea Coast and western Central Africa. However, they cannot tell historians how the culture of these two Western African regions or Western African ports would influence the enslaved communities in the South-Eastern Atlantic Coast whose descendants became the Gullah Geechee.

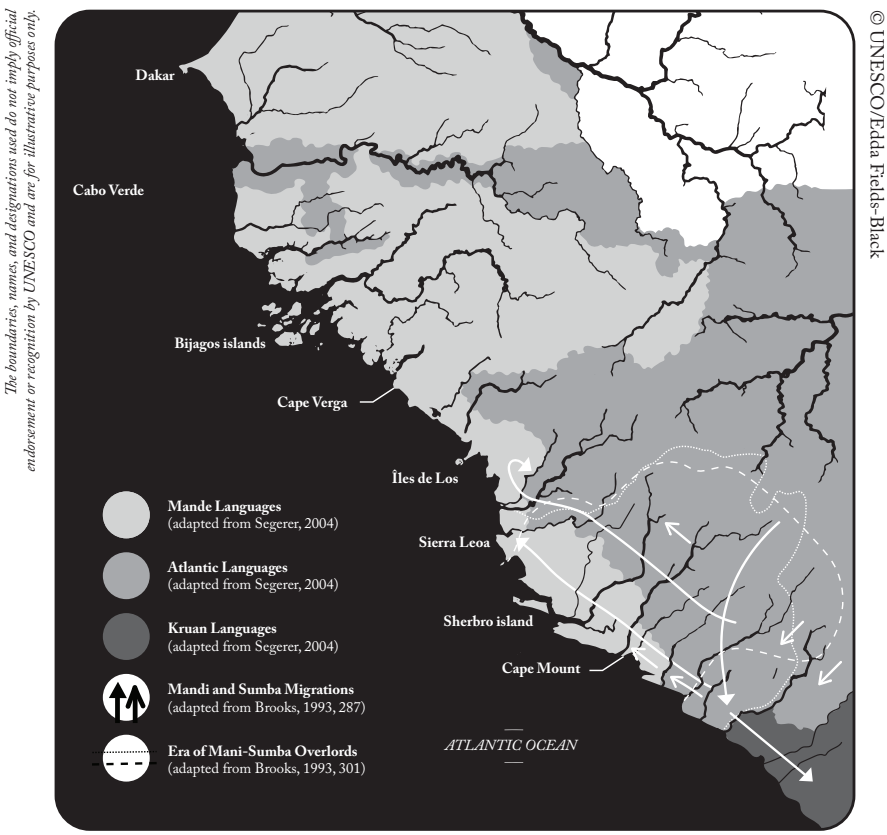

FIGURE 2. *Areas of origins of enslaved Africans from the 'Lowcountry'*

In identifying for historians two broad embarkation regions, western Central Africa and the Upper Guinea Coast, the slave ship data also pinpoints the genesis of Lowcountry Creoles (Figure 2). Linda Heywood and John Thornton have argued that the culturally and linguistically homogeneous western Central African kingdoms of Kongo and Ndongo were the source of 'Atlantic Creole' culture in colonial Virginia (Heywood and Thornton, 2007, pp. 236–39, 49, 51, 60–61, 62–67, 70, 72, 82, 98–109, 69–70, 86–94, 95–97, 99, 206, 08–11, 22–26; Sweet, 2003; Sweet, 2006). Among the Upper Guinea Coast's relatively heterogeneous Atlantic and Mande language groups,[5] Toby Green argued that the transatlantic slave trade and

5 Atlantic, Kruan and Mande are three separate language groups which within themselves are relatively heterogeneous; the Northern and Southern branches of the Atlantic language, in particular, are relatively distantly related (Childs, 2007; Thornton, 1998 pp. 186–92).

violence could not be separated from the birth of Creole societies in the Atlantic World. Particularly in Cabo Verde and Upper Guinea, Atlantic Creole societies emerged from commercial relations among New Christians, Atlantic and Mande groups. Thus, 'primary creolization' based on the pre-existing frameworks of cultural pluralism among the lineages in the region foreshadowed Atlantic creolization and modernity.[6] In both western Central Africa and the Upper Guinea Coast, Afro-European creolization on the African side of the Atlantic acted as a precursor to creolization in the New World among enslaved Africans who originated in these two regions (Thornton, 2010; Green, 2012). Creolization within indigenous Western African communities has received relatively little attention.

From the sixteenth century, European observers reported the occurrence of a regional transformation, which would re-shape the economic, political, social and cultural history of the Sierra Leone and Liberia subregion of the Upper Guinea Coast. Speakers of languages in the Central and South-Western branches of the Mande language family moved through the interior of present-day Sierra Leone to the coast of Liberia to establish trade networks linking the interior with the coast. In some areas they also took over the riverine trade networks that had been operated by the Sapes from Sierra Leone in the south to the Biafada territory along the Rio Grande in the north. Historians have called this social, political and cultural movement the 'Mani or Mane invasions' and the Central and South-Western Mande-speakers the 'Mani or Manes'. (Green, 2012, pp. 236–38). According to Adam Jones, the Manes were the linguistic ancestors of speakers of the present-day Vai language in the Central branch of the Mande language group; vocabulary words recorded by European observers and attributed to the Manes included Vai words (Brooks, 1993, p. 288; Jones, 1983a, p. 25; Jones, 1981, p. 159; Hair, 1968, pp. 47–73, 52, 58–59). The movement of Mande groups from the interior impacted Atlantic and Kruan groups occupying the coast from the Cape Verga region of present-day Guinea to the Cape Mount region of present-day Liberia (Brooks, 1993, pp. 275–78).

Slave trader Sir John Hawkins was one of the first Elizabethan navigators to reach the Upper Guinea Coast. Hawkins made his second voyage in 1564 to the coast of Sierra Leone, specifically to the islands off its coast, the Îles de Los. There, he encountered Atlantic groups, Sapes, Krim and Bullom speakers, the indigenous inhabitants of the coastal region. Hawkins' two ships visited the Îles

6 Green, 2012, pp. 10, 12–13, 18, 28, 34, 53, 56-57, 61, 62, 96–97, 103, 05, 48, 74, 78–79, 226, 34, 72–73, 76. Green demarcates the sixteenth century as the beginning of modernity, in which a new period of trans-national ideologies, such as racial hierarchies, impacted ongoing processes of creolizattion.

de Los, because they 'went to an Island of the Sapies, […] to see if they could take any of them' captive, which Hawkins' men did by 'burning and spoiling their townes' (Williamson, 1970, pp. 16–17). Though this account is a slaving voyage, it is an invaluable primary source for the political, social and cultural transformation already in progress in the islands off Sierra Leone's coast.

Hawkins' description of the influx of Manes in coastal Sierra Leone echoes travellers' accounts for the region recorded as late as the early seventeenth century. European visitors observed Mani armies made up of recruits from speakers of Kruan languages, whom they called Samboses and Sumbas, fighting the Sapes or Sapi who spoke languages from the Atlantic group. The Temne and Bullom inhabitants of the Iles de Los, 'who were before Sapies', however, had already been 'conquered by the Samboses, inhabitants beyond Sierra Leone' (Williamson, 1970, pp. 16–17; Brooks, 1993, p. 288; Green, 2012, pp. 236–37). The Sumbas had arrived before Hawkins and his men, conquered the territory by force, 'tooke [the Sapies] in warres, as their slaves' (Williamson, 1970, p. 17; de Almada, 1984, pp. 16/7, 16/9, 16/10, 18/2, 18/5). The Sumbas paid tribute, but allied with and were not enslaved by the Manes. On the contrary, the Manes conquered the Sapes and enslaved them, making the Sapes 'till the ground' because they 'neither have the knowledge thereof, nor yet will work themselves' (Williamson 1970, p. 17). Using involuntary Sape labour, the Sumbas cultivated millet, rice, root crops and palm wine, transforming the islands into 'a veritable granary' (Williamson, 1970, pp. 17–18). The Sapes may have been an easy target for defeat by the Manes and their Sumba armies, because a lack of good-quality iron on the coast made it difficult for them to build strong defences against invasion (Green, 2012, p. 241; Hawthorne, 2003).

By the 1590s, however, a social, political and cultural transformation had progressed even further. André de Almada, a Luso-African born in Cabo Verde, traded along the Upper Guinea Coast rivers. His first-hand account written in the 1590s, but recorded in the 1560s, provides a rare glimpse at Portuguese and Afro-Portuguese commercial relationships with coastal villages and insight into the Sapes cultural and linguistic traditions in a time of great regional change. Contemporary observations from as early as the sixteenth century in present-day Sierra Leone and the Cape Mount region of Liberia also describe a transformation occurring among the subregion's Atlantic and Mande inhabitants.

According to de Almada, among speakers of languages the Atlantic language group, Nalus, Bagas, Cocolins, Sapes and Sumbas, and the Mande language group, Manes, cultural distinctions were breaking down, because the Mani-Sumbas had incorporated so many captives. Nalus, along with Bagas and Cocolins, 'dress[ed] like

Sapes' (De Almada, 1984, pp. 13/5, 15/6, 16/1; Brooks, 1993, pp. 298, 304). The Nalus spoke a language from the Northern branch of the Atlantic language group and the Bagas, Cocolins and Sapes spoke languages from the Southern branch of the Atlantic language group. However, de Almada assumed that the Sapes and Manes 'understood each other' and the Manes '[spoke] the same language as the Sumbas speak' (De Almada, 1984, pp. 16/1, 16/6, 17/1; Brooks, 1993, p. 235). Linguistically, this was unlikely. Maybe the Sapes and Sumbas could communicate with one another. Though both of their languages belong to the Southern branch of the Atlantic language group, the relationship is too distant for the languages to be mutually intelligible. The Manes spoke a language from an entirely different language group, Mande. Though de Almada appears to be misinformed about the relationship among the Sapes, Sumbas and Manes, one cultural trait is clear, however: '[Sape] men and women [filed] their front teeth, above as well as below' (De Almada, 1984, pp. 16/6, 17/1). Before him, Hawkins reported Sapes or speakers of Atlantic languages for the Northern and Southern branches as far north as the Rio Grande engaging in the same body modification practice 'for a braverie, to set out themselves' as well as scarring the flesh on their arms, legs and bodies in patterns (Williamson, 1970, p. 17). By the 1590s, Sapes, Sumbas and Manes were engaged in warfare, political/social overlordship and cultural contact, but important cultural distinctions remained.

South of Sierra Leone in present-day Liberia, the south-westward movement of Mande groups, specifically speakers of Vai/Kono languages, penetrated the coast at Cape Mount, where West Atlantic and Kruan groups' territories met (Brooks, 1993, pp. 72, 288). For a large swath of the Upper Guinea Coast spanning north-western Liberia and to a lesser extent southern Sierra Leone, the late historian Paul E. H. Hair described the unpublished Kquoja account on the political history of Cape Mount, the core of Olfert Dapper's travellers' account, as 'one of the richest pieces of documentation of any black African district and people in the period before 1700' (Hair, 1974, p. 34; Jones, 1990, pp. 181–86; Jones, 1983b, pp. 23–25). The author of the Kquoja account was likely well-acquainted with the Cape Mount region. He may have been an employee of Samuel Bloomaert, a director of the Dutch West India Company beginning in 1622 and resided in Cape Mount between the late 1620s and the 1640s (Jones, 1990, pp. 180–81, 74, 76; Jones, 1983b, p. 23; Hair, 1974, p. 33; Hair, 1964, p. 130).

By the time Olfert Dapper's informant travelled in Liberia and witnessed the results of the 'Mani invasions', no remnants of the Mani existed in Liberia. The Karou had themselves been conquered by the Folgia kingdom. They 'by assistance of the Folgians conquering the Veyes after a tedious war' ruled over the Vey or Vai, along with the Puy and Kquoja. The Karou came to rule present-day Liberia's Cape

Mount region and present-day coastal Sierra Leone (Dapper, 1686, pp. 399, 79, 81, 98, 407; Jones, 1983*b*, pp. 23, 25, 33, 34, 36). The Folgians were themselves subjects of 'Emperor of Manou, or Manoe, a mighty Prince' in the interior to whom they paid 'yearly tributes in slaves, salt, red cloth, kettles, basons'. The Kquoja king and some of his officials had intermarried with women from groups conquered by the Kquoja (Dapper, 1686, pp. 379, 98–99, 401; Brooks, 1993, pp. 302, 04, 06; Jones, 1983*b*, p. 28). Mani influence continued to be felt, however, in a new subregional culture among the Mani and the Atlantic and Kruan groups among whom they settled and whom they incorporated into their cultural practice, social structure and political organization.

The Poro power association, 'Belli-Paaro', is but one example. Mediating disputes was one of the primary functions of the Poro power association in south-western Liberia, in addition to socializing young males into manhood and maintaining peace and security along trade routes. As the demographic, cultural and linguistic changes swept south-westward, the Mani initiated young men from Atlantic and Kruan groups into these South-Western Mande institutions (Brooks, 1993, pp. 74, 289). Young males speaking different languages were all 'incorporated into the society of Spirits' and instructed in 'causes which concern the Wars, Justice, and Government' took part in eating meat offerings made to the spirits, *Jaananen* (Dapper, 1686, pp. 402–04; Brooks, 1993 p. 304; Jones, 1983*b*, p. 39). Before they became men, the youth from different ethnic groups also took an oath '[swearing] by Belli-Paaro, that is, Divine Justice' that they would not cause conflict, disrupt trade routes or steal trade goods. If a man broke the oath, the Belli-Paaro spirits acted as a divine arbiter, prosecuting through painful ordeals and sentencing the wrongdoer to lay in a basket of thorns, 'be carried away by the *Jaananen*' or executed. By the recording of Dapper's account, men from Mande, Atlantic and Kruan groups in south-western Liberia were initiated into Belli-Paaro, enabling the small Kquoja kingdom to rule over its large territory 'more by wisdom, policy, than by power'. According to Dapper, the King of Kquoja was the 'head' of Belli-Paaro ruling over a council of elders, *simmanoe*, who all had been 'marked' by the spirits with 'some row of cuts, from the neck along both shoulder blades'. Poro power was centralized and institutionalized at a 'university' beyond Cape Mount, which may have been where the highest-ranking members of the society were trained (Dapper, 1686, pp. 38–40; Alvares, 1990, ff.138v-39; Brooks, 1993, p. 302). The power association formed the core of political power and kept the peace among multi-ethnic communities throughout south-western Liberia.

Travellers' accounts from sixteenth and seventeenth century Sierra Leone and Cape Mount provide evidence of complex cultural, social and political processes

at work. Cultural contact among Mande groups, moving into the region as smiths, traders and warriors, and Atlantic and Kruan groups subjugated, incorporated and in some cases enslaved by the Mande. The emphasis here is on the incorporation of the Atlantic and Kruan groups by the Mande, which resulted in the Mani in Sierra Leone adopting the dress and language of Sumbas who fought their wars and the Vai initiating young men in Atlantic and Kruan groups in south-western Liberia into their power associations. Though the Mande achieved political control of the region through violence, the cultures practised among conqueror and conquered groups were no longer distinctly Mande, Atlantic or Kruan after the 'Mane invasions', but Creole (Dapper, 1686, p. 381).

Conclusion

The Mande and Atlantic are but one example of complex cultural processes taking place in precolonial West Africa; western Central Africa is another. Creolization is a process which historians of the Atlantic World have written about primarily in enslaved societies in the New World or in Western Africa among multi-racial societies resulting from Western Africans' interaction with European slave traders. This article discussed evidence of cultural contact in pre-colonial Western Africa in the context of shifting social and political hierarchies in which one incoming militarily, politically and socially powerful group subjugated and incorporated peoples, leaving both groups fundamentally changed.

Lowcountry Creoles were primarily the descendants of Africans who embarked slaving vessels in the Upper Guinea Coast and Kongo/Angola subregions in almost equal numbers. African captives disembarking in South Carolina and Georgia's coastal ports from the Kongo/Angola subregion were likely Atlantic Creoles. Whether they were captured in the interior or the coastal areas of Kongo, Angola or Mbundu, these Atlantic Creoles were likely bearers of culture influenced by centuries of warfare, political insecurity and interactions with Portuguese traders and Christianity. Captives embarking slaving vessels in the Upper Guinea Coast may have practised cultures and spoken languages which were also influenced by centuries of warfare, interaction among Atlantic, Kruan and Mande groups and political domination by the Mande. A fresh historical question is how the already creolized languages and cultures of enslaved people from two distinct Western African regions produced Lowcountry Creoles in the antebellum period and subsequently the Gullah Geechee in the mid-twentieth century.

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CHAPTER 10

COMMUNITIES OF AFRICAN DESCENT IN CANADA

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The earliest historical records of persons of African descent in Canada refer to a man who reportedly died in the settlement of Port-Royal (Nova Scotia) during the winter of 1606–1607 and to Mathieu Da Costa, who, in 1608 was contracted to work for Pierre Dugua de Mons as an interpreter between the French explorer-colonizers and the Mi'kmaq people during trading expeditions in Acadia (Johnston, n.d.; Johnston, 2001; Lescarbot, 1928; MacBeath, 2017; Trudel, 1960, 2017; Winks, 2000).[1] While there is some question as to whether Da Costa's contract is sufficient evidence of his North American sojourn, the fact that he acquired the language skills involved makes him an intriguing

1 According to *Historica Canada*, Da Costa entered into a contract to work with Dugua de Mons for three years and was 'paid a salary that was quite considerable' (http://blackhistorycanada.ca/events.php?id=21). According to George MacBeath, 'Dugua de Monts […] also known as Du Gua and de Mons', was an 'explorer, trader, governor of Acadia, and founder of Port-Royal, the first permanent settlement in Canada' (George MacBeath, 'Dugua De Monts Pierre (also known as Du Gua and de Mons)'. *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, Vol. 1. (University of Toronto/Université Laval, 2003). http://www.biographi.ca/en/bio/du_gua_de_monts_pierre_1E.html (Accessed 18 March 2017). A.J.B. Johnston, noting that more recent scholarship 'identifies the personage as Dugua de Mons', points out that Da Costa's contract was to last for three years starting in 1609 and that his 'annual salary was to be 60 crowns, about 195 *livres*, which was a significant amount' (Johnston, n.d., pp. 2, 19). See also Johnston (2001, p. 162) and Winks (2000, p. 1).

figure with a nonetheless largely elided place in the Canadian national narrative (Johnston, n.d.; Johnston, 2001; Pachai, 1987).[2]

There are similar silences on the role of slavery in the creation and definition of the early colonial spaces that would become Canada. However, according to the historical record, in 1628 a child was brought to Quebec from Madagascar or Guinea, possibly by British Commander David Kirke during the British invasion of New France (1628–1629). The *petit nègre* was sold at the age of 6 or 7 years for 50 *écus* to Le Baillif, a French clerk who had entered the service of the English. Before departing with the British in July 1632, when Quebec was restored to French control, Le Baillif gave the enslaved child to Guillaume Couillard de Lespinay, carpenter and seaman (Provost, 2017). In Couillard's household, the young African was taught catechism by the Jesuit priest Paul Le Jeune and in 1633, when he was baptized, he took the first name Olivier, from Olivier Letardif, the head clerk of the Compagnie des Cent-Associés, which controlled the colony and the surname of the priest (Trudel, 2017). As Robin W. Winks argues, Olivier Le Jeune, enslaved African, 'was neither the first slave nor the first Negro in New France, but he was the first of whom there is any adequate record' (Winks, 2000, p. 1). It is difficult to know exactly what Le Jeune's duties involved; however, his labour was possibly utilized in a variety of ways since Couillard had 10 children, at least 100 acres of land and a flour mill (Provost, 2017). It is not clear if Le Jeune remained enslaved until his death in 1654, when the burial register listed him as a *domestique*, nor whether his case was unique in the earliest period of European colonization.

In 1663, when New France was transferred from the Compagnie des Cent-Associés to royal control, the authorities looked to slavery as one means of increasing the necessary workforce to establish the colony. According to Winks, in 1677, Jean-Baptiste de Lagny, Sieur des Bringandières obtained royal permission to exploit the colony's resources and, in 1688, he approached Jacques-Réné de Brisay, the colony's governor, who, with the support of the colony's intendant, Jean Bochart de Champigny, appealed to the imperial authorities for the provision of enslaved African workers (Winks, 2000, p. 4).

2 Johnston outlines the archival evidence for the controversy over Da Costa's employment by French and Dutch traders, his contract to work for Dugua de Mons, signed in 1608, and Da Costa's imprisonment for 'insolences' in 1609. In his analysis of the 'possibilities and probabilities' regarding Da Costa, Johnston points to the long history of European-African contact, the role of African interpreters, the development of trade languages and the possibility of his transatlantic travel prior to the 1608 contract, thus exploring the possible means by which Da Costa acquired his skills. Johnston makes reference to scholarship by Hilary Russell, who 'summarizes the evolution of the published references to Da Costa in her unpublished manuscript, Looking for Mathieu da Costa, ms. on file, Parks Canada, Halifax' (Johnston, n.d.).

In the wake of the adoption of the 1685 *Code Noir* in the French colonies in the Caribbean, the said appeal reflected the hope that similar utilization of African labour would lead to profits for investors. Louis XIV assented to the appeal to support African slavery in New France on 1 May 1689 and reiterated this in 1701. While the upheavals of King William's War and the War of Spanish Succession affected international trade routes during this period, the institution of slavery continued to grow in the colony, leading the intendant Jacques Raudot to issue an ordinance on 13 April 1709 establishing that all enslaved Africans and Indigenous peoples who had been and who would be purchased 'shall be the property of those who have purchased them and will be their slaves' (Winks, 2000, p. 6). In 1716, the intendant Michel Bégon repeated the observation on the lack of labour and appealed for an expanded trade in enslaved Africans who could 'till the soil, fish for cod, saw timber, build ships, and exploit the iron mines' (Winks, 2000, p. 8).

Although the trade did not expand as quickly as the intendants wished, by 1736, the number of enslaved persons had risen to a level where regulation was deemed necessary: accordingly, the intendant Gilles Hocquart issued a new *ordonnance* establishing a uniform means of manumission (Winks, 2000, p. 6). According to Marcel Trudel, by 1759 there were at least 1,132 enslaved Africans in New France, concentrated mostly in Montreal and other towns where the majority worked as domestic servants for the merchant classes, administrative authorities, doctors, members of the military and clergy (Donovan, 1995; Riddell, 1920, 1923; Trudel, 1960; Winks, 2000, p. 9). The latter would have been among the enslavers who participated in the domestic slave trade, some of the transactions of which were evident in *Actes notariés* (Notarial Acts) filed in the Province of Quebec in the 1740s and 1750s (Riddell, 1923).[3] Among the enslaved in New France was Marie-Joseph Angélique, who belonged to the wife of François Poulin de Francheville and was accused of setting fire to her mistress's house in April 1734, thereby destroying a significant portion of Montreal. She was tried, humiliated, tortured and executed; her corpse was then burned and, according to Afua Cooper, her ashes were flung 'to the four winds' (Cooper, 2006, p. 22; Trudel, 1960). While there is some debate about whether

3 William R. Riddell discusses the sale of 'five Negro slaves, two men and three women and girls' sold by *la dame Cachelièvre* for 3,000 livres in 1743: Robert, aged 26 to 27 years , sold by Damelle Marie-Anne Guérin for 400 livres in 1748; Louison, 'a Negro woman […] about 17 years old', sold by Amable-Jean-Joseph Came for 1,000 livres in 1749; Jean Monsaige, sold by Jacques Damien *pour le servir en qualité d'esclave* in 1751; Nicholas, aged about 30 years, sold by Joseph de la Tesserie in 1757; and Pierre, aged about 18 years, sold for 1,192 livres in 1757.

Angélique started the fire or was wrongfully accused, the barbarity with which her body and spirit were broken was reminiscent of enslavement in many other contexts in the Americas (Beaugrand-Champagne, 2004).

In the mid-eighteenth century, as the enslavement of Africans was being extended to the rest of the Americas, the institution of slavery gained further support in Canada. Winks notes that, as the Seven Years' War – known as the French and Indian War – drew to a close, the French treaty of capitulation (1760) to the British included article 47, which 'affirmed that all slaves would remain the possession of their masters, that they might continue to be sold, and that they could be instructed in the Roman Catholic faith' (Winks, 2000, p. 24). With the formal end of the conflict and the Treaty of Paris (1763), France ceded its colonial claims in North America to Britain, and the said article further strengthened the institution of slavery. In this context, James Murray, the first British governor of Quebec, corresponding with persons in New York in 1763, declared that 'Black Slaves are certainly the only people to be depended upon' and that he would 'begrudge no price' in order to procure 'two Stout Young fellows, who have been accustomed to Country Business' along with 'a clean young wife' for each (Elgersman, 1999, p. 23; Riddell, 1919, p. 396; Winks, 2000, p. 26).

In addition to the Treaty of Paris, the Quebec Act of 1774 confirmed the rights of British citizens to their property, including the enslaved, and the Imperial Act (1790), which encouraged immigration and included the right to import 'Negroes, household furniture, utensils of husbandry or cloathing' [*sic*], further strengthened the institution of slavery (Winks, 2000, p. 26). In addition, free Black people were not included among those encouraged to immigrate and, according to Winks, '[a]ll white settlers over fourteen years old were to take an oath of allegiance' whereas 'children and Negroes, slave or free, were not expected to do so since they were unable to swear'. Therefore, the racialized hierarchy that animated the exclusion of persons of African descent from claims of citizenship was increasingly obvious (Winks, 2000, p. 26).

Eighteenth-century historical records show that there were Afrodescendants in the eastern portion of Canada. This included persons involved in the unsuccessful attempt by the French to repel the British conquest of Louisbourg in 1745 and settlers in Nova Scotia who came in response to offers of passage and provisions from the British Government. However, as was the case in Quebec, not all Afrodescendants in the Atlantic Provinces (Nova Scotia, Cape Breton Island, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland) were free settlers: in 1752, a 'negro servant' named Orange was mentioned in a will and, according to Winks, '[i]n 1768 alone, 2,217 Negro slaves valued at £77,595 sterling were

imported into the British provinces of North America, Newfoundland, Bahama, and Bermuda'. While most Afrodescendants probably went to the Bahamas and Bermuda, some remained in the Atlantic Provinces and others would be added to their ranks, including in the fisheries of Newfoundland (Fleming, 1953; Mackey, 2004; Riddell, 1919, 1920*a*, 1920*b*; Winks, 2000, pp. 26–28).[4]

According to James Walker, in 1775, when Britain and thirteen of her North American colonies went to war, 'attention in some British quarters turned towards the half-million slaves in American hands who could be recruited as invaluable allies within the enemy camp'. While there were some concerns about inciting rebellion among the enslaved in the thirteen 'rebel' colonies, when Lord Dunmore, the governor of Virginia, declared martial law, he also called for support from 'all indentured servants, negroes, or others' to join the imperial forces in order to restore order. Walker says that within a week of the publication of Dunmore's Proclamation, 'over 300 black men joined the Governor's "Ethiopian Regiment"', and when the governor met the rebels at Great Bridge on 9 December 1775, 'one half of Dunmore's troops consisted of runaway slaves'. Although Dunmore seems to have acted on his own authority, according to Walker, '[t]he inscription 'Liberty to Slaves', emblazoned across the chests of the Ethiopian Regiment, became a British slogan and *de facto* a British war policy' (Walker, 1976, pp. 1–2).

In an imperial context still deeply committed to the transatlantic trade in enslaved Africans and the system of slavery, abolitionist sentiments never prevailed in the British war strategy. While the policy was reissued in Sir Henry Clinton's 1779 Philipsburg Proclamation, which promised 'to every Negro who shall desert the Rebel Standard, full security to follow with these [British] Lines, any Occupation which he shall think proper', enslaved Africans belonging to British Loyalists were not offered their freedom in exchange for their services (Walker, 1976, p. 2). Nevertheless, the response to the Philipsburg Proclamation was significant: while it is unclear how many persons of African descent joined the British forces, estimates range up to 100,000, representing about 20 per cent of the Black population. Regardless of their number, argues Walker, 'the overriding motive of the escaped slaves, and one that was shared by free blacks who became Loyalists, was for security in their freedom' (Walker, 1976, p. 4). Whether as soldiers of the corps of Black Pioneers, cavalry troops, sailors in

4 From the 1750s to the 1770s, enslaved Africans were found in Liverpool, New Glasgow, Bridgetown, Amherst, Onslow, Cornwallis and Halifax. According to Winks, in 1788, there were reports of Black men working in the fisheries of Newfoundland.

the Royal Navy, skilled workers, general workers, guides or in a variety of other capacities, they contributed significantly to the war effort. In return, beginning in 1776, some African Americans were evacuated with British forces to Nova Scotia. However, others were sold back into slavery in North America or the Caribbean, as a reflection of the mentality of many in the British forces (Walker, 1976, pp. 3–6).

As the American Revolution progressed and the British defeat became apparent, the fate of the enslaved and free African Americans who had joined the British forces became a matter of great concern. The negotiated peace agreement sought, among other things, to prevent the unlawful 'carrying away [of] any Negroes or other Property of the American Inhabitants' from the United States of America. In response, the British issued guidelines which provided that Black people who were behind British lines before 30 November 1782 were free and could be evacuated with other British Loyalists; for others, petitions for their return by former enslavers were heard. In order to expedite the evacuation, the British commander-in-chief Sir Guy Carleton kept a record of all free Black people being removed so that compensation could be paid to legitimate American claimants. This "'Book of Negroes" listed a total of 3,000, inspected in New York between 26 April and 30 November 1783, bound for Nova Scotia'; it did not include those who preceded the roll or took other routes, or those who followed. By the end of the evacuation, more than ten per cent of the 30,000 Loyalists who migrated to Nova Scotia were free Black men, women and children (Walker, 1976, pp. 11–12). And they were not alone: along with the thousands of free 'Black Loyalists' were large numbers of enslaved African Americans who accompanied their Loyalist masters to British imperial locations, especially in Upper Canada (now Ontario) and the Atlantic Provinces.

While historians might debate whether these free or freed persons were Black Loyalists or enslaved African Americans who joined the British forces in pursuit of their freedom, it seems certain that their experiences in Nova Scotia were disappointing at best (Cahill, 1999; Walker, 1999). The main obstacle to their successful settlement was limited or no access to land. According to Walker, the land-granting policy sought to compensate those who had lost the most in the American Revolution, and the former large landholders were dealt with first. Therefore, 'few blacks received any land at all, and when they did it was in smaller quantities than promised, contained some of the province's worst soil, and was often located so far from major settlements that establishing

a viable farm upon it or even visiting it was extremely difficult' (Walker, 1976, p. 18).[5] Walker argues that

> [t]heir disappointment, and the discrimination with which they were met, indicated that they were not to be treated as equal citizens after all, and encouraged many of them to believe that they would have to look beyond the governor and his surveyors to complete their escape from slavery and to achieve the independence they sought (Walker, 1976, p. 32).

It is likely that the discrimination the Black Loyalists faced – although they were free – was related to their association with previous servitude and the fact that race-based slavery was still practised in the Atlantic Provinces. As mentioned previously, the British evacuation at the end of the war included enslaved African Americans: according to Walker, '[a]n estimated 1,232 slaves, often designated "servants" or "servants for life", were brought by Loyalists from the former American colonies' (Walker, 1976, p. 40). The extension of slavery to the provinces led to the growth of the domestic slave trade and increasingly harsh conditions, including cruel whippings and even murder; as a result, some enslaved persons attempted to escape their enslavement (Riddell, 1920; Winks, 2000, pp. 51, 53).[6]

Although the coexistence of enslaved and free Afrodescendants made it difficult to identify and control those who were enslaved, Nova Scotia displayed the characteristics of a slave society. The Black Loyalists were largely landless and often reduced to share-cropping or indentured servitude; suffering from inadequate government support (including rations), they were forced into competition in the labour market, were subjected to pervasive racism and prejudice – including an anti-Black race riot led by White soldiers at Shelburne in July 1784 – and faced the threat of being resold into slavery in the United States of America or the Caribbean. They were also denied the rights of citizenship, including trial by jury, the right to vote and equal treatment in the courts – which sometimes sentenced them to whipping akin to the punishment imposed on their enslaved brethren. Under these circumstances, many within the Black Loyalist communities began to look elsewhere for their promised land.

5 Resorting to petitions, delayed by years and repeatedly relocated, a small number of the Black Loyalists finally established Black settlements in Birchtown, Brindley Town and Little Tracadie (in the only lands granted directly to free Black people); others were concentrated in Preston and Halifax, while others, landless, were scattered in Lunenburg, Wilmot, Cornwallis, St. Margaret's Bay, Granville and Port L'Hebert.

6 Winks points to the multiple advertisements for runaways and argues that the enslaved were treated as property and 'continued to die young' (Winks, 2000, p. 53).

In 1791, the Sierra Leone Company was formed to regularize the effort to found a colony in West Africa which would provide a 'home' for the thousands of free Black people in Britain. Under the leadership of Thomas Peters, a Black Pioneer leader who had been made false promises of government support and land grants, more than 200 of the Black settlers in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick drew up a petition that outlined their dissatisfaction with their condition and sought a remedy. The petition made its way to the Secretary of State for the Home Department, Henry Dundas, who requested that the authorities in Nova Scotia address the situation and also suggested as an alternative that the settlers consider Sierra Leone as an asylum. After a flurry of meetings and negotiations, on 16 January 1792, a convoy of 15 vessels with more than 1,190 Black passengers left Halifax harbour for Sierra Leone (Walker, 1976). And they were not alone.

In the wake of the British conquest of Jamaica in 1655, the colonial forces found themselves at odds with formerly enslaved Africans who had escaped and formed Maroon communities in the mountains of the island. The guerilla war which ensued ended with a treaty signed in 1739 which provided the Maroons with land and some autonomy. However, in July-August 1795, the Trelawny Maroons and the colonial forces were once again at war: on this occasion, the Maroons were defeated and subjected to a disadvantageous treaty. In June-July 1796, this resulted in 549 Jamaican Maroon men, women and children being exiled to Nova Scotia (Hinds, 2001; Robinson, 1969). While there was some trepidation among Nova Scotian authorities regarding the deported Maroons, the concerns were initially allayed by the group's willingness to work on the fortifications at Citadel Hill in Halifax (known thereafter as the Maroon Bastion) and to settle in parts of Preston, which had been previously occupied by the departed Black Loyalists. By the end of 1796, however, disagreements between the provincial authorities and the Assembly of Jamaica with regard to financial support for the Maroons, the group's cultural practices and growing determination to leave Nova Scotia led to an array of confrontations, petitions and negotiations. Allister Hinds argues that for the next three years, as the costs related to their settlement mounted, the Maroons resisted the authorities' efforts to integrate them into the colony and, well aware of the possibility of removal from the inhospitable climate and poor land, instead seemed to make organized and calculated attempts to force the colonial authorities to send them to Sierra Leone (Hinds, 2001, pp. 214–215). As a result of the pressure from their petitions and activities, by August 1800, the authorities were convinced to facilitate the transportation of 551 Jamaican Maroons to Sierra Leone, where the latter joined the Black Loyalists who had already settled there. According to Hinds, their departure

> signalled the end of an experiment which failed […] not only because the Colonial Authorities in Jamaica and Nova Scotia were unable to reconcile their differences over the problems which emerged in the creation of the Maroon settlement, but also because the Maroons refused to adjust to living conditions in Nova Scotia (Hinds, 2001, p. 219; Lockett, 1999; Picart, 1996).

The Atlantic Provinces emerged as a preferred destination for Black settlement in the late eighteenth century, and that trend would continue in the nineteenth century. According to Harvey Amani Whitfield, during the War of 1812, which pitted the British against their former colonies (the United States of America), some African Americans joined the British forces and were active in the Colonial Marines as soldiers, spies, messengers and guides (Whitfield, 2002). In 1814, as the war drew to a close, Vice-Admiral Sir Alexander Cochrane issued a proclamation offering all residents of the United States of America who would join the British side a choice of military positions or transportation to a British colony – in the same way as the British had done during the American Revolution. While the offer was not restricted to enslaved African Americans, 3,500–3,600 joined the British lines and, according to Whitfield, 'by the end of 1818 approximately 2,000 had landed in Nova Scotia', while 400–500 went to New Brunswick (Spray, 1977; Whitfield, 2002, p. 33; Winks, 2000, pp. 114–141). In the wake of this mass migration, the American Government demanded the return of the formerly enslaved Americans or payment for their freedom: after a great deal of negotiation, in 1827, the British Government paid US$1,204,960 for the enslaved African Americans removed during and after the war (Winks, 2000).

This wave of African American immigrants was labelled the 'Black Refugees', perhaps to distinguish them from the remaining Black Loyalists. They faced a Nova Scotia Assembly convinced that the province would not benefit from the arrival of 'a separate and marked class of people, unfitted by Nature to this Climate, or to an association with the rest of His Majesty's Colonists', as well as material destitution and an outbreak of smallpox (Winks, 2000, pp. 116–117). The changing policies to deal with the group included plans to settle them as small farmers; however, as had been the case with previous groups, the plots were too small, the soil was unproductive and their settlements faltered. Winks attributed the dire circumstances of the Black Refugees to their enslaved origins in the American South, their competition with White immigrants for employment, a series of natural disasters, their restricted access to land, their lack of leadership and attempts by White colonizers to manipulate them (Winks, 2000, pp. 114, 124–128). Whitfield challenges this interpretation and notes that there is evidence of the emergence of 'black self-assertion and agency', even in

the archives of the colonial elite, and points to 'a group determined to make a place for themselves in colonial society' (Whitfield, 2002, pp. 31, 49).

The society in which the Black Refugees, Black Loyalists and Jamaican Maroons sought to find a place for themselves embraced slavery; however, by the end of the eighteenth century, the institution was under some pressure. According to Riddell and Winks, the main sources of pressure included the actions of members of the judiciary: in Nova Scotia, the courts often frustrated attempts by enslavers to recover runaways; in New Brunswick, a divided court led to confusion about the rights of enslavers and a growing preference for indentureship. Indentureship was also increasingly preferred in Prince Edward Island (formerly Isle St Jean) and Cape Breton, while in Lower Canada (now Quebec), attempts to pass an abolition act were defeated, even though the courts leaned towards the enslaved whose cases were heard.

In Upper Canada however, a limited, gradual abolition was implemented in response to the case of Chloe Cooley, a so-called 'Negro Wench' who came to the attention of the authorities when she loudly resisted the actions of her enslaver, Mr Vrooman, to sell her to an enslaver in the United States of America. When Vrooman was prosecuted, not for selling Cooley – which he had the right to do – but for 'violent breaches of the Public Peace', the charges against him were dropped; however, in May 1793, the Act to Prevent the further Introduction of Slaves and to limit the Term of Contracts for Servitude,[7] also known as the Act to Limit Slavery in Upper Canada, was adopted unanimously. Winks notes, importantly, that 'Upper Canada's act to abolish slavery freed not one slave', since those who were enslaved were not freed; children born to enslaved mothers would thenceforth become apprentices until the age of 25 years, and any children born to these apprentices were to be born free (Winks, 2000, p. 97). The population of enslaved persons in the provinces would be freed only by the British Emancipation Act of 1833, which was enacted on 1 August 1834.

These developments in abolition and emancipation had an impact on African Americans. In 1793, the same year in which Upper Canada adopted its Act to Limit Slavery in Upper Canada, the Congress of the United States adopted the Fugitive Slave Act, which endorsed the rights of slaveholders to recover enslaved persons who had escaped their bondage. When Upper Canada's limited freedom for enslaved persons was expanded by the British Emancipation Act, the British provinces became even more attractive as a destination for the enslaved in the

7 Statutes of Upper Canada, 33 George III, Cap. 7.

United States of America. Furthermore, in 1850, the Congress of the United States adopted the second Fugitive Slave Act, which strengthened the previous Act and required authorities and individuals in the 'free states' to cooperate with the law, thereby placing 'fugitives' in a tenuous position, including in northern states; crossing the border into Canada thus became increasingly attractive.

It is estimated that between 1815 and 1860, some 50,000 enslaved African Americans escaped their bondage and went to Canada, mostly to south-western Upper Canada (St. Catharines, Windsor, Amherstburg, London, Chatham, Dresden, Toronto, Oro), where they also established some Black communities, such as Dawn, Wilberforce and Elgin/Buxton (Meyler, 2001; Prince, 2012; Shadd, 1994; Silverman, 1984; Smardz Frost, 2008; Tobin and Jones, 2007; Ulman, 1969; Winks, 2000, pp. 142–177, 187–232). The routes of escape varied, and the majority of those who escaped relied on their own ingenuity and on assistance from their community, as well as from some White allies, to escape their enslavers; in the 1830s, the network which facilitated the escapes was referred to as the 'Underground Railroad', an allusion to the railroad systems that were being built in the United States of America.

Initially, the flow of 'fugitives' into Canada was greeted relatively positively: they were a potential source of (cheap) labour and their choice of residence indicated Canada's alleged moral superiority over the United States. However, according to Winks, by the end of the 1830s, many White Canadians were concerned about the level of Black migration and, in the 1840s and 1850s, Black immigrants were distinctly unwelcome in many areas (Winks, 2000). By the 1850s, some Black individuals and communities complained that the level of prejudice in Canada equalled that in the United States; Reverend William King, who founded the Elgin settlement, said that they were unable to 'roll back the prejudice against them' (Drew, 1856; Winks, 2000, p. 144). Notwithstanding the fact that some Black people served in the provincial militias, that the Coloured Corps supported the Government in the Rebellions of 1837-1838, and that many commented on their loyalty, the Black community was increasingly 'the object of growing prejudice' (Winks, 2000, pp. 151, 148).[8] Perhaps not surprisingly then, when the American Civil War started, tens of thousands of 'fugitives' returned to the United States to fight in the war, to find their families and to avail themselves of the sorts

8 According to Winks, when the rebellion in Upper Canada was launched in 1837, 'nearly a thousand Negroes volunteered for service within the month'. There were rebellions against the crown and political authorities in Upper and Lower Canada; the uprisings were put down but resulted in loss of life and the unification of the Canadas.

of opportunities that some believed were not possible in Canada. After the Civil War, some 'fugitive' descendant Black Canadians moved to the United States in search of better educational and employment opportunities.

For those who remained in Canada, while there was no systematic, codified legal segregation, some African Canadians in Canada West (formerly Upper Canada, later Ontario) and Nova Scotia experienced legally segregated schools but, for the most part, encounters with racism were individualized or localized (McLaren, 2008). While they experienced prejudice, in some places, Black individuals had rights of citizenship; in others, however, theatres and hotels were segregated, Black people were not allowed to run for public office, sit on juries or have business licenses, and some churches banned the burial of Black believers in church-owned cemeteries (Winks, 2000, pp. 288–336). Since the experiences were very uneven and racism lay just beneath the veneer of tolerance, it was difficult for Black communities in Canada to generate a sustained anti-racist movement. Many believed that their experiences were unique and personal, others believed that compared to their colleagues in the United States of America they had little cause for complaint, and others made enough personal and familial progress to eschew anything that would rock the proverbial boat. However, perhaps because of the growing segregation and racism that they faced, many African Canadian communities became self-reliant. Where they were excluded from churches and schools, they built their own; since the important events in their communities were ignored by the local and national newspapers, they created their own (Brown-Kubisch, 2004; Clairmont and Magill, 1999; Fingard, 1992, 1995; Hill, 1963). However, as separate and separated communities with differing self-identifications, they developed few links among themselves; the larger White community might have viewed and treated them as a single group defined and proscribed by their racial heritage, but they envisioned themselves and operated as several distinct groups/diasporas, each with its (competing) agenda.

In addition to the communities of African descent that were established in the Atlantic Provinces, Canada West and Quebec, a Black presence also developed on Vancouver Island in British Columbia. The majority of the estimated 400 families who settled on the Pacific coast in the 1850s were free, skilled and financially independent former residents of California, where African Americans were increasingly barred from enjoying the full rights of citizenship and faced increasing segregation (Winks, 2000). The immigrants were warmly welcomed by Governor James Douglas (an Afrodescendant born in British Guiana), the local newspaper and clergy; they were represented by spokespersons such as Mifflin Wistar Gibbs, a successful businessman; and their relatively small number initially raised fewer of the concerns that the larger groups in Nova Scotia and Canada West caused

among White Canadians. Nevertheless, members of the community experienced prejudice: when they volunteered to serve with the fire brigade, they were rejected; their military group (the Victoria Pioneer Rifle Corps) was segregated and so was the worship in the Congregational Church on Vancouver Island and the theatre in Victoria; they were attacked by the editor of *The British Colonist* for apparently not supporting his bid to become Attorney General; and they were excluded from jury duty, the Victoria Literary Institute and the temperance society (Howay, 1939; Kilian, 1978; Winks, 2000). By the late 1860s, Black settlers in the West were receiving a very poor welcome in Canada.

For other groups, the story was similar. Among African Americans anxious to escape the Black Codes, various vagrancy laws, economic exploitation and erosion of the rights of citizenship through legalized disenfranchisement, fraud and terrorism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, some looked to Canada for possible relief. According to Elizabeth Beaton, among the migrants were 'several hundred African-American skilled furnace men' who were recruited to work in the steel enterprises in Cape Breton between 1901 and 1904. They soon found that their work and personal lives were affected by 'the realities of racial and paternalistic attitudes': they were routinely placed to work in the blast furnace ostensibly because 'black people could better stand the heat of the blast furnaces', and they were housed in company shacks, some of which were 'exceedingly filthy', had no sewerage or water connection, had poor ventilation and were poorly – if at all – heated. Attacked in the local newspapers and generally portrayed as undesirable, after a strike in 1904, the community drifted away to other provinces or back to the United States of America, 'penniless, destitute and disappointed' (Beaton, 1995, pp. 67–93).

Similarly, those African Americans – many of whom were from Oklahoma – who responded to the Canadian Government's promotion of immigration to western Canada and who migrated to Alberta and Saskatchewan soon realized that the recruitment campaign was not meant for them. According to Stewart Grow and R. Bruce Shepard, the African American migrants encountered attitudinal and administrative barriers (Grow, 1974; Shepard, 1991). When a group of 200 African Americans sought admission to Manitoba in March 1911, the group's members were submitted to rigorous examinations regarding their health and financial and moral standing. When all passed and were admitted, some White Canadian citizens (especially in Edmonton and Winnipeg) protested and parts of the press argued for a ban on Black immigration to prevent 'the Negro question' and race riots (Winks, 2000, p. 308).

By 1912, the movement for exclusion had spread: the Great Northern Railway sent notices to its employees advising them that potential Black immigrants would not be admitted to Canada. In the same year, W. D. Scott, Superintendent of Immigration, dispelled any doubts among African Americans by publicly asking them 'not to come to western Canada since opportunities for them were better in a warmer climate' (Winks, 2000, p. 312). With the start of the Great War, the Canadian Government took the opportunity to prohibit entry 'to any nationality or race […] deemed unsuitable having regard to the climatic, industrial, social, educational, labour or other conditions […] [or] because of their probable inability to become readily assimilated' (Shepard, 1997; Winks, 2000, p. 31). Although persons of African descent had lived in – and made their contributions to – Canada for centuries, the exclusionary intentions of the Canadian authorities were clear: Afrodescendants' alleged 'unsuitability' for the climate and society were regularly used as excuses for their extremely low rates of admission to the country.

Given the racial atmosphere in Canada, it should not be surprising that, during the First World War, very few persons of African descent were accepted for military service, White soldiers refused to serve with them and there was a desire for segregated units, although no White officer wanted to give such a command. In 1916, confronted by the possibility of recruiting African Canadians, Major-General W.G. Gwatkin, Chief of General Staff, claimed that '[t]he civilized negro is vain and imitative […] he is not impelled to enlist by a high sense of duty; in the trenches he is not likely to make a good fighter; and the average white man will not associate with him on terms of equality', therefore, there was 'no place for a black battalion' (Winks, 2000, p. 317). Instead, the No. 2 (Negro) Construction Battalion, with White officers, was authorized in July 1916. In France, African Canadians laboured on behalf of a nation that promptly forgot their contribution and, in some instances, greeted them with hostility. With these racial attitudes in place, perhaps it was not surprising that in the 1920s, Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, British Columbia and Ontario witnessed the rise and popularity of the Ku Klux Klan; although its public visibility declined, the Klan's sentiments would remain in place among many Canadians (Henson, 1977). This was the context in which immigrants from the Caribbean, mainly of African descent, arrived.

During the nineteenth century, small numbers of Caribbean men were recruited to work on the ships that plied many of the country's harbours. In the early twentieth century, according to Agnes Calliste, some Caribbean men were recruited to work in the steel mills in Nova Scotia where, '[d]espite their skills,

most of them were restricted to jobs in the Sydney mines and the steel plant's coke ovens because of the segregated workforce and the myth that blacks could withstand the heat better than whites' (Calliste, 1993–1994, p. 135). Women from the Caribbean were also sought to occupy places in the labour force: between 1910 and 1911, 100 women from Guadeloupe were recruited to work in Quebec as domestic servants (Calliste, 1993–1994, pp. 140–141).[9] Despite general satisfaction with their work, fear of a growing Black presence foreshadowed by permanently resident Black women caused Government officials to require their departure once their contracts were completed. In 1955, Caribbean women would, once again, be targeted as domestic workers through the West Indian Domestic Scheme, which was popular because, according to Linda Carty, it was clear that 'recruiting in the Caribbean would be cheaper owing to its relative proximity to Canada, thus resulting in minimal administrative costs' and that 'wages would be lower than those paid to white workers' (Carty, 1994, p. 218). By 1965, a total of 2,690 Caribbean women had been admitted under the scheme – more than all the Caribbean immigrants who had come to Canada before 1945 – and since it was one of the few means by which Caribbean people could migrate to Canada, during the 1960s and 1970s, many nurses, teachers, secretaries, clerks and trained service workers used this avenue for the prospect of personal and familial improvement (Bakan and Stasiulis 1997; Calliste, 1996; Giles and Arat-Koç, 1994; Henry, 1987; Johnson, 2012; Macklin, 1994; Silvera, 1989; Walker, 1984). Both domestic schemes, especially the second scheme, allowed for an influx of African-Caribbean women and their families to reinvent the cities where they tended to congregate; however, the labour scheme also reinforced the association between Blackness and servitude that had previously existed in Canadian society.

In addition to the women who were recruited for domestic service, another labour scheme – which started in Jamaica in 1966 and was extended to the rest of the Caribbean in 1974 – recruited temporary farm workers, thus bringing an additional Caribbean presence, comprising primarily Black men. They worked – and continue to work – on farms in Alberta, Quebec, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Ontario (accounting

9 According to Calliste, 'they were in great demand as domestics since few Canadians were attracted to this work; indeed, most Canadians left such work as soon as possible because of the deplorable working conditions – low pay, long hours, hard labour, low status, isolation, and lack of independence and respect. Unlike European women, most Caribbean women remained in domestic service since other areas of employment were closed to them […] most employers expressed satisfaction with their employees because they were cheap, intelligent, industrious, devoted, fond of children, docile, polite, submissive, and, unlike some domestics, "they knew their place"' (Calliste, 1993/1994, p. 141).

for ninety per cent of those recruited) but were not – and are still not – legally allowed to stay in the country beyond their annual contracts. In addition, there were Caribbean students who had started to arrive on temporary permits in the 1920s; their number increased after the Second World War and by the 1960s was significant. They were largely blamed for the eruption of student radicalism and alleged Black Power sentiment at Sir George Williams University in 1969 (Eber, 1969; Forsythe, 1971) and, as a result, 'Afro-Caribbeans' were increasingly viewed as a potential source of disruption. More recently, the label of 'problematic Black communities' (who are read to be of Caribbean, particularly Jamaican, origin) has gained prominence with the apparent growth in gang activity and intracommunity violence. While the crime rate in Canada is relatively low and steadily declining and the majority of crimes are committed by the majority White population, the racialized spectre of 'young Black men with guns' has led to an eruption of rhetoric and policies aimed at nullifying what many (White) Canadians believe to be 'naturally' aggressive and disruptive tendencies among Black people (Backhouse, 1999; Chan, 2004; Foster, 1996; Rowe, 2008; Thornhill, 2008).

In addition to the Caribbean community, since the 1960s, there has been a growing wave of migrants from 'continental Africa'. Between 1946 and 1960, Africans represented only 0.3 per cent of the immigrants to Canada; between 1960 and 1980, on account of the changes in immigration policy discussed below, that proportion rose to 1 to 2 per cent of the country's immigrants. The majority of migrants are from South Africa, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Kenya, Ghana, Uganda and Nigeria. They have been joined by a number of refugees fleeing from natural disasters and conflicts in Ethiopia, the former Biafra/Nigeria, Sudan, Somalia and Rwanda; however, large numbers of Africans who might be considered refugees are unable to make Canada their home since, the authorities argue, they do not meet the United Nations' definition of the term 'refugee'. In the last few decades, the situation of communities of African descent has become even more complex with the migration of Afro-Latin Americans from every country in the region. Perceived as fulfilling neither the racial expectation of 'Latinos' nor the linguistic expectations of 'Blackness', most of these Spanish- and Portuguese-speaking persons of African descent are trying to find their place and are creating communities in Canada.

The very existence of the many communities of African descent in Canada is remarkable. According to Joseph Mensah,

> [h]istorically, Canadian immigration policy has been racist, to put it bluntly (…) The conventional wisdom in pre-1960s Canada was that Blacks, in particular, were so physically, mentally and morally inferior to Whites that the influx of Blacks would inevitably create racial problems in this country (Mensah, 2010, p. 69).

From the prohibitive Immigration Act of 1906 to Robert Borden's declaration in 1908 that the Conservative Party (which would become the government in 1911) 'stands for a white Canada', to the Immigration Act of 1910, the sentiment was clear (Walker, 1984, p. 9). The latter Act, described as 'restricted, exclusive, and selective', prohibited the entry of immigrants who belonged to 'any race deemed unsuitable to the climate or requirements of Canada, or of immigrants of any specified class, occupation or character' and was implemented by 'exclusion officers' (Calliste, 1993–1994; Winks, 2000, p. 307). This general sentiment was repeated by Canadian Prime Minister Mackenzie King, who declared in 1947 that the people of Canada did 'not wish, as a result of mass immigration, to make a fundamental alteration in the character of [their] population' (Winks, 2000, p. 435). Not surprisingly then, the Immigration Act of 1952 allowed for the exclusion of persons 'for reasons of nationality, citizenship, ethnic group and geographical area of origin' (Walker, 1984, p. 10). It was only in 1962 that Canada formally ended the preferential treatment of prospective white immigrants and began to emphasize educational achievement and professional skills as a basis for (selective) immigration.

This resulted in a significant increase in the migration of Afrodescendants, which was even more marked after 1967 as a result of a change in the immigration policy to the 'points system' which calculated – and continues to calculate – the eligibility of potential immigrants according to optimal working age, educational achievement and occupational experience. According to some scholars, the policy change highlighted the fact that Afrodescendant migrants constituted the most educated and highly skilled of any immigrant group (Macionis, 1999; Mensah, 2010). However, despite their qualifications and despite Canada's claims of tolerance and progressivism, persons of African descent in Canada often experience anti-Black racism and discrimination that create difficulties in finding decent housing or jobs at their levels of qualification and result in their being treated with suspicion and hostility by significant segments of Canadian society. Indeed, few Black people would argue with Cecil Foster's description of Canadian racism, as 'racism with a smile on its face' (Foster, 1996, p. 14).

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CHAPTER 11

AFRICAN-MEXICAN COMMUNITIES

Excluded from the Mexican Nation

Paulette A. Ramsay

In the first years of the twenty-first century, almost five hundred years after the conquest, it is surprising that Mexicans as well as foreigners are still shocked on discovering the black presence in Mexico.

Ben Vinson III and Bobby Vaughn, *Afroméxico*

For Afro-Mexicans, descendants of enslaved Africans brought into New Spain during the first three centuries of colonial rule, recognition and acceptance have been delayed, due to their reduced and scattered presence among more than sixty different "indigenous" groups, but primarily the result of Mexico's self-avowed mestizo *credentials.*

Father Glyn Jemmott Nelson

Introduction

The last three decades have witnessed a quiet and slow rewriting and re-versioning of Mexican historiography, mainly by scholars from the Caribbean, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. This has been less evident within Mexico itself, where only a few anthropologists and historians have begun to revisit Mexican historical discourse, which has been largely silent

about African-Mexican communities for a long time. Historians such as George Reid Andrews and Patrick J. Carroll have asserted that as a result of Mexico's undeniable participation in the trade in African people and the plantation enterprise, a significant number of descendants of Africans may be found in Mexico, despite their extreme marginalization and invisibility and Mexico's silence about their existence. Indeed,

> many Mexicans have embraced notions of national identity originally defended by Mexican educator and politician José Vasconcelos Calderón, along with Mexico's elites, which posit that the Mexican nation is mestizo because descendants of blacks have completely disappeared due to racial mixing (Ramsay, 2016, p. 28).

This chapter outlines a history of the contradictory nature of the African presence in Mexico: its submersion and visibility; the half-hearted and self-defeating efforts of successive governments to respond to it while balancing international pressure with internal political interests; and above all, the ways in which African-Mexicans and Afro-Mexican culture have impressed themselves on the political and cultural landscape, both through acts of political resistance and self-fashioning and through the preservation of African culture in Mexico.

Certainly, several of the communities of African ancestry dispersed across different regions are obvious products of racial mixing – mainly indigenous and black. These include groups in the northern states of Yucatán and Quintana Roo, who are mainly descendants of Maroons and free blacks from the United States of America (Muhammad, 1995, p. 170). However, the largest and most clearly defined group of blacks is to be found among the forty small communities on the Costa Chica and Costa Grande of Oaxaca and Guerrero respectively, on the Pacific Coast. In the state of Guerrero these communities include: Cuajinicuilapa, El Pitarroso, San Nicolás, Montecillos, Punta Maldonado, Buenos Aires, Alto de Barranas, Cerro del Indio, Banco de Oro, El Tamarindo, El Tamaic, El Jícaro, El Vaivén, El Quizá, Cerro de las Tablas, Ometepec, El Capricho, Vista Hermosa, Huehuetán and Juchitán. Among the villages in Oaxaca are Collantes, Morelos, La Boquilla, El Chivo, Cerro de la Esperanza, Santo Domingo, Santiago Tapextla, San Juan Bautista Lo De Soto, Santa Maria Cortijo, La Estancia, La Culebra, Rancho Nuevo, El Callejón, Lagunillas, El Ciruelo, Rio Grande, Santa Rosa, Cerro Hermoso (Ramsay, 2016, p. 18).

While the mixed heritage of people in many of these communities is undeniable, there are many persons in villages such as Santo Domingo, Collantes, El Ciruelo and Tapextla who can safely be regarded as 'fully' Afro-Mexican. Father Glyn Jemmott Nelson describes the African demographic as follows:

Among the villages with a more than eighty per cent Afro-Mexican population are El Ciruelo, Estancia Grande, Rancho Nuevo, Santa María Cortijos and Santiago Llano Grande, El Maguey, San Juan Bautista de Soto, Corralero, Collantes and Lagunillas. Others, with a significant, though not majority black population are Pinotepa Nacional, Santa Rosa, Río Grande and Santa María Huazolotitlán.

(Interview with Paulette Ramsay, Port of Spain, Trinidad, 15 April 2014)

Despite this significant Afrodescendent population, the majority of Mexicans neither know of these communities nor realize that the myth of the complete disappearance of blacks in Mexico has long been refuted. Indeed, such is the level of ignorance about Mexico's racial heterogeneity that exists at different levels of Mexican society that African Mexicans are often treated as foreigners and even illegal immigrants. Quite often they report that while travelling outside of their communities they are routinely stopped by the police and accused of being undocumented aliens from Cuba or Central America. They often endure long stares and even touching of their hair by curious fellow Mexicans. That unfamiliarity comes in part because Mexico's black population, often to escape persecution and discrimination, historically never moved in large numbers to big cities and have kept largely to themselves in scattered communities in three southern states – Oaxaca and Guerrero, the two mentioned above, and Veracruz (Archibold, 2014).

"They say we are ugly and have donkey skin", I was told by a young girl on one of my visits, as she tried to explain her reluctance to leave and socialize outside of her small village of Tapextla, showing how painfully aware she is of her outsider position in her own country. Clarence Page wrote in 2005 of a distressed cattle farmer, who complained that "people ask us where we are from" (Page, 2005).

Afro-Mexicans/African-Mexicans

The small number of Mexican scholars who have written about the presence of Afrodescendent people in Mexico insist on referring to them as *Afro-mestizo*. This is a term which clearly signals resistance to any real consideration or acceptance of the true Africanness of the communities. Tellingly, Ben Vinson and Bobby Vaughn assert that

Mexico is the only Latin American country where some scholars still refer to black people as *Afro-mestizo*. Although this term would seem to identify a special characteristic of the Mexican "mixing" in the Costa Chica, individuals recognized

> today as blacks do not show more particularities of "mixing" than the rest of the black of the African diaspora. In fact, the tonalities of the skin colour as well as a wide range of phenotypes are the norm amongst African descendants. Therefore, Mexico is not the exception (Vinson III and Vaughn, 2004, p. 257).

In this discussion the terms Afro-Mexican and African-Mexican are used interchangeably, as a counter to *Afro-mestizo*, which seeks to advance Mexico's *mestizo* identity by suggesting that individuals may have black blood, but still do not constitute a separate ethnic Afrodescendent group. *Afro-mestizo* represents a 'watering down' of the fact that these groups of persons have survived and have not been made more 'Indigenous' than 'Black' due to miscegenation, as official Mexican discourse holds. As an ideological signifier, this term operates within the framework of *Indigenismo,* the political agenda of favouring indigenous groups in Latin America. In Mexico, as David Carrasco (2001) has argued, official policies and ideologies work to emphasize the importance of Mexico's heritage, even though the policies were intended to improve the conditions of impoverished people. In fact, it has been said that while 'Indigenous groups have received national as well as international attention and support, Afro-Mexican voices have largely gone unheard' (Muhammad, 1995, p. 178).

Historical beginnings

Blacks have inhabited Mexico since the 1500s. The highly celebrated Mexican anthropologist Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán established in his book *La población negra de México 1519–1810* (1946) that the importation of blacks into Mexico began with Hernán Cortés in 1519, and Juan Cortés was the first African slave brought into Mexico by Hernán Cortés. Patrick Carroll later corroborated the long presence of blacks in Mexico in his assertion that 'they participated in virtually every major thrust into the colony' (Carroll, 2001, p. 26). As was the case in other Spanish-occupied territories, the large-scale importation of Africans was directly related to the decimation of the indigenous groups under the pressure of unaccustomed forced labour. The Spaniards' economic pursuits were being seriously compromised and so, after Bartolomé de Las Casas declared in 1511 that Africans were needed to 'replace the *indio* who was being exterminated at an alarming rate of four million within the first twelve years of the conquest' (Muhammad, 1995, p. 164), an alternative source of slave labour was sought, and Africans were seen as the natural choice.

Blacks had come to be regarded as being stronger than 'Indians', able to endure the rigours of the mines and sugar plantations. They were imported into Mexico through the ports of Veracruz, Campeche and Acapulco and taken across the territory to work in the silver mines in places such as Taxco and Zacatecas, and on sugar plantations in Morelos and the Orizaba valley as well as in other enterprises in Puebla and Michoacán. It has been established that more than 15,000 Africans were imported into Mexico between 1530 and 1550, and more than 900 were imported after 1570 to work in Taxco in the silver mines. Overall, Mexico was reputed to have imported the largest number of African slaves, and according to Muhammad, 'Mexico was the most successful economy in colonial Spanish America because of black labour' (Muhammad, 1995, p. 178).

Colonial Mexico: stereotypes, African-Mexicans and the shaping of the Mexican nation

The European population made it clear that they held very negative views of Africans and their descendants who were taken to work for them in Mexico. Several terms were coined to characterize blacks and convey this negative perception of them. Among these disparaging phrases were: *gente sin razón* (senseless people), *gente de mala sangre* (mongrels, people with bad blood) and *mala raza* (evil race). In other words, blacks in Mexico did not escape the long-standing assertions made about blacks in the slave-holding European world to justify the enterprise of slavery (Sanders, 1969, p. 522). Obviously, this suspicion of blacks and their perceived natural propensity to evil influenced the decision to deny them religious freedom, or any freedom to practise their African customs and traditions, all of which were categorized and rejected as witchcraft and sorcery. Blacks were not allowed to express their feelings or opinions about the treatment they received or their lack of any right to live as they wished. The extremely harsh punishments that were meted out to any enslaved African who attempted to protest, even verbally, against his or her masters, have been well documented (Martínez Montiel, 1992, p. 452).

The brutality of the system of forced labour resulted in repeated efforts by blacks to defy the oppressive system in the mines and on the sugar plantations. Escape, or marronage, was an endemic strategy of defiance. In 1609, a Maroon warrior named Gaspar Yanga, or Nyanga, who led other slaves in flight from the plantations, established the first *palenque* or Maroon community in Mexico and the Americas. Yanga and his fellow Maroons led a determined opposition,

fighting for self-government and the right to own land. After tough negotiations with the representatives of the Crown, he obtained land rights and privileges for the first Maroon town, San Lorenzo de los Negros in Veracruz, later renamed Yanga after its founder (Martínez Montiel, 1992, p. 542). The nature of the negotiations and the continuing relationship with the colonial authorities is instructive. Maroons in Yanga collaborated with the Spanish for the recapture and return of captives. The town was granted full militia status, not because the Spanish wanted this, but because they depended on the Maroons' knowledge of the fortresses and hideouts of runaways and their ability to manage the terrain to help recapture them. This agreement was also made in the expectation that as a result, Maroons would be 'helped' to return to the plantations and become 'obliging citizens' (Vinson III, 2001, p. 22).

The Afro-Mexican population of Yanga, unlike those of several similar Maroon communities in Latin America, has almost completely 'disappeared' due to racial mixing. The town of Yanga today does not have the distinctive features of an Afro-Mexican community that are immediately visible in some of the other Maroon communities such as San Basilio de Palenque in Colombia. Such features include African-derived continuities in language, folklore, festivities, religion and kinship patterns, as noted by Father Glyn Jemmott Nelson (quoted elsewhere in this chapter). Several researchers into this period of Mexican history observe that the extensive racial mixing and the departure from African cultural practices in Yanga are the result of the collaboration with colonial powers on which the community's 'security' was founded. Muhammad is among those researchers who see this factor as the reason Yanga became 'racially and ethnically indistinguishable from other settlements that dotted the area, after a few generations' (Muhammad, 1995, p. 166). In other words, collaboration became a means of destroying the African genealogical line and culture, an effect much broader and more far-reaching than the aim of stemming their flight from the plantations.

The miscegenation that led to this erasure carries its own irony, as *Afro-mestizo* inadvertently points to the African presence in Mexico's roots and national genealogy. Whether one sees the Yanga strategy as collusion or the success of the Spaniards' divide-and-rule strategy, it is clear that this negotiation of survival space produced results that were at best ambivalent, both for the Yanga community and for mainstream Mexico's narrative of national identity throughout most of the country's history.

Despite the success of the Spanish in convincing the blacks of Yanga to collude in their agenda, blacks in other parts of Mexico did not relent in rejecting and rebelling

against the oppression to which they were constantly subjected. It was their resentment and refusal to participate in their own exploitation that propelled them to join in the fight for equality pursued by other proponents of the War of Independence. George Andrews records that when the Hidalgo Revolt of 1810 spread to the plantations of Veracruz, blacks fled from the plantations and joined the rebels fighting against colonial rule (Andrews, 2004, p. 58). The role of Afro-Mexicans in the shaping of the Mexican nation is marked by their participation in the War of Independence, which freed the country from oppressive Spanish colonial rule. They were willing to be part of that rebellion since they viewed it as a way of bringing slavery to an end and becoming part of an independent nation. They envisioned themselves as part of an inclusive polity.

The two most famous black fighters were Vicente Guerrero – popularly known as El Negro Guerrero – who later became President of Mexico, and José María Morelos, who became a general in the War of Independence. Slavery was officially abolished in Mexico in 1829 during Guerrero's presidency. The states of Guerrero and Morelia were renamed in honour of these two black Mexicans. Today, they are probably celebrated more for their role as fighters in the war, with less emphasis being given to their origins and racial composition.

Despite the elevation of Guerrero and Morelos as symbolic heroes, participation in the liberation movement did not accrue many benefits to blacks. Their socio-economic status remained the same as they were unable to find employment, lacked the means to support themselves and could not protect themselves from continuing discrimination. They soon discovered that the caste laws previously established to keep them subjected were still being used to continue to subjugate them. Many returned to the sure prospect of a meal on the plantations and others resorted to 'vagrancy' and itinerant lifestyles.

Afro-Mexican communities today: Indices of underdevelopment and exclusion

Afro-Mexican communities lack many basic amenities and facilities. Even a short visit to the many small African-Mexican communities of the Costa Chica reveals the level of neglect encountered by the people. Essential services such as health centres and hospitals lack adequate medication, equipment and medical personnel. The education system is woefully inadequate as schools are not properly staffed or equipped. It could be said that not very much has been done to improve the impoverished conditions in which Afro-Mexicans have

lived since the 1950s, when Aguirre Beltrán wrote about the absence of medical facilities and schools in the region.

Since the 1980s, the activism of Father Glyn Jemmott Nelson and a few other members of the society has resulted in some improvements, but the conditions remain unacceptable, with many communities still having no access to drinking water, paved roads or safe and adequate housing. Perhaps the most deplorable aspect of their living conditions is housing. The majority of houses are constructed from fragile and improvised materials available in the immediate natural surroundings, mainly wood, sticks, mud, *palapa* thatch and palm leaves. Most are dilapidated, unmistakably unsafe and vulnerable in an area subject to frequent hurricanes. This is even more disconcerting when issues of human dignity and comfort are considered.

One member of the African-Mexican community, very conscious of being a black person belonging to a distinctive ethnic group within Mexico, maintains that there have been no attempts at the government level to assist in improving the living conditions of African-Mexicans:

> *Although there are Government programmes that could satisfy these housing needs, they are not used to resolve the problem as a consequence of bureaucratic, political and economic red tape.*
>
> (Sergio Peñaloza, unpublished presentation, 2016, Kingston, Jamaica).[1]

Blacks who openly embrace their blackness are not readily embraced into the political system, since Mexican politics has for the most part been concerned with power and maintaining the status quo. African-Mexicans have not benefited from any significant representation in the political landscape. The very few members of their community who have participated in representational politics have not been enthusiastic or loyal spokespersons for their communities or their urgent needs. For instance, in 1999 the *Partido Revolucionario Institucional* (Institutional Revolutionary Party) garnered the support of many African-Mexicans in Guerrero. However, its leader Cisneros was soon recognized as being more interested in promoting indigenous causes than those of the African Mexican communities. What was even more egregious to blacks was that he made no public acknowledgement of his own black heritage (Ramsay, 2016, p. 15).

In 2017, it is true to say that Afro-Mexicans continue to be denied a place in the official definitions of Mexican identity and nation. The foundations for this denial

1 Original text: '*[…] aunque existen programas gubernamentales para dar respuesta a estas necesidades de vivienda no resuelven el problema por tener vicios burocráticos, políticos y económicos.*'

were laid in the 1925 essay by José Vasconcelos Calderón, which forcefully informed post-revolutionary Mexico's definition of the nation, claiming that as a distinct ethnic group, the black group had been totally diluted and no longer existed. Vasconcelos's position fortified the 1910 decision to cease including African-Mexicans in the national census. Interestingly, this situation persisted until 2015, when a voters' survey, designed to measure claims that blacks existed in Mexico, yielded the following results:

> *[O]f the 32 states that make up the Mexican republic, 7 states have a population of people of African descent of 1.5% to 6.5%, 19 states have a 0.1% to 0.8% and 6 states have no population of African descent. So of 64.3% of the population, there is acknowledgement of the presence of people of African descent and of Indigenous persons.*
>
> (Sergio Peñaloza, unpublished presentation, 2016)

Despite these figures, and the fact that this survey followed the formal recognition by two states of their black presence – Oaxaca in 2013 and Guerrero in 2014 – Afro-Mexicans who live in those two states continue to be marginalized. Ironically, Oaxaca and Guerrero have not followed through on any of their stated intentions, despite publicly announcing that they embraced the rights of blacks to be recognized as legitimate members of the states. Sergio Peñaloza, the current President of *Mexico Negro*, has this to say:

> *All our collective rights (economic, social, cultural, civil and political) have been violated or rather, we do not exist. We are not the recipients of any rights, and, as a consequence, we are the subject of exclusion, marginalization and governmental and social discrimination.*
>
> *[T]o date they have not drafted the secondary laws that would allow the benefits of constitutional recognition to become a reality. If we are not recognized, we have no part in the development plan of the Mexican State at the three governmental levels. No specific public policies have been designed for the Afro-Mexicans neither are we included in census-taking.*
>
> (Sergio Peñaloza, unpublished presentation, 2016, Kingston)[2]

2 Original text: '*[T]odos nuestros derechos colectivos (económicos, sociales, culturales, civiles y políticos) han sido violado o mejor dicho no existimos, no somos sujetos de derechos, traduciéndolos en exclusión, marginación y discriminación gubernamental y social […] hasta la fecha, no han elaborado las leyes secundarias que permita hacer realidad los beneficios del reconocimiento constitucional. Si no estamos reconocidos, no estamos como colectivo el plan de desarrollo de estado mexicano en sus tres noveles de gobierno, no se diseñan políticas públicas específicas para los afro-mexicanos y tampoco somos incluidos en el conteo censal.*' (English translation by Bradna McLaren.)

While at the Federal level the Constitution was modified in 2019 to acknowledge the black presence in Mexico, there is still very little, if any, translation of this into daily life or actual promotion of African Mexicans as a distinct ethnic group that contributes to Mexican multiculturality.

Contemporary resistance models: the case of *Mexico Negro*

For many years, Afro-Mexicans were regarded as persons who had accepted the ideology of *mestizaje* and therefore lacked any knowledge or understanding of themselves as blacks. The work of Trinidadian Catholic priest Father Glyn Jemmott Nelson has helped to raise their consciousness of race. *Mexico Negro* is in part the product of Father Nelson's consciousness-raising efforts. The organization is motivated, first, by the members' rejection of the fact that when the Constitution of the United Mexican States was originally drafted in 1810, African-Mexicans were excluded, despite their participation in the independence movements. Secondly, members are fully aware of Mexico's failure to comply with specific recommendations of the United Nations such as the Durban Declaration, adopted at the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance held in Durban, South Africa, in 2001, that all nations throughout the world should acknowledge the presence and existence of people of African descent in their respective countries. Thirdly, they are motivated by the International Decade for People of African Descent (2015–2024) proclaimed by UNESCO, to continue to challenge the Mexican Government in its ongoing neglect of all these United Nations mandates.

Unfortunately, despite efforts such as those of *Mexico Negro*, the majority of Mexicans remain totally unaware of the status and day-to-day realities of their African and Afrodescendent compatriots. *Mexico Negro*'s main objective is 'to obtain constitutional recognition from the Federal Government of Mexico and a commitment to the development of their region with good roads, a good education system and social amenities' (Ramsay, 2016, p. 161). Peñaloza laments that the community's situation is made worse by its inability to access or provide effective means of challenging the status quo, given the way the system is established. His words suggest a sense of near-impotence in face of the systemic blockades to inclusion:

> *Most of us members of the Afro-Mexican communities do not have the theoretical tools that would allow us to know and exercise our rights. This situation is exacerbated by the professional training of the administrators of justice and the nonexistence of government legislation on issues of concern to people of African descent.*
>
> (Sergio Peñaloza, unpublished presentation, 2016, Kingston, Jamaica)[3]

Apart from being restricted by their own limitations, Afro-Mexicans are confronted by a deeply entrenched system of attitudes of intolerance and rejection of blackness in Mexican society. They face both racism and discrimination on a daily basis, in particular when they try to venture outside their tiny enclaves to larger cities. This is one of the reasons *Mexico Negro* sees itself as an educational body that insists on educating the people about the unacceptability of the racial disparagements and discrimination to which they are frequently subjected, both openly and in more subtle forms.

Ironically, the Mexican Government was not unresponsive to the United Nations recommendations for black inclusion: in 2003, it established the National Council for the Prevention of Discrimination (CONAPRED), but Peñaloza highlights with scepticism its ineffectiveness and failure to fulfil its true mandate:

> *In Mexico, discrimination and racism are practices which together with daily actions and behaviour seem so natural that they are not considered discriminatory practices. And as there is no institution that punishes these acts, the possibility of eradication is remote. It is worth mentioning that the National Council for the Prevention of Discrimination (CONAPRED) has been established to eliminate racism and discrimination. However, it only makes recommendations but does not sanction and has not completed the strategy required to combat these practices which cause hurt and lead to deplorable acts.*
>
> (Sergio Peñaloza, unpublished presentation, 2016, Kingston, Jamaica)[4]

3 Original text: '*En su mayoría los habitantes de las comunidades afro-mexicanas, no tenemos las herramientas teóricas que nos permitan conocer y ejercer nuestros derechos, situación que sumada a la formación profesional de los impartidores de justicia y la inexistencia de reglamentación de las instituciones gubernamentales con enfoque afrodescendiente*.' (English translation by Bradna McLaren.)

4 Original text: '*En México, la discriminación y el racismo son prácticas que están junto a acciones y comportamientos cotidianos pareciendo tan natural que no se consideran prácticas discriminatorias y no habiendo una institución que castigue dichos actos está lejos erradicarse, cabe mencionar que para prevenir el racismo y la discriminación está el Consejo Nacional para Prevenir la Discriminación (CONAPRED), solo que hace recomendaciones pero no sanciona y que incompleta la estrategia que combata estas prácticas que lastiman y llevan a hechos lamentables*.'

In arguing that the government mandates have no teeth because of the reluctance to impose sanctions for discrimination, Peñaloza highlights the ways in which 'democratic' governments have sought to balance the competing pressures of their internal constituencies on the one hand, and global belonging, or approval in the international community, on the other. In such a balancing act a minority population of less than seven per cent, particularly an Afrodescendent population, is given short shrift; mandates become token gestures.

Mexico Negro wages an ongoing campaign to see the UNESCO recommendations enforced in the areas of health, education and development. In the organization's view, this is the only way of restoring dignity and fairness to this marginalized community. It has also declared its commitment to the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD) and to raising consciousness about self, ethnicity, heritage, history and the importance for people to redefine themselves as persons who have the right to be recognized as integral members of Mexican society. However, 'perhaps their biggest challenge to the Mexican Government is for the inclusion of Afro-Mexicans in the national census so that there will be an official record of the number of black persons in the country' (Ramsay, 2016, p. 161).

Contribution of African-Mexicans to Mexico's multicultural society

Mexican historiography remained silent for a long time, almost until the end of the twentieth century, about the cultural contributions of Africans to Mexican cultural dynamism. It must be conceded that, as part of its attempt to satisfy the provisions of the United Nations International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD, 1965) so that people of African descent the world over should be accorded recognition, status and specific opportunities for educational and human development, the Mexican Government developed and launched a project in 1989 through its Ministry of Foreign Affairs called *Nuestra Tercera Raíz* (Our Third Root), which was placed under the auspices of the National Council for Culture and the Arts. The main achievements of the programme include studies on slavery in the Americas, and research into the musical traditions, religious practices and general belief systems of people of African descent. That this programme was unsatisfactory is clear not only from the fact that today, eleven years later, the majority of Mexicans still have no knowledge of either the location or existence of African-Mexican communities, but also from the fact that even though the cultural projects lasted more than five years, they left no completed statistics

or records of existing Afro-Mexican communities and their way of life. As late as 2010, the National Institute of Statistics and Geography was still uncertain about including persons of African descent in Mexico as a distinct category.

Despite these challenges, Afro-Mexicans have made themselves an undeniable part of the Afro-Costa Chican cultural landscape. The strongest evidence of how this group of Afrodescendants have survived marginalization and exclusion is evident in their cultural expressions. Father Glyn Jemmott Nelson states that:

> *Behind the "official" silence and "out of sight" of most Mexicans, much of what was brought from Africa centuries ago has been preserved and continues to reveal itself in music, in regional festivals of Veracruz and along the Pacific Coast, in culinary styles, in their folk dances, language and religious practices and especially in the patterns of association and kinship which have survived.*
>
> (Interview with Paulette Ramsay, 15 October 2013, Port of Spain, Trinidad)

Music

In the area of music, the *corrido* is perhaps the most popular musical form associated with African-Mexicans. The earliest recognition of the centrality of the *corrido* to African Mexican culture was made by Aguirre Beltrán in a study in the 1950s, when he explained that the *corrido* was generally recognized throughout Mexico as a traditional cultural form associated mainly with the people of the Costa Chica. Along the Costa Chica, the *corrido* is practised among Afro-Mexicans in annual celebrations and depicts local events such as disputes or assassinations, and even commemorates specific experiences related to the Mexican Revolution. In several African-Mexican communities, annual *corrido* competitions are held to display the *corridistas*' talents, as they compete with each other in ballads, mostly sung in an Afro-Mexican dialect.

The performative and carnivalesque nature of the *corrido* connects it to a larger aesthetic of performance usually associated with the global African diaspora. The *corridos* reveal an attempt to legitimize particular identities and to project African-Mexicans, in particular males, with different identities from those witnessed in society. Some *corridos* suggest that Afro-Mexican males challenge

> the status quo, disparage political leadership and promote themselves as competitive, capable, confident men who are concerned with promoting a culturally nationalist agenda, to privilege members, to destabilize the hegemonic masculinity of the society, and to demonstrate that the new masculinity which they are performing/promoting is essentially concerned with exhibiting power (Ramsay, 2016, p. 83).

Dances: *La Danza del Diablo, La Danza de la Tortuga* and *El Son de Artesa*

The dances that are celebrated include the Turtle Dance (*La Danza de la Tortuga*), the Artesa/Fandango de Artesa (or *El Son de Artesa*) and the Devil Dance (*La Danza del Diablo*). The Turtle Dance is a very famous performance in which dancers dramatize the cruelty meted out to blacks during slavery. The figure of Pancho carries a whip in his role as the vicious overseer who mercilessly beats black workers. This invigorating dance is interesting as on one level it appears to be a mere celebration, but on a different level it is really a cynical representation and undermining of the plantation system of oppression.

The *Fandango de Artesa* is a dance in which a couple dances on a wooden trough carved from a ceiba, also known as *guanacaste*, a tree which grows in abundance on the Costa Chica and is well known for its huge trunk (Ramsay, 2016, p. 22). The trough is usually carved to represent an animal's head at one end and a tail at the other and is placed upside down so that a couple or a single individual may dance barefoot on it. Music is produced mainly by tapping the feet on the hollow log along with music produced by string and wooden instruments, a lead singer and a group of persons clapping and singing loudly.

The *Artesa* is an important part of the festivities at weddings and other African-Mexican community celebrations. Today, the best-known *Artesa* groups are to be found in San Nicolás and El Ciruelo. In fact, in the town centre of San Nicolás there are several *Artesa* troughs on display, while the mural on the Town Hall depicts an *Artesa* setting. Both artwork and carvings seem to serve as an emblem of their identity for a people who recognize their unique culture. *Mexico Negro* is actively encouraging younger Afro-Mexicans to maintain an interest in this unique cultural form so as to ensure its continuity and the understanding of its role in defining African Mexican cultural heritage.

The Devil Dance is the most acclaimed dance form, which has been performed by Afro-Mexicans in Maroon communities of Costa Chica from the colonial era to the present. In the Afro-Mexican town of Collantes it is performed during *Todos Santos* (All Saints' Day) in November. In El Ciruelo, Morelos and La Boquilla, it is the most celebrated cultural form, while in the state of Guerrero it is very popular in San Nicolás, Lo Desoto and Cuajinicuilapa (Ramsay, 2016, p. 21). The instruments used in the Devil Dance (or Dance of the Devil) include the harmonica, *charrasca* and *tigrera*. The *charrasca* is a cow's jawbone with the teeth loosened to create a bass sound as the player rubs the teeth with

an ice pick (Apodaca, 2008, p. 52). During my own observation of this energetic dance, I found it extremely exhilarating to watch this unusual instrument being played. The *tigrera*, also referred to as *bote*, is a drum with animal skin stretched over the top. The player uses a stick to rub the animal skin to produce music (Apodaca, 2008, p. 52).

Twenty dancers and three masked musicians dance through the streets, performing as rebel spirits that are out of control. One other set of dancers is disguised by masks that depict the idea of resistance against the status quo. The masks are usually made from animal skin, cardboard and elastic bands. As I have argued elsewhere, there are analogous messages between some *corridos* and the Dance of the Devil, in the sense that in both cultural forms, rebellion and defiance are projected as admirable qualities. The devil is depicted as a figure which at the same time symbolizes the evil of the Spanish slavery system. The theme of rebellion also resonates with the subversive intent of many of the *corridos,* which protest against oppression by superior and powerful forces (Ramsay, 2016, p. 21).

These African-influenced cultural forms associated with Mexico's black communities serve to emphasize that cultural marronage continues to be a defining feature of the African Mexican presence. The ways in which these practices resonate with other popular forms in other parts of the African diaspora emphasize the connection of the Afro-Mexicans to a broader global African context.

Literary production

As has been the case with the communities themselves and the people in them, the small body of Afro-Mexican literary production has not been given much attention by mainstream Mexico. A large part of this production is oral. African-Mexicans have preserved oral verses such as *coplas, décimas* and verse-form folktales. These oral verses were recorded under a special project by the Mexican National Council for Culture and Arts in 1992. The main participants were Mexican anthropologists Francisca Aparicio Prudente and Maria Cristina Diaz Pérez. The folktales were collected through a project of the Guerrero Regional Unit for Popular Culture and were compiled by two members of the Afro-Mexican community, Augustín Torres Diaz and Israel Larrea. This oral literature reveals that Afro-Mexicans share a past with Africans in other parts of the world such as the Caribbean.

Both projects had as their motivation the concern that these critical aspects of African-Mexican culture and constructions of cultural identity were threatened and needed to be recorded for posterity. Furthermore, the Guerrero Institute for Popular Culture, an organization founded and run by enthusiastic community members, had an interest in raising awareness about the presence of African-Mexicans and their unique cultural forms, and so the project was undertaken to commemorate five hundred years of European contact with the Americas. Afro-Mexicans themselves were invited to narrate the folktales that had been preserved through different generations. The oral poems were collected in a similar manner and provide an understanding of the values and general beliefs of their communities.

Malinali Meza Herrera (1992) has said of the African-Mexican oral poems that:

> Thousands of Africans were forced from their homeland to be carried away as slaves to plantations, mines and farms in the Americas. Coming from different ethnicities, they suddenly saw themselves without their cultural references, without their land, their gods and languages […] they had to reinvent new forms of expression, copy others and adapt others. Speech communication thus became an urgent tool for survival. […] Verbal expression has ever since then accompanied important acts of community life. […] men and women, children and adults create and recreate this ancestral heritage.[5]

The *coplas* and *décimas* suggest that there has been a communal space in which African-Mexicans have preserved an Afro-Mexican identity. The oral poems in general often reveal an interactive form or a poetry of exchange, which functions both to establish an independent collective identity and an assertion of individual selfhood. Although intended to entertain an audience through humour and mockery, they simultaneously reveal an aspect of a community's way of life and provide an indication of how in a marginalized context, people attempt to redefine themselves.

The literary production also includes more contemporary lyric poems that help to link African-Mexican communities to an African past and a global African diaspora and reveal an increasing level of consciousness among them as they respond to efforts to educate them about themselves as people of an Afro-derived heritage. These lyric poems seem both 'overtly and covertly' to construct an Afro-Mexican identity, as seen in the work of emerging writers such as Zárate Arango and Álvaro Carrillo. A study of many of the lyric verses written by these new poets from the Costa Chica, who are obviously concerned about self-fashioning, reveals this tendency quite clearly. Their work may be explained

5 Meza Herrera (Malinali), Foreword to *Cállate, burrita prieta: poética* afromestiza, Chilpancingo, Mexico: Dirección General de Culturas Populares, 1992, vii, (English translation by Bradna McLaren).

by post-colonialist Stephen Slemon's view of creative revisionism (1998), which involves the subversion or displacement of dominant discourses. In other words, African-Mexican oral poems may also be seen as a way of providing their own mode of expression which simultaneously conveys the cultural distinctiveness of their society.

The cultural forms, folktales, *corridos*, dances and oral and lyric poems are clear indications that Afro-Mexican communities form a cohesive group of persons who understand their belonging to a specific place with cultural connections to a wider global black diasporic community. Their preservation of these forms and their continued support of the work of *Mexico Negro* suggest an inherent understanding of self, identity and place that is uniquely Afro-Mexican. The lyric poems in particular show a generation of black-conscious African-Mexicans, who craft poems of self-assertion, self-authoring and self-definition. Among their collections are lyric poems that defy the ways in which they have been devalued and homogenized; poems that express pride in the beauty of the black skin, and poems that reject the denigration of blacks.

The lyric poems present a contrast with the oral poems because they show African Mexicans creating their own literature and self-representations, whereas the oral poems and folktales are re-narrations of pre-existing works which have been passed on by different generations. The lyric poems suggest a conscious effort to write a story, in a more formal manner, of self-acceptance and acceptance of identity as black persons. Even so, the tradition of re-narration is, equally, a form of dynamic cultural change and responsiveness, as the re-narration is never a static reproduction of the original. It is marked by linguistic and other shifts over time, as well as by the improvisations made to fill the gaps left by memory.

Mexican historiography in the twentieth century continues to be dominated by colonial Eurocentric ideas, and African-Mexicans are excluded from positions of power. However, the eyes of the world are slowly focusing on Afro-Mexican communities, and taking note of Mexico's insistence on defining itself as a *mestizo* nation. Scholars outside of Mexico continue to reveal the cultural diversity of Mexico and challenge the hegemonic definitions of the Mexican nation. The work of a small group of persons within the Afro-Mexican communities is also promoting the agenda of ending the invisibility and marginalization of these communities, establishing their roles in the building of the Mexican nation, and bringing issues of local concern to global attention.

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CHAPTER 12

AFRICAN COMMUNITIES IN COSTA RICA AND CENTRAL AMERICA

Rina Cáceres

Introduction

It could have been a morning like any other. Though the discussions on climate change have taught us that the climate is not always the same, one could have imagined that it was like any other typical sunny morning in July in the old city of Cartago, right in the heart of the Americas. Even so, the day was not like any other, this would be a very special day, this would be the day of his baptism. Anton arrived at the parish of *Nuestra Señora del Carmen* accompanied by his godparents, Father Balthazar de Grado and Juan de Cárdenas, on 20 July 1599. Anton was the first African registered in Costa Rica that had his name recorded, although he most certainly was not the first to be baptized.

Perhaps Anton was aware that through this act he was entering a new congregation of souls; he could have already known the Catholic rituals from his native land of Congo, whose capital in those days had several Catholic chapels. Perhaps he was not aware, and went reluctantly to a church embedded in a society that was being settled amid blood, sweat and tears. Anton was not alone. In 1599, the cusp of a new century, there were other Africans baptized in the same parish. The scene was the same, including for orphans; the Africans arrived with their godparents. This was the case of Francisca, who arrived with Andrés and Ana, both Afro-mestizos. We see this couple acting, again and

again, as godparents to these children of God. There were cases like that of Madalena, possibly born someplace in Africa, who arrived with an indigenous couple as her protectors.

While the small province had few inhabitants, month after month, one after the other, Africans and Afro-mestizos, free and enslaved, became increasingly visible in the ecclesiastic record. By 1625, their number had increased. Five were registered on 24 March, fourteen one day later, and twenty-five on 26 March. On 30 March, thirteen additional Afrodescendants were registered with five more the following day. Two were left for the visit on 1 April.

Hundreds of people arrived in the region. They came from the small Wolof and Serer communities, from the Akan, Yoruba and Congo cultural areas, and from the Muslim, Animist and Christian lands. They were united through the crossing of the Atlantic as the horror of the Middle Passage linked them in a great network spanning the ocean from the Americas to Africa.

Between Mexico and Colombia, Central America is located on the western border of the Caribbean Sea and connects the northern and southern continents. This region was also part of the larger history of African and Afrodescendent migrations.

African presence in the formation of the new nations

At the beginning of the Spanish conquest in the sixteenth century, Central America had an indigenous population of approximately five million people. In the following years, the population dropped to extreme levels; in some regions, the death toll was greater than fifty per cent of the total population. This was due to the impact of military conquest, disease, enslavement, famine and the dismantlement of the indigenous states and societies' political and economic systems. By the middle of the eighteenth century, communal strategies, political restructuring and the force of their civilization led indigenous communities to recover demographic stability (Lutz, 1982).

It is precisely as this indigenous demographic decline was under way that we see a sustained demand for workers and a continued increase in the Afrodescendent populations across the region. School textbooks teach (Euraque and Martínez, 2016) that Central American populations are chiefly of mestizo, ladino, indigenous and European descent. However, the reality is that Africans and their descendants were and are an integral part of the contemporary society's foundation.

During the colonial period, most of the Central American territory was under Spanish hegemony and under the authority of the General Captaincy of

Guatemala, which managed the region from Chiapas to Costa Rica. Nonetheless, Central America's Caribbean coast was under British influence. Hence the coastal areas became integrated into a colonial network that connected them commercially and demographically to the Antilles (West Indies) and particularly to Jamaica, starting in the seventeenth century. Accordingly, the Caribbean coast was historically an area of dispute between Spain and Great Britain, with distinct patterns of occupation that determined the diversity of their identities.

From the start of the sixteenth century until the start of the nineteenth century we find waves of African and Afrodescendent migrations. Unlike what happened in the Caribbean islands, in Central America different forms of labour control coexisted, such as the *repartimiento* and *encomienda*, debt bondage and enslavement. All of these labour regimes affected the indigenous, African and Afrodescendent populations (Cáceres, 2000).

During the first two centuries, the Africans were brought directly from Africa, Spain and also from intermediate ports like those of Veracruz or Cartagena. Men, women and children were seized from their communities and sent to America. At the beginning, they came from Western Africa, from groups such as the Wolof, Biojo, Biafara, Bran, Bañon, Zape and Mandinga. Around the middle of the sixteenth century, the Castilian and Portuguese crowns united. This resulted in changes to the geographic origin of the enslaved people, which came primarily from the Congo-Angola region (Cáceres, 2002; Lohse, 2014). Lokken (2013) has found that between 1610 and 1628, at least fifteen transatlantic merchants did business in the capital of Central America, bringing people from western Central Africa on boats that arrived 'accidentally' to the Caribbean coast. As David Wheat (2016) has pointed out, this made the region an extension of the African Atlantic. In the following century, the British networks in the Caribbean used the islands as distribution waypoints for the Africans taken from their colonies in West Africa (O'Malley, 2016).

They were brought in as labour for the mines in Honduras and Nicaragua, the sugarcane plantations of Amatitlán and San Jerónimo in Guatemala, the indigo plantations in El Salvador, and the cacao plantations in El Salvador and Costa Rica. They were also used to build structures like the military fort at San Fernando de Omoa, in Honduras, to cut timber in Belize and to carry goods towards Panama, which at the time was one of the main communication routes between the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. Others worked throughout Central America in domestic services, on small-scale construction projects, in agriculture and in the cattle industry (McLeod, 1980).

Most of the enslaved Afrodescendants fought against their enslavement through flight. Some successfully created autonomous communities like the *palenques* of Portobelo and Bayano in Panama. Lokken (2001) and Komisaruk (1999) for Guatemala, and Acuña Léon (2005) for the case of Costa Rica have identified other resistance strategies. As these authors have demonstrated, the enslaved Afrodescendants knew and used Spanish legal tools to negotiate the change of their masters and the purchase of freedom, as well as to report physical and sexual abuses (Cáceres, 2016). These few cases demonstrate, however, the enslaved people's agency.

In the urban centres, male and female neighbours organized collective strategies to challenge the law of the womb that stipulated that a child of an enslaved mother would also be born enslaved. This was the central concept that sustained the slave system. Many of the enslaved women remained anonymous in the urban world. This was the case with Cayetana, enslaved by Alfonso Ulloa. She had three children: Francisca, Manuel and Tomasa. To free them from enslavement, she secretly used her midwife as intermediary to give her children to other people to be raised as free. Francisca was raised by Paula Coto, a neighbour to the Puebla de los Pardos, Manuel was cared for by Josefa Bonilla who lived in Los Arrabales, and Tomasa was given to María Candelaria Álvarez who lived in the neighbourhood of Churuca (Acuña León, 2005, p. 11).

Many important Central America traditions can be traced to these first generations of Africans. They include the marimba – an essential part of the region's folkloric music tradition – Coyol wine and words like: *cachimba* (smoking pipe), *angú* (plantain purée), *candanga* (devil), *mandinga*, *morongo* (blood sausage), *timba* (belly), etc. (Duncan and Meléndez, 2005).

At the same time, other generations of free Afrodescendants had settled throughout the area. In the colonial archives, they were called *negros criollos* (black creoles) to note that they were born in the region, or mulattos and *pardos* – Afro-mestizos – to note the admixture of Africans with other ethnic groups.

Population resettlement was part of a system of social reengineering imposed by Spanish rule in the Americas. It started by creating a new type of indigenous community known as *pueblos de indios*, whose goal was to supply labour for colonial economic projects. As part of the same system, during the seventeenth century the Spanish created towns specifically for Afrodescendants. They included: Villa de la Gomera in Guatemala; El Realejo, San Felipe de Austria, Santa María del Haro de Nueva Segovia and Abierto de Granada in Nicaragua; San Vicente in El Salvador; and La Puebla de los Pardos in Costa Rica. This urban reengineering sought to strengthen the demographic limits of the empire and, more importantly, to facilitate tax collection by the Crown (AGI, Guatemala 43, N 49; Cáceres, 2000).

In the urban centres, the Afrodescendants worked as artisans, tailors, blacksmiths, carpenters, weavers, cobblers, merchants and service employees. In the rural areas of Costa Rica, in Matina for example, they farmed lands and cacao fields. They were also actively involved in regional trade. By this time, they spoke Spanish, were catholic, paid taxes, took part in the militias and years later were politically prepared to ask for the right to be Spanish citizens during the Cádiz Cortes of 1812.

Throughout the colonial period, some Afrodescendants managed to develop successful economic activities and become part of the elite. Many Afrodescendants had never been enslaved, and although they were part of the militias, spoke Spanish and were catholic, there were still some sectors of the society that wanted these free individuals to be placed into slavery. The permanent threat of enslavement haunted the free Afro-mestizos, who by the day were rising in number within an increasingly mixed society.

The abolition of slavery

Independence from Spain in Central America occurred in 1821, and a Constitutional Assembly was formed to establish the new laws that would guide the nascent republics. Starting with the call to form this assembly, we see evidence of Afrodescendent influence. It was agreed that one representative would be appointed for every 15,000 individuals, emphasizing the phrase 'without excluding those of African origins'. A study of the assembly's proceedings reveals an intense year of discussion on one basic concept: freedom (AGCA B, Leg 91, Exp. 2472). Among these proceedings, one letter stands out. Signed by six enslaved people, it was read in 1823 by the assembly. The letter reads:

> The civil freedom of men is [an] invaluable jewel…. God does not want the men that He has cast into a free world to be enslaved. . . The origin of slavery … is no more than the uncontrolled greed of men who, to increase their wealth, have infested the … coasts of Africa, enslaving their inhabitants, which clearly,… is no other [thing] than to rob them of their precious jewel of freedom, and deprive them the social life of [those] who are their cruel murderers, a principle which [must be] rejected and labelled as illegal … because what legality can it offer, … if the natural law shows us… that all men have been born free?

The discussion about freedom continued amid fierce confrontations. Two positions emerged. Some argued that freedom should be immediate; others believed that the enslaved individuals should pay for their freedom. In the end,

the commission appointed to study the abolition of slavery recommended an immediate end to the law of the womb and the granting to enslaved individuals of both freedom without the need for payment, and citizenship rights.

After a heated debate and facing the danger of obstructions to the proposed law, the law's supporters accepted the creation of a public fund to compensate slave owners. The law incorporated another point that was then controversial: citizens' rights recently acquired by the inhabitants of the newly independent territories 'would be immediately lost by those who owned or trafficked slaves' (AGCA B, Leg 91, Exp. 2473, F 14V, 6 January 1824). This rule also applied to foreigners.

It is in this context that the Honduran delegation called attention to the 'irritation' that this could cause in the neighbouring regions of Cuba and Jamaica, which continued to employ enslaved people (AGCA B10 Exp. 4042, Leg 185, f5, 1824). Omens became a reality in 1825 when one hundred people fled from British Belize, and subsequently were granted asylum. According to Martínez and Contreras (1962), the traditions in Petén recall this episode and argue that a large part of the inhabitants of San Benito are descendants of this population. During this year, the same authorities also reported a slaver leaving the region by way of the Caribbean coast, forcing some of his enslaved workers onto boats heading to Cuba, where slavery was still legal.

After a year of debating, on 24 April 1824, the National Constituent Assembly declared the freedom of all enslaved people a right enshrined in article 13 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Central America, under the section titled 'On the Citizens': 'All men are free in the Republic. No one who abides by these laws can be a slave, and no one who traffics in slaves can be a citizen'.

At the same time, on the Caribbean coast of Central America, Great Britain abandoned its enclaves in Mosquitia, Nicaragua, and on the Black River, Honduras, in response to treaties signed with Spain in 1787 and 1860. However, in the Antilles, the British violently removed the Garifuna from the island of Saint Vincent under the authorization of the British Parliament and shipped them to Honduras. Saint Vincent's 'empty lands' were then devoted to growing sugar. The case of 'the Caribs' as the Garifuna were called at the time, is the most vivid example of the role that Central America played in the dispute for the Caribbean between Spain and Great Britain.

During the nineteenth century, the new Central American states were not yet well established and their confrontation with Great Britain evolved. An example was the forced and violent annexation of the Miskito Kingdom by the State of Nicaragua at the end of the nineteenth century. Great Britain had recognized this kingdom, located on Nicaragua's Caribbean coast, as an independent nation. After

annexation, Nicaragua created a racialized narrative to justify the occupation of this land and the subordination of its citizens (Hooker, 2010).

These changes and contradictions shaped various forms of identity. These identities were defined not only by specific African origin and racial ascription, but also by the position of individuals in relation to language and religion inherited from the metropolitan powers, and the antagonism derived from the period of imperial confrontation.

The great Afro-Antillean migration

At the end of the nineteenth century, new Afrodescendent immigrants were arriving in Central America from the Caribbean islands, particularly from Jamaica, enriching the region's cultural mosaic. Numerically, this was the largest migration in the region's recent history. Thousands of workers were brought in to build the infrastructure for the new export economies, including the Panama Canal, railroads and agricultural activities. These immigrants boosted the cultivation of cacao, abaca and banana – Central America was the largest banana producer in the world (Chomsky, 1996). Writers, nurses, teachers, priests, railway and telegraph operators and accountants also arrived, all of which enhanced the professional composition of the region's countries. As some of these immigrants returned to their countries of origin, they in turn further enriched the cultural dynamic of the Antilles. The immigrants' professional training and family connections, as well as their membership in the English-speaking world, facilitated their participation in international discussions connecting Central America, the Antilles and New York.

In the case of Costa Rica, religious schools promoted British-style education. Among the religious congregations were the Baptist, Wesleyan, Anglican and Moravian churches as well as the Salvation Army. These religious institutions created networks that brought together a great number of Afro-Caribbean individuals within the Antilles and Caribbean Central America.

The development of mutual aid societies and lodges strengthened these complex international networks. Members would be received as brothers after presenting their organizations' credentials in different locales around the Caribbean. In Costa Rica's case, as in the rest of the Antilles, subsidiaries were created of the Independent United Order of Mechanics, the Loyal Order of Ancient Shepherds, the Lebanon Foresters, the Grand United Order of Odd Fellows, and the Independent Benevolent Order of Elks. This also includes the subsidiaries of the Jamaica Mutual Life

Assurance Society, which functioned as an international savings and transfer bank (Putnam, 2009 and 2013). These support organizations emerged in a complex socio-economic context of confrontation and negotiation between the banana companies that dominated the economy of Caribbean Costa Rica and their workers (Senior Angulo, 2011). This sets the stage for the arrival of Marcus Garvey, who played an influential role in the region's press.

According to Putnam (2009), the different lodges, the secret societies, associations, social clubs, churches, scout groups, newspapers and so forth looked for financial, physical and spiritual security, while promoting racial pride, individual improvement and collective brotherhood. For example, from early on, the Mosaic Templars and the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) spread the discourse of racial solidarity and pride between the Afro-Caribbean people. Similarly, the Friendly and Literary Association, sponsored by St Mark's Anglican Church, aimed to promote the social, intellectual and physical advance of the city's youth. At the beginning of the nineteenth century, various labour organizations were founded along Costa Rica's Caribbean coast, such as the Artisans' and Labourers' Union, whose first public action was the celebration of Emancipation Day, on 1 August 1910. This event, attended by the provincial governor of Limón, gathered almost 5,000 Jamaicans, who paraded through the streets of the city of Limón (Fernández, 2013).

Several newspapers were also created, some monthly, others weekly. One of them, The Nation, had Marcus Garvey as an editor. Regional news circulated through these papers, informing people of political issues, connections and transportation with the Antilles, and economic developments in the Caribbean. They also advertised a large quantity of products, which suggests that a large consumer society existed in Limón, the main Costa Rican port at the time. The following are examples of the types of newspapers that circulated between 1910 and 1964 in the Caribbean:

1. Limón Weekly News
2. The Central American Express
3. The Nation
4. Boletín Anunciador
5. El Atlántico
6. El Caribe: Semanario limonense
7. El Comercio
8. El Correo del Atlántico: órgano de divulgación de la provincia de Limón
9. El Limonense
10. El Partido Nacional
11. El Pueblo Limonense
12. El Tiempo: diario de la mañana
13. Faro Limonense

Difficult changes still lay ahead. The nineteenth century would see a surge in new theories that intended to halt the period's advances. The Jim Crow laws from the north would be followed in the south by the views of Argentinian educator Faustino Sarmiento. He promoted the idea of the 'improvement of Latin American blood' which was supposedly weakened by excessive racial mixing. These ideas were feeding off the popular eugenics movement, while European powers divvied up the African continent in 1885.

From the end of the nineteenth century and at the time the first European capital loans were being requested to fund the construction of infrastructure, the Central American liberal elite began to devise narratives about the past. These narratives, detrimental to the region's culturally diverse heritage, were intended to magnify their European roots.

During this so-called era of progress, the ideas of barbarism and civilization prevailed, and the Central American states erased all traces of their Afrodescendent history. The states ceased using census categories that recorded the ethno-racial diversity within their population, thus creating a fantasy of egalitarian societies. On the ground, the different populations were separated according to residential area and access to rights, while the collective memory of their history was being erased.

In the twentieth century, the migratory policies went beyond the official historical discourse that defined the Central American society as 'white' or 'mestizo' by minimalizing the indigenous populations' role and denying the Africans' contribution. At the same time, governments began to pass restrictive laws against immigrants, designing a legal structure to impede migration and to categorize populations according to their proximity to Caucasian cultures. Central American governments started with Asians and people from the Middle East. In 1897, El Salvador prohibited entry to all Chinese people, and then laws were passed to restrict the entry of Arabs, Malaysians, Libyans, Turks, Gypsies, Syrians and Palestinians. Costa Rica prohibited entry to Chinese people in 1897, and in 1904 to Arabs, Turks, Syrians, Armenians and Gypsies. In 1904, Panama prohibited the immigration of Chinese, Turks and Syrians, and in 1912 it prohibited the entry of Coolies (Putnam, 2010).

According to Euraque (2004) and Putnam (2010), it was in the 1920s that the region produced anti-black laws that prohibited the entry of Afrodescendent immigrants and limited their ability to be hired, even when they had been born in Central America to immigrant parents. In Honduras, in 1929, the blacks were added to the list of 'restricted races' and in the following decade a new law was passed that prohibited the entry of Coolies, Gypsies and Chinese. In Panama,

blacks that did not speak Spanish were added to the list of 'undesirable' races and banned from immigration. Then a law was passed that limited citizenship to those who already resided in the country. In 1931, Guatemala declared the immigration of foreigners of the 'black race' illegal, and later prohibited entry to people of the 'black races', 'yellow or Mongol' races and of 'Gypsies'. In 1936, Nicaragua shut out the Chinese, Arabs, Syrians, Armenians, Gypsies and Coolies. In 1925, a new law in El Salvador declared it illegal for 'members of coloured races' to enter the country.

At the end of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth century, Liberalism made the ideology of racial mixing and whitening into a social norm. Those who did not fit within this scheme, like the indigenous and black groups, were converted into the 'others', and those who questioned it were viewed as uncivilized or combative. The ideology of order, progress and civilization would be joined to this racial ideology of 'whitening' that nullified the existence, achievements and social mobility of the non-Caucasian ethnic groups (Gudmundson, 1986).

During the first half of the twentieth century, the main political demand of the second and third generation Antillean descendants would be that the state recognized their right to citizenship. Diana Senior Angulo (2011) shows that for Costa Rica, this right was achieved after intense political negotiation in 1948, as the civil war was unfolding. This also marked the beginning of the fight to get legal ownership of the lands in which these Afrodescendants had been living since the previous century.

To their first actions discussed earlier, Afrodescendent organizations added the creation of an exceptional social and political movement across Latin America. One example of this is the Central American Black Organization (CABO), founded in Belize in 1995, whose mission was to establish a network of Afrodescendent organizations in Central America. CABO brings together more than 20 organizations from Central America and from the Afrodescendent diaspora in the United States. Its goal is to promote the comprehensive development of the towns and communities of Central America with African heritage.

At the same time, a vibrant musical movement made reggae, parranda or sandunga, punta and calypso, among others, the regional anthems of Central America. There was also a push to spread the appreciation for jazz and gospel music. This movement provided new ingredients to Central American identities.

Along with the rise of these social organizations, an intellectual movement began leaving its mark on literary works that experimented with new themes

and linguistic structures. This is exemplified in the writings of authors such as Eulalia Bernard, Shirley Campbell, Delia McDonald, Isabel Estrada, June Beer, Annette Fenton, Franklin Perry, Yolanda Rossman, Deborah Robb, Andira Watson, Alderman Johnson Roden, Antonieta Máximo, Dolores Joseph, Myrna Manzanares, Wingston González, Carlos Wynter, Gerardo Maloney, Melanie Taylor Herrera and Quince Duncan (Mosby, 2003; Britton González, 2014).

As for twenty-first-century Costa Rica, the result of the constant work and pressure from Afro-Caribbean leaders and groups led to significant changes to correct the aforementioned historical discrepancies. Among the most important transformations made are the reform to the first article of the Constitution of Costa Rica to describe the country as a multi-ethnic and multicultural republic, the adoption of a national policy against racism and xenophobia that mandates public institutions to develop policies to remedy the inequality in the access that Afrodescendants have had to civil rights. Another measure consisted in establishing in the city of Cartago, the old colonial capital, the first memorial to commemorate the Afrodescendent presence in Costa Rica. This site is in Puebla de Nuestra Señora de los Ángeles, also known as Puebla de los Pardos, where they began the veneration of the most important Catholic figure in Costa Rica, the Virgen de los Ángeles, affectionately referred to as *La Negrita*.

Conclusion

Every one of the different migrations of African and Afrodescendent populations that came to Costa Rica specifically, and to Central America generally, produced distinct symbolic codes at the cultural, social and political level. These codes were a product of their particular past, the areas the migrants settled and the moment in history. These migrants' identities, built around their diverse social roles, explain the different paths taken by each generation and how this influenced a plural and diverse national identity.

During the colonial period, Afrodescendants in Central America acquired Spanish culture and in time blended with other groups, thus giving birth to a mestizo culture. By the end of the eighteenth century, people with African ancestry could be found throughout every level of society, from a friar in an indigenous *doctrina* (parish) to elementary school teachers. The word *Don*, which legally could only be used by Spaniards, was used in practice by blacks and Afro-mestizos in important positions. Exemplifying the malleability of ethno-racial census categorizations, Afrodescendants situated in a position of economic

or political power were no longer referred to as blacks but as *pardos*, mulatos or mestizos. At the same time, other Afrodescendants remained enslaved, were treated violently in their everyday life, and continued to be separated from their families. As time passed, they were culturally assimilated into the dominant Spanish culture, becoming Spanish-speaking Catholics. Familiarity with the larger culture gave them the ability to fight in courts of law for better living conditions and for their liberty. They especially struggled to legalize the abolition of slavery, a law that many did not wish to respect.

After independence from the Spanish metropolitan power, and in the process of shaping the Central American national states, racism took on a new role under the influence of eugenics. Ideas of separate development emerged and politicians attempted to confine Afrodescendants to the Caribbean coastal lowlands. These politicians also erased memories of colonial Afro-mestizo heritage, creating an idealized image of past societies as homogeneous, static, and the sole product of an epic Spanish achievement (Gudmundson, 1986). Despite that, the actions of Afro-Antillean immigrants have challenged the traditional narrative and have recovered the true story of African heritage within the culturally diverse Central American nations.

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CHAPTER 13

BLACKNESS ACROSS BORDERS

Jamaican Diasporas and New Politics of Citizenship

Deborah A. Thomas

Introduction

On 16 June 2004, the first ever Jamaica Diaspora Conference was called to order in Kingston. This conference was the outgrowth of a symposium held on 20 October 2003 at the Mona campus of the University of the West Indies entitled *The Jamaican Diaspora Reciprocal Relations: Way Forward*. For two days, the Government of Jamaica hosted over 500 delegates – half living in Jamaica, half Jamaicans living abroad – who had gathered to discuss ways that overseas Jamaicans might have more of a stake in what was happening at 'home', not only culturally but also economically and politically. During the conference, then Prime Minister P. J. Patterson outlined five Cabinet-backed incentives for overseas Jamaicans to invest in the country, including improved passport services and the issuance of an investment bond targeted specifically to overseas nationals. He also proposed the establishment of a Jamaica Diaspora Foundation 'through which Jamaica will speak to overseas Jamaicans about national development and other issues',[1] an annual Diaspora Day, and the establishment of 'trade councils' throughout the Diaspora.

1 'Jamaica reaches out to diaspora', *Daily Observer,* 17 June 2004.

The editorial that appeared after the conclusion of the Conference in the *Observer*, one of Jamaica's two daily newspapers, argued that the profound significance of the event lay in its having officially initiated 'a process of redefining Jamaica – its expansion from an island territory to a concept of a people'.[2] Indeed, with the 2.7 million Jamaican nationals living in North America and Great Britain roughly equalling the number of Jamaicans living 'on the rock', and with a reported forty-two per cent of overseas Jamaicans having attained a tertiary education,[3] the recognition of a new sense of peoplehood would seem to herald new possibilities for transforming Jamaica's political economy. The editorial continued, 'There must be a continuous relationship between those of us who live on the island and the offshore communities. The critical issue is how to build these seamless relationships'.[4]

This is an issue with which many Caribbean Governments have been preoccupied for some time. Because migration has long been a central development strategy throughout the Caribbean – for individuals, families, and governments – states in the region have attempted to devise ways of 'hanging on' to their migrated populations. They have done so by recognizing dual citizenship, tapping migrant communities in the United Statas, the United Kingdom, and Canada to fund hometown associations and political campaigns, and in some cases granting overseas nationals the right to vote in elections locally. The suggestions outlined at the Jamaica Diaspora Conference in 2004, then, were in step with more general regional attempts to facilitate national development by harnessing the economic resources of the Jamaican diaspora in the United States, Canada, and Great Britain. The proposed bond issuance, for example, followed initiatives of other West Indian leaders, like Barbadian Prime Minister Owen Arthur, who have been attempting to channel the flow of remittances toward more stable and ongoing economic investment in the region. These efforts have garnered additional force in the contemporary period, as anti-terrorism legislation in the United States has resulted in the increased harassment of both legal and undocumented Jamaican immigrants, and has therefore been seen as threatening remittance flows.[5] Of course, government directives such as those listed above have not only been designed for the purpose of 'hanging on' to populations, but also for 'catching up' with them, as many

2 'The Jamaican Diaspora Conference is just the beginning', *Daily Observer*, 18 June 2004.

3 'Tapping into the diaspora', *Daily Gleaner*, 30 October 2003.

4 'The Jamaican Diaspora Conference is just the beginning', *Daily Observer*, 18 June 2004.

5 'Warning signs – remittance flows to Jamaica under threat', *Daily Gleaner*, 2003.

migrants have taken the lead in creating and maintaining transnational networks to advance their own multifaceted and multilocational goals. Scholars attuned to these practices have argued that contemporary processes of transnationalism and globalization have not only altered the ways people conceptualize space, community, and citizenship, but have also transformed nationalism and processes of racial formation (Basch et al., 1994; Carnegie, 2002; Clarke, 2004; Clarke and Thomas, 2006; Glick Schiller et al., 1992; Smith and Guarnizo, 1998; Sutton and Chaney, 1987).

The intensification of transnational migration and the creation of Caribbean diasporas have also raised another major issue for Caribbean States, one that has to do with the level of 'Americanization' occurring throughout the region. With the United States' economic, political, and cultural influence strengthening over the course of the twentieth century, the nature of many governments' much cherished post-colonial independence has been called into question. Yet Caribbean people have always engaged 'America' critically, negotiating its power and promise while actively building new notions of national belonging and racial mapping. These new notions have had complex, and sometimes unexpected, effects upon Caribbean nationalisms, even as these nationalisms are being reformulated 'at home'. If we agree that 'social spaces are constructed in tandem with processes of racial formation' (Brown, 1998, p. 291), then new understandings of space and community – such as those reflected during the Jamaica Diaspora Conference – raise important questions regarding emergent concepts of blackness, both in Jamaica and among Jamaicans (and their descendants) elsewhere. For example, how might we situate contemporary black America with respect to new configurations of diasporic blackness? Where does Jamaica stand in relation to (black) America, and how might this standing be interpreted differently by different generations of Jamaicans? These questions, in turn, implore us to consider the two sets of issues raised here – migration and the reconfiguration of nationalisms, and Americanization and the reconfiguration of blacknesses – within the same spatial frame of analysis.

In her analysis of black Liverpudlians' cultural politics across generations, Jacqueline Nassy Brown borrows the concept of 'diasporic resources' from Paul Gilroy (1987) to give a sense of the kinds of cultural and political practices that are available to them at different moments. Predominant among these practices have been African American musical forms and political struggles, leading Brown to conclude that 'black Liverpudlians actively appropriate particular aspects of "black America" for particular reasons, to meet particular needs – but do so within limits, within and against power asymmetries, and with political

consequences' (Brown, 1998, p. 298). In this essay, I want to reflect upon these issues in relation to the implications of the current global hegemony of the United States for processes of racialization among Jamaicans. I am interested here in how the concept of 'resources' is constituted over time, when and where these resources circulate, and toward what ends they are used. Ultimately, I argue, the manipulation of diasporic resources services a project of racial vindication that, though it addresses different specific needs and operates differently in the United States and Jamaica, nevertheless is a project generated and implemented transnationally. As a way to map the kinds of circulations that are critical to this project, I draw examples not only from my own ethnographic research in a hillside community outside Kingston, Jamaica, but also from renderings of the relationships between blackness in Jamaica and the United States offered by popular media.

Modern blackness in Jamaica

By the late 1990s in Jamaica, when urban popular expressions of blackness became paramount within contemporary invocations of Jamaican particularity, the hegemony of the Creole multiracial nationalism that had been consolidated by political and intellectual elites at the time of independence in 1962 had been displaced (Thomas, 2004). This shift is critical because it marks a partial triumph of the ideologies, styles, and political and economic practices developed by working-class and poor black Jamaicans over the notions of respectable citizenship that have been (and to a degree, still are) promulgated by political and cultural elites, middle-class professionals, and most religious communities. As a result, it reflects a broader transformation in terms of who (and what) has public power to define and represent Jamaican culture in the contemporary era.

This transformation has not been due to any one specific social movement, or even to the work of several different movements. It has been, instead, the result of a confluence of factors that have had a variety of (sometimes unexpected) effects. One of these factors has been the intensification of transnational migration and the proliferation of media technologies, which have facilitated the amplification of a diasporic consciousness. Another has been the increased political, economic, and social influence of the United States, which has opened avenues for many black Jamaicans to circumvent the colonial hierarchies of colour, class, gender, culture and progress that were institutionalized by the British. These two factors are related, of course, since after independence and the closing of emigration

channels to Britain, many more Jamaicans began to avail themselves of the perceived opportunities presented by migrating to the United States. And while the nature of the influence of American cultural practices upon (especially) poor and working-class Jamaicans has been vigorously debated since the turn of the twentieth century, the current period of 'fragmented globality' (Trouillot, 2001, p. 129) has given these debates new vigour, not only in Jamaica but throughout the region as a whole. Michel Rolph Trouillot uses the term 'fragmented globality' to underline the effects of contemporary neo-liberal capitalist processes, and to draw our attention to how worldwide deindustrialization and the concomitant rise of the service and informal economic sectors, the phenomenal proliferation of information technologies, and (throughout the Third World) the implementation of structural adjustment policies, have widened the gaps between rich and poor, developed and underdeveloped, North and South.

As David Murray has noted for Martinicans during the mid-1990s, 'America, or more particularly a set of mostly media-generated images of "black" America, occupied an increasing amount of attention in discussions about self and society' (Murray, 2002, p. 159). Because young people were the primary consumers of these images, Murray found that youth had become the 'new metaphor through which dissatisfaction or disappointment with Martinican society was voiced' (Murray, 2002, p. 158). Similar processes were afoot in Jamaica during this period, and the generational difference Murray identifies – a difference that seems to mark a particular shift in political worldview – has also been key to the consolidation of what I am calling modern blackness in Jamaica. That is, modern blackness reflects a changed geopolitical environment, one in which the gaps between rich and poor, developed and underdeveloped, North and South have been exacerbated by worldwide de-industrialization and the rise of the service and informal economic sectors, the proliferation of information technologies, and (throughout the Third World) the implementation of structural adjustment policies. This new environment has undermined the earlier contention that formerly colonial territories should be sovereign in order that they may participate meaningfully in international forums, and instead has generated what several scholars have insisted is a 'new imperialism', a capitulation to the dictates of global (American and European Union) markets regardless of the sociocultural, political, economic, and environmental costs (Harvey, 2003).

That youth often symbolically occupy the contested terrain of nationalists' deferred (or even derailed) development dreams does not preclude them from elaborating their own. In other words, on the one hand, current processes of globalization throughout the Caribbean have generated increased rates of violent crime, unemployment,

and poverty at the same time as structural adjustment programmes have reduced government expenditure on health care, education, literacy programmes, and other social services, thereby heightening conditions of instability for the majority of Jamaican families; while on the other hand, contemporary neo-liberal capitalist development has also created new possibilities for realizing ambition, and new opportunities for advancing new or previously marginalized ideologies and practices regarding citizenship and subjectivity. In Jamaica, for example, youth have actively transformed aspects of old colonial hierarchies of race and gender, in part through their consumption and re-signification of aspects of African American style within contemporary dancehall culture (Cooper, 1993; Hope, 2004; Thomas, 2004; Ulysse, 1999). In order to understand the meanings of America and diasporic blackness, then, we must pay attention to what different Jamaicans *do* with America. More particularly, what use do Jamaicans make of *black* America? Alternatively put, what has black America allowed variously situated Jamaicans to *do* in terms of reconceptualizing the meanings of belonging and community? And finally, if we understand power as 'capillary' (Foucault, 1979) – as never fully possessed by any one entity but as circulating through diaspora and always enacted within broader relations of dominance – how might we conceptualize the relationship between black America and black Jamaica as reciprocal?

Black America in Jamaica

One of the more controversial recent additions to the Jamaican cultural and educational scene has been the recognition of Black History Month in February. During the mid- to late-1990s, many cultural commentators viewed local interest in this African American commemoration as further evidence of Jamaicans' interest in adopting anything emanating from the United States. For example, Basil Walters, a frequent contributor to the *Daily Observer*,[6] argued that 'it has always been a part of

6 The *Jamaica Gleaner* is the country's premiere daily paper, and is the longest continuously published newspaper in the western hemisphere. Owned by a family whose holdings include longstanding sugar interests, the paper tends to reflect a more conservative position on many issues having to do with national development. The *Observer*, Jamaica's other morning daily, tended at the time this article was originally written to be more left-leaning, and reported more often on American (and African American) topics, including sporting events such as the NBA Finals, scandals such as the Jayson Blair fraud and the Kobe Bryant case, and musical collaborations between hip-hop and dancehall artistes. The *Observer* had also been more consistently critical of Colin Powell, who as an African American with Caribbean roots was expected to stand up for the region as a whole but who disappointed many West Indians by playing a role in Aristide's removal from Haiti, in ignoring CARICOM's collective stand against the U.S.-led war in Iraq, and in undermining support for the jurisdiction of the International Criminal Court.

our national psyche to adapt and adopt anything that Americans do, whether black or white. Thus in recent times, the celebration of Black History Month has become fashionable in Jamaica, and the emphasis is on fashionable'.[7] Walters and others saw Black History Month as an 'imported' event that would appeal to certain intellectuals, but that would remain irrelevant to the lives of the majority of Jamaicans. Verna Lee Davis-Daly, an occasional columnist for the *Daily Observer*, worried that

> we bombard our young black populace with black music, black theatre, black art and other positive predominantly "black American" experiences. What happens, however, is that we sometimes unwittingly bypass our simple, available sources of relevant black history.[8]

Similarly, *Gleaner* columnist Peter Espeut argued for greater attention to Jamaican 'heroes':

> I am disappointed that in this imported Black History Month, we are not hearing much about our own black heroes. It is as if we are being distracted from our own Jamaican situation by discussions about Malcolm X and Martin Luther King – great men for their milieu, mind you; but what does that say to Jamaicans in our situation? What about our struggle?[9]

The consensus among these writers seemed to be that because ninety per cent of Jamaica's population is black, 'we would need neither the approval nor the encouragement of the USA to study black history twelve months of the year'.[10] Indeed, many noted that Rastafarians had always celebrated black history, suggesting that their example would be the more meaningful one for Jamaicans to follow.

Yet there is something more to the opposition to Black History Month being expressed by these writers, something that Peter Espeut provocatively hints at in the following passage:

> The alacrity with which we in Jamaica have embraced [Black History Month] is not just another example of our penchant to copy all that is American. In Jamaica, race is still not accepted as a subject for polite conversation in middle and upper class circles".[11]

Espeut is proposing that because Black History Month is seen as an imported rather than an Indigenous event, it opens conversations that might

7 B. Walters, 'Black my story – not his-story', *Daily Observer*, 4 February 1997.

8 V. L. Davis-Daly, 'My black history', *Daily Observer*, 6 February 1997.

9 P. Espeut, 'Honouring our own', *Daily Gleaner*, 19 February 1997.

10 C. R. Reynolds, 'Black History Month', *Daily Gleaner*, 18 February 1997.

11 P. Espeut, 'Honouring our own', *Daily Gleaner*, 19 February 1997.

not otherwise occur. What seems critical here is his suggestion that expressions of racial pride or style from the United States are taken on in Jamaica as a way to enter into public conversations about race among those who might otherwise consider such discussions 'impolite', and by so doing, to direct attention to the dynamics of racial formation both within Jamaica and transnationally. U.S. Black History Month, in this context, becomes a resource through which Jamaicans might frame an ongoing local dispute regarding the degree to which Jamaican nationalism has 'succeeded' in eradicating racial divisions in the service of the national motto – 'Out of Many, One People'.

Because this is a dispute that has tended to break down along class lines – with lower-class Jamaicans remaining the most adamant about the ways race and class interact to reproduce their marginalization with respect to political and economic power – it becomes important to question the assertion that black America does not resonate with the majority of Jamaicans, whose attention instead should ostensibly be directed toward black Jamaican heroes. Paulette, a striving lower-middle-class woman in her early thirties whom I had come to know well during the course of my extended fieldwork in a rural hillside community just outside Kingston during the late 1990s, reflected with me on her own process of 'coming to consciousness' about her heritage and history. She remembered that her parents did not emphasize a 'black history' to her while she was growing up. Nevertheless, as she grew older, she began learning more about Jamaican history by listening to a radio show on IRIE-FM about African and diasporic history hosted by Mutabaruka, a Rastafarian dub poet known for his Afrocentric (and revolutionary) lyrics, and by reading about African Americans, information that was supplemented by the television programmes broadcast during Black History Month. 'They'd show certain programs on TV and I'd see how they'd handle black people, and I'd get so emotional that I'd turn off the TV', she recalled. 'It's just recently I can really sit down and watch. I don't know if it's embarrassment or anger or what. I'd watch these programs and probably go out on the road and see [the one white landowner living in the community] and just hate him. I'd think, "you're one of those".'

Paulette also mentioned that she would teach her daughter, who was three years old at the time, about black history in order that she should 'know and love herself', especially since she anticipated that her daughter would ultimately attend a university in the United States:

> *It's important to let her know that OK, she's of a different color, but she has to love self however people might say that you're black so you're not beautiful. Even here now, people are bleaching out their skins and all of that. I have to make her*

> *know that regardless of what people might say [in the States], she will be proud of where she's coming from. Because I'm not going to grow her like how my parents just sort of had me and they never really sat and shared a lot of things with me. You have to make them know, and you do this by telling them about the history.*

Paulette's personalization of aspects of the history of race relations in the Americas and her preparations for her daughter's expected migration speak to more general processes associated with globalization and identity formation. Her generation, having come of age during the 1970s flowering of black power and 'Jamaica for Jamaicans', was supported in its efforts to develop ideas about racial value that differed from those of their parents by a much-changed national context. Moreover, the technological and communications developments that had taken place since her parents' youth made external opportunities (such as a tertiary education in the United States) seem more easily accessible in some cases than those available locally.

As a result, Paulette's comments also show that history matters to the development of personal and community consciousness, and that the histories that matter are not limited to Jamaica and the West Indies, but can also include those of black people in the United States. For her, television shows like the original miniseries 'Roots' were additional resources through which to view race and class relations within her own community and nation, giving her another language through which to develop what she called her 'black consciousness'. Here, then, African American cultural productions became diasporic resources that extended their relevance across national borders because they helped provide insight into the kinds of structural inequalities faced by poor and working-class people, not only in the United States, but also elsewhere in the black Atlantic. Equally important, they could inspire the pride needed for surviving incidences of racial and class prejudice, both those experienced within Jamaica and those expected overseas.

Yet the circulation of African American cultural production does not occur outside broader relations of power and privilege, and this is what so many commentators are identifying as they decry the encroachment of American blackness upon the nationalist sensibilities of Jamaicans. In other words, as several scholars have argued, diaspora is not a unified field of experience and should be theorized in terms of power relations/asymmetries across communities, relations that are about race and nation but that are mediated by class and gender (Brown, 1998; Campt, 2004; Edwards, 2003). These insights should direct us towards two related points of inquiry. The first has to do with how current processes

of globalization have fostered new identities or facilitated a new dominance of older, marginalized ones through lateral borrowing among black communities worldwide, what Liza McAlister would call the co-production of identity among diasporic groups. McAlister's discussion of Haitian rara in New York City marks a tension between the concepts of diaspora and transnationalism. Noting that rara in New York is in dialogue with the Haitian branches of dancehall and African American hip-hop culture, and explicating the complex and changing relationships forged between Haitian and Jamaican migrants in Florida and Brooklyn (indeed, between newly arrived Haitians and established Haitian Americans), McAlister arrives at the important insight that 'the process of identity building is coproduced with other minority communities, and not just against hegemonic groups' (McAlister, 2002, p. 198). The second has to do with the ways borrowing among communities is selective and completely imbricated within the hegemonic social, economic, and political relations that make particular cultural and political practices, originating in this case in the United States, available to black communities elsewhere. Tina Campt's analysis of oral histories of Afro-Germans who lived through the Third Reich (Campt, 2004*a*) builds on this latter point. She argues that her interviewees drew upon African American cultural and political narratives not only because these narratives circulated as resources, forms of cultural memory that could serve as points of inspiration, but also because they formed part of the repertoire of American capital – economic, political, and cultural – that has become globally hegemonic. Her point here is that if we understand cultural memory as one among other sites of 'global flows', we more clearly reveal 'how that circulation is also structured by American global capital in ways that facilitate its accessibility and availability in different cultural sites' (Campt, 2004*b*, p. 17).

In other words, performances of African American blackness have been used as means to identify belonging and racial power in a range of sites throughout the black world (and beyond), yet the relations between African Americans and black people elsewhere are fraught with tension because of the globally hegemonic position of the United States and the dominance of American media. In Jamaica, on the one hand lower-class black Jamaicans have adopted and adapted some of the political and cultural trends that are portrayed in U.S. media featuring African American themes, while on the other hand, the difficulty of extracting personal and national development goals from the shadow of the United States has perpetuated an ongoing resentment. This resentment has occasionally also been extended to black Americans who, despite the stylistic appeal of African American popular culture, and despite the political appeal of

transnational racial solidarity, are nonetheless suspect because they carry the banner of the United States.

Despite the hegemonic status of 'America', however, the United States does not have a monopoly on the cultural production of blackness globally. Because of the worldwide popularity of reggae music and dancehall, and because Jamaican cultural and political struggles have become the dominant referents of black consciousness in other areas of the diaspora (Codrington, 2006; Noble, 2004), representations of Jamaican blackness have come to challenge the hegemony of American blackness as the means through which black Atlantic communities index cultural and political citizenship. Moreover, the boundaries of variant blacknesses are never as rigid as nationalists would have us believe. For example, as key brokers within African American popular cultural institutions like the black music magazines *Vibe* and *The Source*, or as well-known hip-hop video directors, people with West Indian background often 'pass' for African Americans. This kind of 'passing' has political dimensions as well, as the recent debate about affirmative action in higher education reveals. The *New York Times* report on a recent meeting of Harvard University's black alumni noted that celebrations of the increased number of black undergraduates at elite colleges and universities were tempered by concerns about exactly where these black students were coming from. At that meeting, Henry Louis Gates Jr. and Lani Guinier argued that 'the majority of [Harvard's black undergraduates] – perhaps as many as two-thirds – were West Indian and African immigrants or their children, or to a lesser extent, children of biracial couples' (Rimer and Arenson, 2004). This means that only about a third of the students were 'from families in which all four grandparents were born in this country, descendants of slaves', prompting several professors to question whether affirmative action policies were benefiting those who they felt 'were intended as [the] principal beneficiaries'. For these professors and administrators, African Americans whose roots in the United States were generations deep were being 'left behind' (Rimer and Arenson, 2004).

Gates and Guinier were raising important questions here about the diverse historical legacies of race, class, and ethnicity that are not easily resolved through the kinds of redressive policies that have been implemented thus far. However, framing this debate in terms of a competition between 'black Indigenous middle-class kids' (whose legacy of slavery is recognized and legitimated) and 'recent arrivals' (who are not acknowledged as also confronting this legacy) raises questions not only about the extent to which the higher education community is committed to contemporary civil rights concerns, but also about the extent to

which a contemporary civil rights movement might benefit from a more global historical framework of analysis (Gates, quoted in Rimer and Arenson 2004). Why not, for example, question the processes that create the conditions by virtue of which migration to the United States – for education or work – is seen as one of very few routes to social mobility in many West Indian and African countries where local ambitions always seem to require foreign realization? Asking these kinds of questions would disturb facile definitions of what circulates, who consumes, how communities are affected, and how political solidarities are forged and broken, and would draw our attention more fully to how global-local interrelationships create and reproduce power dynamics embedded within the production of various kinds of diasporic resources (education and jobs, as well as cultural style and political practice).

Black Jamaica in (African) America

Many of the young people with whom I spoke during the late 1990s believed that the circulation of ideas, practices, and styles between Jamaica and the United States was reciprocal. As one young man in his late teens put it, 'We're seeing more of the world through TV, and we're sharing ideas […] Jamaicans want American style', he argued, 'but Americans want to talk Jamaican, to walk Jamaican'. For him, and for many of his cohort, as much as America had influenced Jamaican culture, Jamaicans also influenced culture in the United States:

> *It's not like we're just taking information and they're just fooling us into thinking one way. They're changing because of us. It's a two-way thing. America right now is supreme, but not everybody is thinking like them. But we're learning from them. If America knows a better way of doing something, why are we going to say that we're not going to do it because is America? I understand that America has bad aspects that Jamaicans have picked up, like them say is America cause this drug thing, that if it wasn't for Americans then Jamaicans wouldn't be selling all this coke and crack. But everything has its good and bad and it's for us to decide what we want out of it. Some people might say we're picking up their culture, wearing our clothes this way and doing this, but if you look on some of the Americans, what they're doing is what we've been doing from long time, especially in terms of the music and the dancing. And I'm sure it's Jamaicans going to America that made it a big thing.*

What is notable about this young man's statement is the extent to which he viewed cultural appropriation as a selective two-way process, albeit one that was uneven. This explains why many young people, in contrast to both an older

generation of middle-class professionals and the generation of working-class Jamaicans politicized by the various movements during the 1970s, might not have seen America as an evil empire encroaching from the north. Contrary to the dominant image of the culturally bombarded and besieged Jamaican, powerless either to resist or critique that which is imposed from 'elsewhere' – the image often proliferated by those who disparaged the growing influence of the United States – youth asserted that David not only could challenge Goliath, but could also influence what Goliath listened to, how he dressed, and what he liked. This insistence reflects an emergent sense of where Jamaican blackness stands in relation to Americanness, and particularly African Americanness, within popular cultural representations.

That Jamaican cultural production has been recognized by mainstream America is evidenced by the fact that even the *New York Times* jumped on the dancehall bandwagon. A fashion spread in the *Sunday Magazine* of 30 May 2004 written by Steve Garbarino presented dancehall and reggae artists wearing Gucci and Versace in settings like Coronation Market and other locations in Kingston's tougher downtown neighborhoods. The emphasis throughout the piece was on 'keeping it street', on the chaos, authenticity, and rootsy sexuality embodied through a politics of cool that was generated, ironically, by wearing high-priced designers in low-income areas. The 'realness' of the street, here, was rooted in violence, or rather in the ever-existing possibility of violence at street dances in West Kingston. While fashion was the centrepiece of the article, music was its vehicle. Popular dancehall artiste Sean Paul (who crosses over to the American audience in part because of his lighter complexion and his ability to speak a more standard version of English than many darker-skinned DJs) was quoted as saying 'Music is the voice of Jamaican people […] We think about it hour to hour, year to year' (Garbarino, 2004, p. 53). Yogie, another dancehall DJ, concurred, stating, 'Music dictates how our whole society lives […] In Jamaica, everyone knows all the artists. Your bus driver could be a record producer here' (Ibid.).

In the *Times* piece, well-worn tropes about blackness, music, and exotic sexuality were rehearsed, but what was especially notable was how the article (re-)produced regionally delineated hierarchies of blackness, authenticity, and what Obika Gray has called 'badman-ism' (Gray, 2001). These are hierarchies that are also implicitly engaged by black American popular cultural productions such as the hip-hop movie *Belly*, released in 1998 by Lionsgate/Fox Studios and directed by Hype Williams, best known for his string of popular hip-hop videos in the mid-1990s. *Belly* is the story of best friends Tommy and Sincere (played

by rappers DMX and Nas respectively), who grew up together on the streets of Queens, New York, and who support themselves by robbing local businesses and dealing dope. Their story is ultimately a morality tale that indexes the power dynamics among blacknesses through space and language.

One night after robbing a strip joint, Tommy hears an MTV news report about a new form of heroin that is so potent it has only to be applied externally to be effective. According to the newscaster, this new drug is on its way to the United States via 'conduits in Jamaica and throughout the West Indies'. Tommy decides this could be a lucrative new business for him and enlists the support of Sincere, who despite his own growing desires to become legitimate, ultimately capitulates to Tommy's wishes. Tommy then drives to the Long Island estate of Jamaican drug don Lennox (played by dancehall DJ Louie Rankin) to ask for financial backing and Jamaican suppliers. Because Lennox initially resists the partnership, Tommy asks him if he is too scared to try a new business. Lennox responds by turning his attention completely to Tommy for the first time during the visit, saying, 'Don't you ever bring that scared business to me. You're looking at the toughest rassclaat Jamaican in the United States of America. I run shit. I kill for nuttin'. With that, Lennox promises to think about it, but not without indicating that Tommy will owe him a big favour for his consideration. Lennox's language here is an important, yet subtle, tool through which Williams indexes the realism of *Belly*'s underworld. Unlike many films in which African American actors portray Jamaican characters, Williams actually hired Jamaican artists for *Belly*. This is significant because in this film, as opposed to movies like *How Stella Got Her Groove Back*, the accent and the proficiency with Jamaican patois are critical registers of the kind of 'authentic' badman-ism Williams needs to portray in this narrative.

With Lennox fronting the money for the new business, Tommy organizes a crew to travel to Omaha, Nebraska, to set up their distribution system. The money starts to roll in for the New Yorkers at the expense of the local crew led by Rico, who sports giant spectacles and styles his pressed long hair in a flip. Resenting the competition, Rico places an anonymous call to the FBI to rat out point man Knowledge and the rest of Tommy's crew. The feds descend on the headquarters of Tommy's business in Omaha, and the crew falls, landing Knowledge in jail.

Meanwhile, Lennox calls in his favor from Tommy, and they travel together to Jamaica. As they are driven through the Kingston streets with Tommy coughing from the strength of the Jamaican spliff they are smoking, Lennox shows Tommy the 'pure sufferation' of Kingston's ghettos, and takes him to a

dancehall session at the Jamaica Gates club (where Sean Paul is giving a live performance). There, he points out Kingston's top don, Sosa, who is so well-protected that 'no one can touch him', Lennox says, 'not even me. It will have to be a man from out of the country'. That man, of course, is Tommy, and he is happy to oblige. By the time Tommy returns to New York, the FBI has seized his home (and imprisoned his girlfriend, Kisha), so he goes on the run.

With Tommy in Atlanta dealing dope and Sincere slowly getting out of the business and on to a new, more spiritual path, Knowledge sends Shameek (played by rapper Method Man) to Omaha to retaliate against Rico, which he does handily. Back in Jamaica, the news comes in that Lennox was behind the hit on Sosa, and Sosa's crew – led by Chiquita, a dancehall queen cum assassin – mobilizes to avenge their leader's death. They travel to New York and ambush Lennox at home. In the gun battle that ensues, Lennox manages to kill all of Sosa's men, but Chiquita surprises him by jumping him from behind and slitting his throat from ear to ear. Here is where we see most clearly how Williams maps a hierarchy of badness onto regionalized and nationalized modalities of blackness. At one end of the spectrum is Omaha-based Rico, who is portrayed as 'soft', on the one hand because of his 'country' hairdo and style of dress, and on the other because he rats out the big-city boys who are dipping into his business. Within the context of urban America, Tommy is the one who inspires fear, but he seems anxious in the Long Island home of 'the original don dada' Lennox, and awkwardly out of place on the streets of Kingston. But in the end, the baddest of them all is a Jamaican woman who kills Lennox not with the impersonal technology of guns, but by getting close enough to slit his throat. Unfortunately, space limitations make it difficult to fully explore the gender implications of this move, and how they articulate with broader gender dynamics within Jamaica (but see Barnes, 1997; Cooper, 1993; Ford-Smith, 1997; Thomas, 2004; Ulysse, 1999 for more extensive treatments). Suffice it to say here that while Chiquita may have been the fiercest killer, her ferocity does not signify that she is the 'top don'. Rather, the power she wields in this instance is symbolic of more general ideologies about violence and retribution in Jamaica. As represented in Hype Williams' film, then, Jamaican blackness is the most powerfully violent, rich, and unpredictable of the three, but it also perishes in the end.

This has the effect of redirecting *Belly*'s narrative away from an exploration of the points of convergence and divergence among diasporic blacknesses, and toward an exegesis of African American spiritual redemption, in one case via a return to roots and in the other through adherence to an alternative modernizing movement. Upon Tommy's return to New York after a brief stint in a Decatur

County Jail, he is tapped by the FBI to infiltrate a Nation-of- Islam-type organization in order to kill the Minister. Yet as he studies the religious texts, he begins to change his own thoughts about his purpose in life. Sincere, in the meantime, decides that he and his family need to get out of New York and implores his partner, Tionne (played by TLC's 'T-Boz' Watkins), to consider moving to Africa with their baby girl, Kenya. 'That's our dream', Sincere reasons, 'to go to our homeland, where our roots are. Forget about money, it's the chance of a lifetime'. The film ends on New Year's Eve 1999, and the new millennium is ushered in with Lennox dead, with Tommy declining to assassinate the Minister at the last minute, and with Sincere in Africa, where he is experiencing life, according to the concluding voiceover narrative, 'like a whole new beginning'.

While *Belly* attempts to portray the complexity of diasporic interrelationships, the film's conclusion recentres the African American narrative it starts with, and as a result, it does not delineate a more complicated sense of generational transitions within African Americanness and Caribbean Americanness that are not bound by geography. Instead, it reproduces a notion of hard and fast intra-diasporic difference and clear territorial separations. This is because figures like the Notorious B.I.G., KRS One, and Busta Rhymes – hip-hop paragons who were either born in Jamaica themselves, or whose parents were – are missing from the cultural landscape of *Belly*. These figures occupy the liminal space of Caribbean Americanness, and embody the overlap among national, transnational, and racial subjectivities. By side-stepping a deeper rendering of these (ultimately, very intimate) relationships, Hype Williams (who himself grew up in Queens with his Oklahoman father and Honduran mother) stops short of fully engaging the ways new resources have been created in and through the processes of African American/Afro-Caribbean identity formation among second-generation West Indian Americans. Had the film highlighted – rather than erased – these sorts of connections, it might have more fully mined the popular cultural networks it introduces for emergent generational trends within diasporic relationships. In this way, it could have more fully embodied what performance studies scholar Thomas DeFrantz has argued is Williams' 'afrofuturist' directorial style – a visual conceptualization of distended time and space. For DeFrantz, this is a style that, in the case of his videos, blurs the 'normative tyrannies of gender and sexuality' (DeFrantz, 2003). Here, it might also have blurred the tyrannies of national and cultural boundaries.

Generational racial formation and transnational belonging

While *Belly* presents us with a stylistic depiction of how blacknesses might be imagined as coeval yet not coextensive, this is not only about style. Popular cultural representations are also diasporic resources that both reflect and re-imagine the implications of a history of black Atlantic circulations, a history whose parameters have been shaped by geopolitical and economic concerns that have changed over time. As a result, generation is a critical analytic tool through which to investigate transnational and racial subjectivities because it gives us a way to situate expressions of racial solidarity and difference within the context of changing relationships among political structures, labour opportunities, and socio-economic mobility. For example, we know that relationships among West Indian immigrants in the United States and African Americans have always oscillated between cooperative and tense because of the changing class composition of West Indian migrant pools, the broader political economy of labour surrounding migration streams, and more general waves of nativism in American society (Watkins-Owens, 1996). But if current processes of globalization have changed the ways people conceptualize national community, and if new conceptualizations of what makes up the national space are also shaped by and shape new understandings about racial community and belonging, then we must also identify not only the kinds of resources upon which different generations of people draw to co-produce new ideas about race and nation, but also the ways generational cohorts imagine and mobilize the concept of 'resources' itself in different ways.

Several scholars have begun to do this kind of work. In her study of first and second generations of West Indian migrants in New York City, for example, Mary Waters argues that while first-generation West Indians tended to identify themselves across the board in relation to their national origins (and in doing so, to distance themselves from African Americans), their children identified in ways that were shaped largely by their class background and education (Waters, 1999). In other words, those second generation West Indian Americans who identified as ethnically West Indian tended to come from middle-class backgrounds, or had parents who were involved in ethnic voluntary organizations. Those who identified as Americans (and particularly as African Americans), on the other hand, tended to be poorer students whose negative assessments of their own future possibilities were rooted in their conviction that American racial prejudice severely limited their chances in life.

These findings led Waters (and many of her interviewees) to assert that becoming American, and specifically becoming African American, was associated with poor performance in school, and therefore ultimately with downward mobility. Other researchers, however, are beginning to investigate the ways in which identifying with aspects of African American political history and cultural production has helped second-generation West Indian Americans to succeed beyond the confines of their ethnic enclave, and to negotiate their own relationships to both West Indian and American racial (and national) formations through consumption and political activism (Glick Schiller and Fouron, 2001; LaBennett, 2002; Clarke, 2004; Stoller, 2002). In doing so, they impel a broadened understanding of 'diasporic resources', one that reconfigures West Indian Americans' relationship not only to racial prejudice in the United States, but also to class discrimination and older notions of respectable citizenship in the Caribbean.

On the one hand, therefore, diasporic resources include the kinds of music, food, fashion, and political sensibilities that accompany people and media as they circulate and that become the raw materials from which communities of black folk in various locations might draw in order to produce innovative racial and national subjectivities at particular moments. On the other hand, because people (through remittances) have become Caribbean countries' largest foreign-exchange earners, they are themselves important resources. Jamaicans themselves have become diasporic resources mobilized in a transnational sociocultural and political sphere towards national development goals that now, by necessity, must be explicitly formulated in trans-territorial terms.

What was notable about the Diaspora Conference I mentioned at the beginning of this essay, then, was ultimately its attempt to imagine a new means by which to survive globalization – by changing nationalist notions of collective belonging in ways that would broaden what it means to be both American and Jamaican. Jamaican communities abroad were positioned as representing not only significant economic interests, but also a fair amount of political power – power that could be used for the advancement of Caribbean interests in the United States, Canada, and the United Kingdom. As the *Observer* editors argued,

> Jamaica as a nation state does have influence beyond its size and economic power, driven substantially by the creative energy of its people, at home and in the Diaspora. If those abroad can be organised politically, there is the capacity to add another dimension to Jamaica's capacity on the international stage. But perhaps more critical is their ability to help add insulation against the turbulence of the globalised environment.[12]

12 'The Jamaican Diaspora Conference is just the beginning', *Daily Observer*, 18 June 2004.

The invocation of globalization here is strategic, and the proposal that diasporic Jamaicans might ameliorate its effects stands as a response to the diminished power of Caribbean (and other Third World) States to provide the resources citizens need in an environment in which the United States, the International Monetary Fund, and the World Bank set the terms for social and economic development.

Thus, Jamaicans' use of the United States to advance new goals and new understandings of community becomes a critical node in transforming nationalisms 'at home' and in the mitigation of the effects of a global political economy which, through the development of new spatial relations of production, has reinstated the national-racial hierarchies of an earlier imperial moment. In other words, redefining the spatial reach of Jamaica and America has become part of a broader project of racial vindication, one that is manifest not only through performative consumption, but also through a politics of citizenship that draws upon nationalist identifications while also extending notions of community across territorial boundaries. Black America and black Jamaica, therefore, exist in one transnational sociocultural and political field, a field that is characterized by power relations that are historically contingent yet dynamic. Only a commitment to apprehending diaspora as a process rather than as a historical event or state of being can empower us to render more complexly the ways this field transforms over time.

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CHAPTER 14

RESISTANCE OF MALAGASY SLAVES TO ENSLAVEMENT

(in the Seventeenth and Eighteenth Centuries)

Rafaël Thiébaut

Introduction

The resistance of captives to enslavement is a recurring theme in the study of slavery and the slave trade in the Atlantic region. Until now, research has focused on the Caribbean area, particularly the revolt of enslaved black people in Saint Domingue (Danon, 2015). Only recently has consideration been given to opposition to enslavement in the Indian Ocean. For many years, stories about this topic took on a mythical tone. As early as the 1840s, at the height of the abolitionist era, two novels painted a very detailed picture of the role assumed by slave deserters in the Mascarene Islands: the novel by Louis Houat entitled *The Deserters* describes four enslaved people on Île de Bourbon (Bourbon Island) who talk about the difficulties of their existence and discuss possible means of escape, and Alexandre Dumas, in *Georges*, provides a description of *marrons*, or black slave deserters (Houat, 1844, p. 29; Dumas, 1848, pp. 270–272). Clearly, deserters had already become the stuff of romantic legend.

During the era of slavery, forms of resistance ranged from enslaved people's flight from settlements through to their armed revolt against their masters. Countless methods of eluding their fate were available to enslaved people, of which desertion (or escape) and revolt are the best known. Escape was frequently an individual matter, whereas revolts required a degree of collective organization.

According to Vink (2003), wherever there was slavery, there was desertion, which, in Stanziani's (2016) view, cannot be understood without taking account of the silence that surrounded the subject of enslaved people. Nonetheless, revolts among enslaved people were a rarity in the slaving system (Meillassoux, 1998, pp. 93 and 131).

In this chapter, we will consider Madagascar as an example of the slave trade in the Indian Ocean. In doing so, we have drawn upon primary sources specifically from the Netherlands and France, the European nations that have had the strongest presence in Madagascar in the modern era. By studying innumerable journals, letters, reports, memoranda and other archived documents, we have been able to obtain invaluable information on the conditions of slavery and the responses of captives. Sources from European observers, who encountered resistance most frequently, provide a great deal of information on resistance movements in Madagascar, the Middle Passage of slave transportation and the destinations of Malagasy captives. From these sources, we learn much about the role of captives from Madagascar.

Historiographical background

Slavery and the slave trade in Madagascar existed well before the arrival of Europeans in the Indian Ocean. Notwithstanding similarities with the slave trade in the Atlantic Ocean, there are clearly distinctive elements which make this trade unique, such as its role in regional trade networks. African and Asian traders would follow the Swahili Coast as far as the Comoro Islands in order to collect slaves for transport to Arabia and Persia (Vernet, 2009). This trade was not without its problems, as highlighted by the Zanj uprisings in Iraq in the ninth century, which involved enslaved people of partially African – possibly Malagasy – origin. This distinction is often difficult to make (De Silva Jayasuriya, 2003). These events curbed the slave trade but did not stop it altogether, as it continued until the mid-twentieth century (Beaujard, 2012, pp. 69–70, 249–250).

Europeans steadily began arriving in the Indian Ocean by sea. Portuguese, Dutch, British, French and other nationalities spread throughout the area and established a presence in trade ports. Madagascar was an important stop-off point on the Indies route and was a major source of slaves. The Portuguese took enslaved people to Mozambique and Goa, the British to Bombay and Sumatra, and the Netherlands dispatched enslaved people to a multitude of its

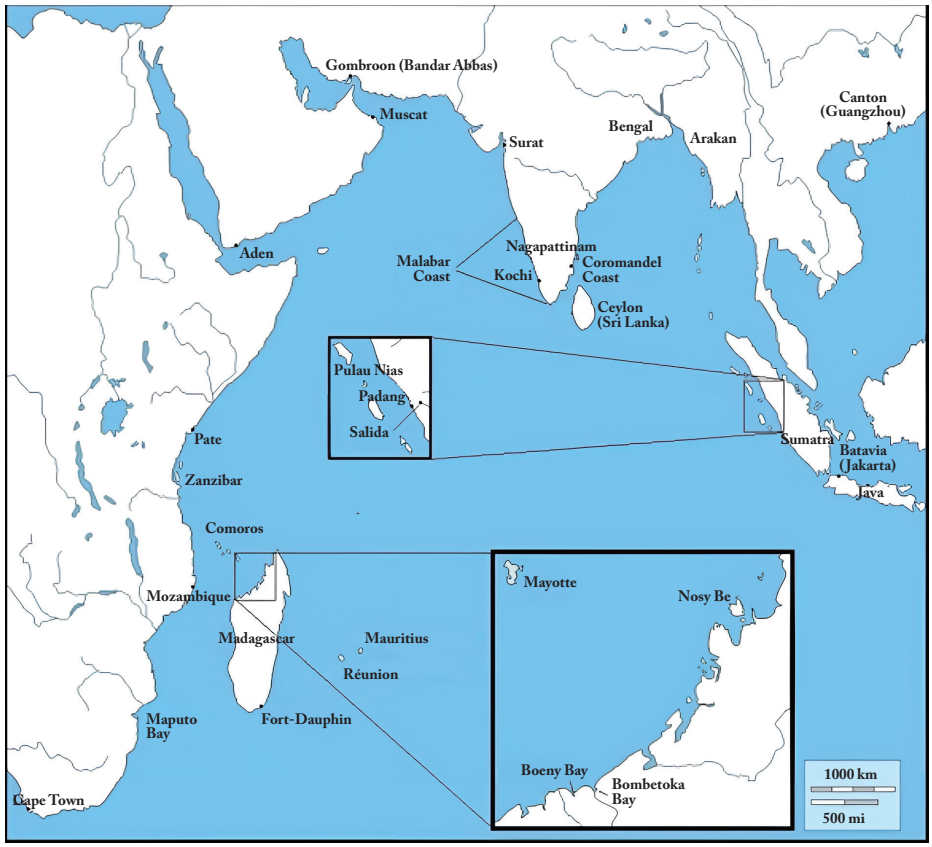

FIGURE 1. *Map of the Indian Ocean*

possessions between 1641 and 1786. The French established tropical agriculture in the Mascarene Islands from the 1720s onwards, giving rise to a thriving trade with Madagascar between 1718 and 1810.

In this paper, we will follow the route of a European slave trade voyage, considering how, at every stage, European traders faced resistance to enslavement on the part of captives taken from Madagascar. On the island itself, there was already a form of opposition from enslaved domestic workers, who were fearful of being sold to the Europeans and fled, as did enslaved people who had been purchased inland. We will then focus on the desertion of enslaved people after they had been purchased by the Europeans, both on land and at sea. Finally, we will describe the various forms of resistance to the slavery system following the arrival of enslaved people at their destination in a European colony.

From bondage to the inland slave trade

Slavery in Madagascar underwent continuous change as a result of developments in the slave trade. The demand for slaves generated by foreign traders clearly brought about a fundamental change in the methods of enslavement employed by the Malagasy people. Until around 1750, the number of enslaved people involved in maritime trade was fairly limited. Inland enslavement was sufficient to meet demand, which was fed by the slave trade among the people of Madagascar. Few were subjugated for exportation. This changed with the arrival of the French and the increased demand for captives that ensued (Thiébaut, 2018). The growth in regular trade rapidly outstripped the capacity of the Malagasy people to supply it, thereby encouraging local traders to import enslaved Africans from the East African coast to the Mascarene Islands, via Madagascar.

A number of historians have highlighted the strong tradition of desertion in Madagascar (Campbell, 2007). This appears to be confirmed by contemporary sources: Europeans arriving in Madagascar report that desertions on land were fairly widespread and occurred mostly on the island itself. Enslaved domestic workers would generally flee as soon as they suspected that they were about to be sold to the Europeans (*Journal of the Huis ten Donk*, 24 June 1733. Nationaal Archief (NA), VOC/2266; Gerbeau, 2013, p. 43). In 1663, the Dutchman Jochem Blank observed that the Malagasy people sold their slaves 'with great caution, in the fear that others would flee to an enemy, if one slave was sold' (Blank, *Rapport*, s.d.n.l. NA, VOC/3998).

There are numerous examples of this practice in the eighteenth century. At Fort-Dauphin in 1706, upon the arrival of a Dutch vessel, enslaved people fled into the forest (Journal of the *Ter Aa*, 20/16/1706, NA, VOC/4057). At Assada in 1762, 'all the slaves within the chief's territory deserted, for fear of being transported out of the country' (*Letter from Cap to Heren XVII*, 5 April 1763. NA, VOC/4229, s.f.) and, in 1774, the commander of the *Zon* reported that the chief's enslaved people, almost all of whom were working in the paddy fields, fled for fear of being sold to the Dutch (*Journal of the Zon*, 18–20 September 1774. NA, VOC/4277). A revolt also occurred in 1768, when the French adventurer known as 'La Bigorne' fought alongside the Malagasy people 'against their revolting slaves, having been promised a substantial reward, both for himself and for the S. Glemet' (*Letter from Clonard*, s.d.n.l. Archives nationales d'outre-mer (ANOM), COL, C4/25, s.f.).

It is not known how frequent these revolts were. Enslaved people often deserted the Europeans while the vessel was still at shore (Mayeur, 1913, pp. 139-176). They also had the support of the Malagasy people: at Fort-Dauphin in 1804, a young captive escaped from the masters and, in 1775, five enslaved people, who were to be sold from the *Ramioure*, escaped during the night (Mayeur, 1913, pp. 93-156). In 1807, the slave vessel *Chardenoux* lost sixteen captives by desertion during its voyage to the interior, of whom only three were recaptured (*Journal of the Chardenoux*, 18 November 1807. BMC, Decaen/102, p. 171). Some deserted while on board vessels: in 1732, one captive succeeded in launching a rowboat from the *Hirondelle* and was never recaptured and, on the *Duc d'Anjou* at Fort-Dauphin in 1738, 'we lost a deserting negro and negress, who jumped overboard entirely without our knowledge' (*Journal of the Duc d'Anjou*, 14 October 1738 and *Journal of the Hirondelle*, 24 September 1732. Archives nationales (AN), MAR, 4JJ/76, p. 23, and 4JJ/86, p. 14).

The outcome of these desertions remains unclear. It would appear that resistance was sometimes short-term, as was the case on the Mascarene Islands and the Cape during harvest time. Some deserters may have become bandits (Campbell, 2007, pp. 49–59). It is also probable that a number of enslaved people failed to survive their escape attempts. On the *Brak*, 13 captives succeeded in freeing themselves from their shackles and attempted to overpower their guard before jumping overboard. Six were recaptured and whipped, and the others were presumed drowned (*Journal of the Brak*, 19 July 1742. NA, VOC/10813). In 1752, on the *Schuilenburg*:

> *In de gepasserde nagt sig 8 slaavinnen, naar den anderen boven komende onder schijn van haar behoef te sullen doen, en stilte, door behulp van een stellagie die buijten boort voor den timmerman om te calvaaten hing, hadden te water begeeven, met voorneemen om naar land te swemmen, dog dat zij door haa geplof in 't water sig hadden doen ontdekken, en daar op met de schuijt afterhaald en tot 4 na waaren opgevischt, zijnde naar alle vermoeden de 4 absent gebleevene, door de serpentgaande stroom, ten eersten onder water getrocken en verdronken.* [Last night, eight female slaves got up, on the pretext of needing to defecate, but took to the water using a structure arranged on the exterior of the vessel, in an attempt to swim to the coast. They were given away by noise, and four were recaptured using the rowboat. The other four were never recovered, and probably drowned in the strong currents] (*Journal of the Schuilenburg*, 24 October 1752, NA, VOC/10815).

In 1764, on the *Nouvelle Julie*, four captives out of a cargo of 103 deserted. They used a knife to cut their shackles and were able to go on deck around

midnight, entirely unobserved.[1] Opportunism was a critical factor in these desertions. Negligence seemingly provided opportunities for desertion, as in 1741, when a Dutch guard fell asleep at the doors of the hut and the captives escaped into the scrub (*Journal of the Brak*, 19 October 1741. NA, VOC/2585).[2] The Europeans encouraged local chiefs to recapture the escapees. In 1699, the slave deserter Simahahwohoets was returned to the Dutch by the Sakalava chief (*Journal of the Peter and Paul*, 2 November 1699. NA, VOC/4043) and, six years later, they recovered a deserter who had escaped by swimming (*Journal of the Ter Aa*, 16 October 1705. VOC/10812). In 1746, after a small boy escaped, the French 'threatened the chiefs to the effect that, if he were not returned, an adult would be taken by force' (*Journal of the Anglesea*, 23 August 1746. ANOM, COL, C2/273, p. 110).

More frequently, financial compensation was paid out. In 1779, the French were required to pay 12 piastres to the local chief for the return of three captives who had deserted from the French receiving station (*Letter from Souillac and Foucault to the Minister*, Port Louis, 29 November 1779. ANOM, COL, C4/49, p. 278).

On-board revolts

The slave voyage was a critical factor in determining the fate of enslaved people. Revolts on board ships were a major source of worry and a constant threat (Medeiros, 2003, pp. 53–80). Unlike onshore desertions, on-board revolts were a display of common resistance. To protect against this threat, detachments of soldiers were often deployed on slave ships.[3] On vessels used in the transatlantic slave trade, it was customary to carry a larger crew (Richardson, 2003, p. 202; Martin, 1993, p. 34). It is often assumed that the same went for the slave trade in Madagascar. However, there is no evidence of this practice on private vessels in the second half of the eighteenth century. They sailed with fairly limited crews and without soldiers, which put them at considerable risk. In one case, a

1 A further slave was recaptured, 'with his entire back rubbed raw by his efforts to escape through a porthole'. Dispatches from the *Nouvelle Julie*, May-August 1764. ANOM, COL. E/101, s.f.

2 In 1686, the *Jambi* experienced no fewer than four desertions, both from the vessel and from the palisades: Resolutions of the *Jambi*, 14/24. 8 and 15 September 1686. NA, VOC/4023, s.f.

3 Instructions for the *Binnenwijzend*, Batavia, 23 April 1732. NA, VOC/985, s.f.; Letter from Pondichéry to Bourbon, s.d.n.l. ANOM, COL, C2/74, f. 286. The *Vierge de Grâce* carried two officers and 22 soldiers for its expedition, whereas the *Fulvy* carried 28. Journal of the *Vierge de Grâce*, 12 July 1733 and the Journal of the *Fulvy*, 1 February 1743. AN, MAR, 4JJ/86, p. 15 and 4JJ/76, p. 30. Letter from Rose to Courtoys, Île-de-France, 1 September 1753. De Boisanger and de La Bourdonnaye-Blossac 2008, pp. 45–54.

revolt broke out aboard the brig *Bons Amis*, which had only five white sailors on board (Declaration of arrival of the *Bons Amis*, Port Louis, 26 December 1790. MNA, OB/28, No. 549).

In the course of French slaving expeditions, twenty-four revolts were recorded and, in five of these, the ship was abandoned. This is equivalent to only 0.01 per cent of all slaving expeditions combined. At least twelve revolts occurred during seventy-one Dutch expeditions, a proportion of 16.9 per cent. There were also a number of revolts on British ships (De Silva Jayasuriya, 2010, pp. 35-36; De Kock, 1950, pp. 18-19; Bialuschewski, 2011; Allen, 2015, pp. 55-56; Sleigh and Westra, 2013, pp. 53-54). There is no reason to believe that revolts were more common on the vessels of the Dutch East India Company (VOC). It is possible that we only have information on the more significant revolts and that minor incidents went unreported.

By way of comparison, revolts broke out on ten per cent of expeditions in the transatlantic slave trade (Richardson, 2003, pp. 204-218). According to the slavevoyages.org database, captives purchased in the western region of the Indian Ocean revolted in 2.7 per cent of cases, but accounted for 4.3 per cent of enslaved people traded. The percentage of insurrections on slave ships in Madagascar is higher than in the transatlantic slave trade, which may be explained by the ease of communication between Malagasy captives, who spoke the same language.

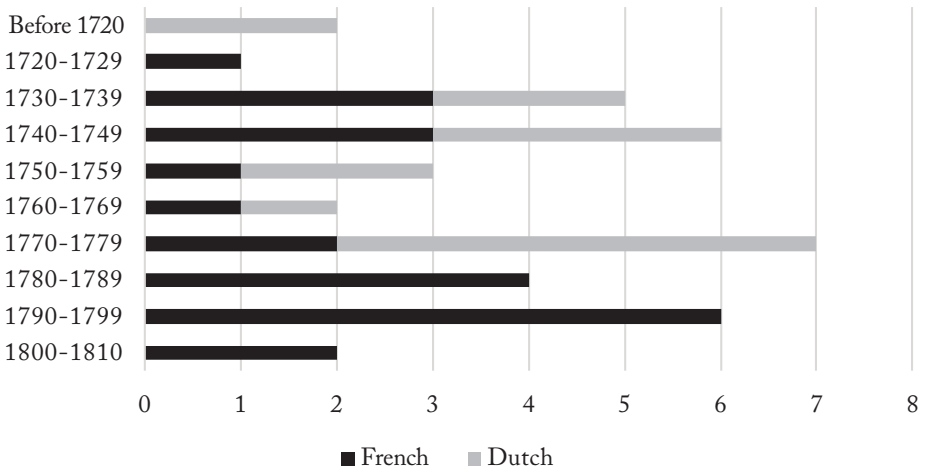

FIGURE 2. *Decade-by-decade breakdown of revolts on slave ships.*
Source: Thiébaut, 2020.

Most revolts occurred when the vessel concerned was still off the Malagasy coast, as was the case with the transatlantic slave trade, where 62.8 per cent of revolts happened off the African coast and 22.5 per cent broke out on the high seas (Eltis and Richardson, 2010, p. 190). According to Hooper (2010, pp. 135–136), time was a critical factor in revolts: the longer the time spent at sea, the higher the risk of a revolt. Le Gentil de La Galaisière (1781, vol. IV, pp. 97–112) observes that, on the *Lys*, the commander decided to remove the shackles from the enslaved people while land was still in sight. The captives had planned to subdue the French by beating them with billycans and then to escape by canoe. However, one captive alerted the commander and the revolt was soon quashed. On the *Julie*, just a few days after leaving Madagascar, the captives spotted the Great Island, but in order to prevent 'any ideas of desertion occurring to the enslaved people, I agreed with my fellow officers that they should be told that it was the Isle of Bourbon' (Cunat, *Memorandum*, s.d.n.l. ANOM, COL, E/101, s.f.).

Revolts do not seem to have occurred more frequently in certain regions or during certain decades, and significant gaps in the sources must be taken into account. However, it is interesting to note that, between 1790 and 1793, six revolts on French slaving vessels were recorded. The reasons behind them are unclear, and they are not believed to bear any connection with the revolutionary movement in France. It is possible that the wreck of the *Françoise* at Matatana in 1792 inspired the idea of insurrection among captives on the *Mananzary* and the *Constance Adèle*, which were passing through the same region the following year. This was also true of the *Vautour* in Morondava during the 1720s (Bialuschewski, 2011, pp. 87–101).

How did these revolts occur? One might well imagine that captives were constantly on the lookout for any potential lapses in the supervision of their European captors, who had to exercise the utmost vigilance.[4] The attitude of the commander appears to have been critical in maintaining discipline. In 1730, Captain L'Hermitte 'maintained good order in all matters, and ensured that the slaves undertook no revolt, although he was accompanied by only a very small proportion of the crew' (Anonymous, *Complaint against L'Hermitte*, s.l., 28 April 1730. Departmental archives of La Réunion (ADLR), C^0/2309). On the *Charlotte*, the enslaved people took advantage of the paucity of crew to stage a revolt, but the determination of the captain, who killed seven captives with his

4 Journal of the *Brak*, 8 August 1743. NA, VOC/4157. On the *Voorhout*, two captives were flogged and chained around the neck as punishment for speaking about revolt. Journal of the *Voorhout*, 26 September 1676. NA, VOC/4012. In 1751, an operation to take sick passengers ashore on the island of Sainte-Marie provided captives with the opportunity to hatch plans for a revolt. Journal of the *Princesse Amélie*, April 1751. AN, MAR, 4JJ/86, p. 27.

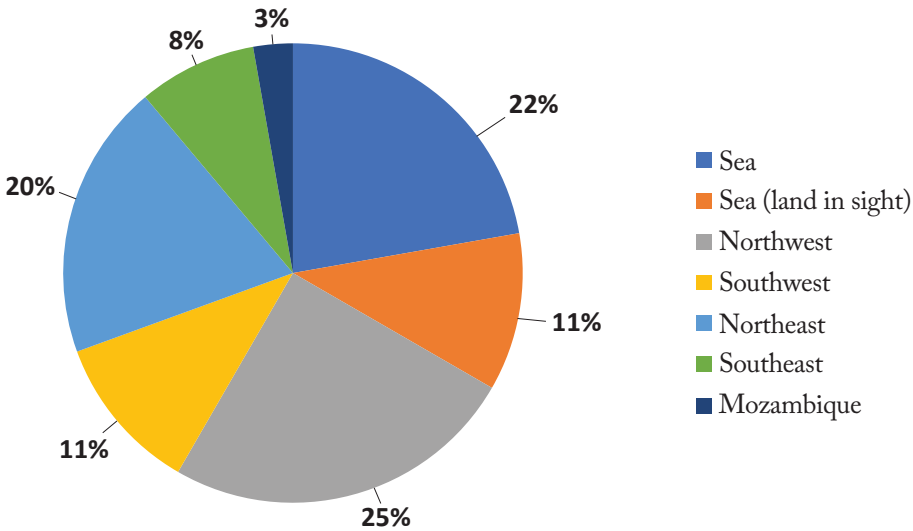

FIGURE 3. *Geographical breakdown of revolts during slaving expeditions to Madagascar.*
Source: Thiébaut, 2020.

rifle, broke the rebels' will (Declaration of arrival of the *Charlotte*, Port-Louis, 10 April 1777. MNA, OC/29, No. 207).

Irons were essential in preventing revolts and desertions: 'If Mr. de Savornin would have put in irons, as is the custom [...] the revolt, so many times rejected and so little believed, would not have taken place' (Delaleu and Boismartin, Instructions for Desgranges, Port-Louis, 31 January 1776. MNA, HB/24, s.f.). On the *Phélypeaux*, half of the enslaved people managed to break free before revolting (*Journal of the Phélypeaux*, 30 September 1756. AN, MAR, 4JJJ/87, p. 32) and, on the *Snelheid*, a captive broke the irons with his hands, sparking a rebellion (*Journal of the Snelheid*, 15 November 1770. NA, VOC/4261). However, the use of irons cannot prevent all uprisings. In the case of the *Bons Amis*, the captives, still in chains, revolted unexpectedly at breakfast time, attacking the crew with logs. Lacking an immediate and effective defence, some sailors were killed, others were put ashore and the ship was lost (*Declarations of Arrival of the Bons Amis*, Port Louis, 29/12/1790. MNA, OC/28, No. 550).

Insurrection would happen at the most opportune moment, following a certain sequence of events. On the *Brak*, the smith left his hammer next to the anvil while some of the crew were onshore and enslaved people were working

on the deck. Stapoenje grabbed the tool and let out a cry, but Auke Hanse de Tonsbergen, the strongest of the sailors, was able to overcome his assailant despite receiving a blow to the head which left 'a hole a finger's width across'. This bought extra time in which to muster an effective defence (*Journal of the Brak*, 6 October 1741. NA, VOC/2585). On the *Tamboer*, at around midday, the absence of a rowboat and the fact that a number of men had removed their irons encouraged the captives to attack the lone guard. However, when the crew was alerted, they fired a barrage of shots from their rifles in order to quell the violence (*Journal of the Tamboer*, 23 September 1694. NA, VOC/1544).

Acts of extreme brutality would be carried out using everyday items. On the *Zon*, the cry *betta betta, hollande matt* or 'death to the Dutch' was the signal for captives to attack the crew with knives, although it was not known how they had obtained the knives (*Journal of the Zon*, 29 August 1775. NA, VOC/4279). Utensils were commonly used as weapons in insurrections, although daily inspections reduced the risks (*Journal of the Brak*, 9 August 1743. NA, VOC/4157). In 1725, captives on the *Vautour* seized an axe, several cannon balls and other tools, while in 1753, on the *Neptune*, enslaved people took hold of kitchen tools and used them as weapons against the crew (Bialuschewski, 2011; Brest, 2010; *Journal of the Neptune*, 12 October 1753. AN, MAR, 4JJ/103, p. 113; Asgarally, 1989, p. 181). On the *Constance Adèle*, enslaved people forcibly occupied the deck where the arms were kept and used the weapons to prevent members of the crew from going down to that deck. Ultimately, having threatened to blow up the powder store, the French crew decided to abandon the ship (*Declarations of arrival of the Constance Adèle*, Port of La Montagne, 8 November 1793. MNA, F/10, No. 572).

These revolts had little chance of success, despite the fact that there were up to ten times more captives than crew on the vessels. However, several revolts ended in catastrophe for the European crews. In 1725, the *Vautour* was lost at Morondava following a revolt of enslaved Africans and, in 1792, the *Françoise* lost its entire crew (Bialuschewski, 2011; Gerbeau, 2013, pp. 51-54; *Letter from Floris to Cossigny and Dupuy*, Port-Louis, 02 May 1792. MNA, F/37, f. 48). In 1807, the *Ecureuil* was wrecked following a slave revolt, but the captives appear to have been unable to escape (Anonymous, *Report on vessels in the harbours of Saint-Denis and Saint-Paul*, 1 April 1807 to 31 March 1808. ANOM, COL, C3/27, f. 290). In 1770, officer Dumargaro of the *Mouche* used swivel guns to come to the rescue of another vessel where 180 captives had mounted an insurrection. Together with the crews of five other vessels in the harbour, the French were able to take control of the ship in a boarding operation. The toll of casualties was high: forty-five

enslaved people were killed and 50 were injured (Dumargaro, *Report of maritime services and campaigns.* s.d.n.l. AN, MAR, C7/94, p. 38).

As for the Dutch, the case of the *Meermin* is interesting because it is the sole example of a successful revolt on the high seas. In 1766, the commander, despite two unsuccessful attempted revolts in Madagascar, presented swords to the captives on deck, with the instruction that they were to be cleaned. The captives took control of the vessel with ease and forced the crew members to set sail for the Great Island. However, second officer Olof Leij decided to take the opposite course, and the vessel grounded in the Struisbaai, close to the Cape Colony. Once there, Leij alerted the local authorities, and the departing captives fell into an ambush. The remaining 103 enslaved people of the 140 purchased in Madagascar were transported to the Cape (Sleigh and Westra, 2013).

The question arises of how the success of a revolt should be measured. As we have seen, enslaved people were able to overcome the crew on a number of vessels. However, the objective was not only to take control of the vessel, but also to return to land. This accounts for the fact that most revolts occurred while the vessel was still off the coast (Bialuschewski, 2011). The success of a revolt therefore depended primarily on how well organized the Malagasy people and the Europeans were. In 1775, a revolt broke out on the *Flore* and the entire Malagasy contingent on board fled ashore, which also happened on the *Samaritaine* and the *Marquis de Castries*. The *Constance Adèle* and the *Bons Amis* were forcibly abandoned (Allen, 2008; *Journal de Benyowsky*, 20 April 1775; Letter from Brillanne and Maillart to the Minister, Port-Louis, 6 April 1777. ANOM, COL, C5A/3, p. 15 and C4/91, f. 20).

However, even if they were able to reach land safely, most enslaved people on board were likely to be recaptured by the Malagasy people and enslaved once more.[5] In many cases, in a final act of desperation, captives threw themselves overboard after a failed revolt, preferring death to recapture. Sea crossings were fraught with danger for the Europeans, who were exposed to both the hazards of the sea and the threat of a hostile cargo. In some cases, the tension between the crew and the enslaved people ended in a fight to the death. For enslaved Malagasy people, insurrection frequently presented a final opportunity to escape bondage.

5 In late November 1738, the *Subtile*, anchored in Baie de Bombetoka with 190 enslaved people and 26 crew members on board, suffered a major revolt just as it was about to set sail. Three officers were injured, one mortally, together with the sail-maker and one sailor. All the captives escaped, with the exception of eight women. With the assistance of Princess Salima and the King of Boina, 35 fugitives were recaptured. As a result, the vessel was forced to remain in Madagascar for wintering. Poëtte, *Declaration*, Ile-de-France, 15/12/1739. ANOM, COL, C4/3, s.f.

Movements of resistance to enslavement in European colonial possessions

As we have seen, although on-board revolts posed a genuine threat, they could often be brought under control provided that discipline was properly maintained, even if the number of enslaved people far outweighed the number of crew members. The same was true in European destinations, where the number of enslaved people could reach the levels seen in the sugar plantations of the Antilles. In Salida, the site of gold mines situated on the western coast of Sumatra, there were 482 enslaved people and forty-six employees of the Dutch East India Company in 1691, a ratio of approximately 10 to 1.[6] In the French Mascarene Islands, at the outbreak of the French Revolution in 1788, there were 12,290 whites, 3,375 freemen and -women and 75,180 enslaved people – eighty-three per cent of the total population.[7] In the Cape, the white population was higher, as enslaved people accounted for only fifty-three per cent of all inhabitants in 1795 (Van Duin and Ross, 1987, p. 115).

The demographics were thus weighted in favour of the servile population and it was not long before enslaved people from Madagascar began to exploit this, as they did on the island of Mauritius, which was colonized in 1638. Some years later, Adriaan van der Stel led the first Dutch slave ship expedition to Madagascar, landing in Antongil Bay.[8] However, of this cargo of 105 enslaved people, sixty escaped to the Mauritius hinterland (Heeringa, 1895). Desertion was one of the scourges that constantly haunted the Dutch, who struggled to establish agriculture and ebony-logging activities. It culminated in violent and fierce opposition to the social order: in 1695, enslaved people set fire to the main Dutch residence and, in 1706, Piet van Bali led a band of deserters who engaged in constant violence.[9] The VOC abandoned the island of Mauritius in 1710.

6 Teduigh, *Rolle waarbij pertinent aangewesen werd hoedanig 's E. comp: dienaren lijffeigenenen gecondem neerdens in de goutmijnen bescheijden aan de werken verdeelt sijn*, s.l., 4 December 1691. NA, VOC/8495, f. 229.

7 Anonymous, *Extract from a census of the Mascarene Islands*, s.l. 1787-88. ANOM, Depository of public records from the colonies (DPPC), G1/505, s.f.

8 Letter from Van Diemen to *Heeren XVII*, 12 December 1642. NA, VOC/1047, f. 70. It should be observed that Cauche mentions the passage of a Dutch slave ship at Sainte-Luce in 1640, but this is likely to have been part of the same expedition. Morisot 1651, pp. 22–23.

9 Leibbrandt, 1896, pp. 48–50; Vaughan, 2005, pp. 9-19; Letter from Diodati to the Cape, Mauritius, 30 September 1695.

The French retook the island some years later and renamed it *Île de France* (Isle of France). From a very early stage, the French too were under threat from deserters: in 1723, nineteen of the sixty-five enslaved people who disembarked from the *Ruby* deserted, and by 1725 there were equal numbers of enslaved people and deserters.[10] As Turpetin, a priest from the diocese of Orléans, France, observed at the time:

> There are presently forty or fifty negro deserters who have taken negresses with them and are growing in number, being familiar with all the most secluded locations on the island, committing all kinds of crimes and even attacking the guard force and their quarters; these are almost all negroes owned by the Company, who have escaped to the forest one by one, and are now a source of considerable disruption (Turpetin's voyage, 1725-1726. BNF, Arsenal/3552, s.f.).

Some ten years later, the maroon chief Sans Souci launched unrelenting attacks against the French. The colonists might have been the victims of the maroons' descendants.[11]

Île de Bourbon, later renamed La Réunion, was taken by the French, accompanied by the Malagasy people, in 1648 (Barassin, 1957). Desertion also appears to have been widespread there, and was as much a hazard to the French colonial settlers as on Île de France, particularly during the period of the *Compagnie des Indes* (Company of the Indies) (Ho, 1998, pp. 134–136). On Île de Bourbon in 1705, deserters 'had sufficient time, while we were outside, to make their attack and, after looting the entire contents of the house, seized the Governor's boat before escaping to their own country in Madagascar, from whence all had originated' (*Journal of Bourbon*, 11 February 1705, Public Library of New York, 1909). Between 1732 and 1767, Bousquet (2011, vol. III, p. 482) listed over 40 raids on the residences of colonial settlers.

The first desertion in the Dutch Cape Colony occurred within three years of the arrival of Jan van Riebeeck. This involved an enslaved Malagasy person 'who disappeared quite suddenly in the morning' of 10 March 1655 (*Journal of Van Riebeeck*, 12 March 1655; Van Riebeeck 1952, vol. I, p. 300). Desertion continued throughout the existence of slave society, adding a genuine element of threat of the type that existed on the Mascarene Islands. Throughout its presence on the Cape, the Dutch East India Company was dogged by the

10 Letter from Desforges-Boucher to the Directors, s.l., 30 November 1725; Letter from Nyon to the Directors, Port Bourbon, 11 July 1722. ANOM, COL, C3/4, f. 112-132 and C4/1, f. 5.

11 'Nearly one month since, a band of black deserters attacked and killed Knight Commander de Brossard in his residence on the Grands Bois headland'. Letter from the Council of Bourbon to the Directors, Bourbon, 1 April 1732. Lougnon 1933–1949, pp. 2–6.

desertion of its enslaved people.[12] On 8 August 1763, for example, just a few months after the arrival of the *Meermin* with its cargo of 73 enslaved Malagasy people, sixteen men and six women deserted. Some were captured two weeks later (*Journal of the Cape*, 8 and 23 August 1763. WCA, C/2021, f. 14).

These deserters, also referred to as *drosters*, behaved extremely violently towards Dutch settlers established inland, threatening the stability of rural areas (Worden, 2007). In 1714, an enslaved person named Tromp van Madagascar led a band of deserters who left a trail of violence before being overcome by the militia (Ekema, 2016). In 1736, deserters were suspected of setting fire to part of the Cape settlement (Ross, 1983).[13] In response to the rising number of desertions, the local authorities carried out increasing numbers of individual arrests and raids, with some degree of success.

Such societies clearly experienced desertion, which was the most common form of resistance among enslaved people, but on a different level compared to elsewhere (Allen, 2007). These communities of deserters were similar to those in the West Indies (Allen, 1983; Dorigny, Gainot and Le Goff, 2007, p. 47). In order to survive, powerful groups were formed, looting plantations and killing cattle (Dalrymple, 1935, vol. III, pp. 404–405; Scarr, 1998, p. 98; Allen, 1983, pp. 214–231). It was more common for men than for women to establish a presence inland, although women formed an integral part of such communities (Ratsivalaka, 1979; Ekema, 2016). Vaughan (2005, pp. 172–174) describes how, in the Mascarene Islands, deserters recreated the local societies of West Africa or Madagascar, using their original names and observing indigenous customs.[14]

The somewhat mountainous interior of La Réunion, for example, served as a largely inaccessible refuge for many deserters. It was here, especially in the calderas of Cilaos and Mafate, that bands of deserters gathered and established entrenched positions (Alpers, 2005, pp. 59–60; Reydellet, 1994, p. 49). There are various reports indicating the permanent presence of deserters in the La Réunion interior. In July 1752, mention is made of the discovery 'on the main tributary known as the "Etang du Gol", of a camp of eight primitive huts, housing fourteen or fifteen deserters' and, in the same year, the camp of Laverdure, the king of the Malagasy people, was discovered in the upper reaches of the Saint-Etienne River (Fuma, 2002).

12 *Journal of the Cape*, 27 December 1718. WCA, C/48, f. 37–46.

13 *Sentence*, Le Cap, 28 March 1737. WCA, CJ/786, f. 88–93.

14 In 1746, Louison, a captured enslaved person, identified herself by her Malagasy name: Fonovola.

As early as the beginning of the eighteenth century, small communities of deserters were established on Table Mountain and Hangklip, a highly sheltered peak. Their leader, Leander Bugis, was venerated by enslaved people from the Cape. In order to survive, they traded with enslaved people from the town or occasionally raided surrounding settlements. The situation of runaways was somewhat precarious, particularly given the severity of the winters (Armstrong, 1979, pp. 104–108; Worden, 1985, p. 125). Mention should also be made of the Morne Brabant peninsula as a place of refuge for runaway enslaved people, who committed suicide upon the arrival of English soldiers bringing news of the abolition of slavery.[15]

Most people deserted alone and desertions en masse were rare. In seventy-five per cent of cases, the duration of absence ranged from a number of days to several weeks. A distinction is drawn between minor desertion (absence of less than one month) and major desertion (Allen, 1983, pp. 222–223; Alpers, 2005, p. 51). According to Teelock (1998, p. 203), desertion was different from escaping as it was more of a temporary relief. This is an important distinction, as not all deserters formed communities. Temporary absences were not necessarily reported to the authorities and were often dealt with by the master. In the mountainous interior, however, runaways were extremely difficult to locate, and some deserters were not recaptured until some 10 years later.[16]

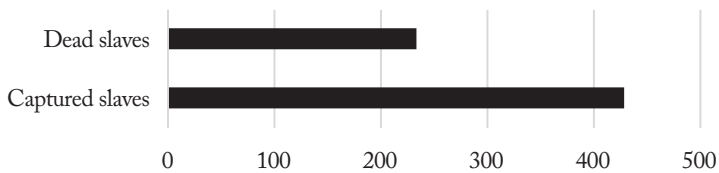

FIGURE 4. *Maroons killed or captured by black people acting for the constabulary or private individuals between mid-November 1759 and September 1762 in Bourbon.*

Source: Raphael Thiébaut.

15 Inclusion of the Morne cultural landscape on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2011. https://whc.unesco.org/en/list/1259/ (Accessed 19 February 2016.)

16 Bellier, *Observations on the Decaen Ordinance of 1 pluviôse XII concerning desertion*, St. Denis, 17 germinal XII (7 April 1804). ANOM, COL, C3/23, f. 327: ALPERS, 2005, p. 60: Letter from Sequard to the Colonial Assembly of the Ile-de-France, North-west Harbour, 12 germinal, year IX [1 April 1801]. MNA, E/68, s.f.

Year	*Enslaved people captured*
1773	465
1774	400
1775	510

FIGURE 5. *Maroons captured on Île de France.*

Source: Raphael Thiébaut.

At the end of the eighteenth century, the number of enslaved people who escaped is estimated at between 1,000 and 3,000. This number appears to increase in the early nineteenth century: the capture of 1,014 deserters was recorded in year XIII of the French republican calendar (1805) (Allen, 1983; Prentout, 1901, pp. 133–135). In 1820, there were 5,220 male and 1,355 female deserters in Mauritius, of whom 1,557 and 224 were not captured or did not return, respectively, within a year. In 1824, these figures were 7,096 and 1,758 and, in 1826, 4,844 and 1,130, or between eleven and twelve per cent of the servile population of the island (Scarr, 1998, p. 158). According to Fuma (2011, p. 246), between five and six per cent of the servile population of La Réunion were involved in resistance to slavery.[17] Half of all criminal convictions of enslaved people in Bourbon were for *marronage* (desertion) (Ève, 2010, pp. 169–170). A quarter of the deserters were women and two thirds were enslaved Malagasy and African people, who were more likely than Creoles to desert (Ève, 2010, pp. 80–81). On the Cape, 429 enslaved people were convicted of desertion in the eighteenth century, while 754 runaways, or nine per cent of the population, were identified in the early nineteenth century (Ekema, 2016; Worden, 2007).

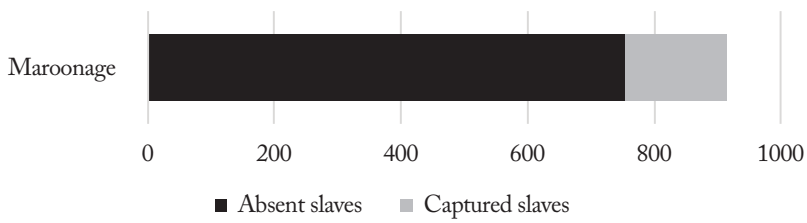

FIGURE 6. *Enslaved people reported as deserters and captured in the Cape Colony between January 1807 and June 1809. © R. Thiébaut*

Source: Raphael Thiébaut.

17 Of the 784 deserters included in the statistics for enslaved people absconding for over six months, 438 were captured, 270 were killed in the forests, 26 died in prison or in hospital, and 50 were put to death over the period 1725-1765 (Fuma, 2002).

It is difficult to determine the number of Malagasy natives included in these figures. In general, they account for two thirds of people enslaved in the Mascarene Islands prior to 1770 and one third thereafter. Meanwhile, on the Cape, one quarter of all enslaved people imported were Malagasy, and exploited mostly by the Compagnie des Indes (Allen, 2001; Shell, 1994, pp. 40–48). Malagasy people were stereotyped as being the most likely to desert, but they were not disproportionately represented among deserters (Barassin, 1980, pp. 360-361; Vaughan, 2001). While it appears that enslaved non-Creole males, acting individually, were the main instigators of resistance movements (Worden, 2007), enslaved people of various different origins would ultimately become involved in desertion (Ekema, 2016).

In response, the French employed so-called deserter hunters.[18] In 1740, La Bourdonnais emphasized the success of his black constabulary as deserter chief Sans Souci was captured 'after eleven years of murder and arson, beaten and burned alive' (Letter from La Bourdonnais to the Directors, Port Louis, 15 January 1740. ANOM, COL, C4/4, p. 2). Further successes followed and, by 1753, black deserters on Île de Bourbon had been reduced to a small number (Letter from Lozier-Bouvet to the Directors, s.l., 21 January 1753, ANOM, COL, C4/7 s.f.). This success was short-lived, however. In 1762, Desforges-Boucher reported that extensive hunts were ongoing and were leading to captures each week by the three detachments deployed (Letter from Desforges-Boucher to the Directors, Île de France, 20 September 1762. ANOM, COL, C4/14, s.f.). On the Cape, private citizens were also encouraged to capture *drosters*, and the Cape authorities organized one-off expeditions to counter the threat of deserters (Worden, 1985, pp. 128–130). In 1800, dozens of deserters attacked wagons on the road, in a form of banditry.

Maritime desertion, whereby enslaved people endeavoured to reach their home country by canoe, was another problem on the Mascarene Islands, as the enslaved people were 'too close to their homeland to discourage the continuous practice of desertion' (*Journal of Magon*, 4 May 1756. ANOM, COL, C4/9). Occasionally, these fugitives would arrive safely on Île de Bourbon and would often be returned to Île de France.[19] The Cape, on the other hand, was situated on the mainland.

18 Letter from the Council of Bourbon to the Directors, Saint-Denis, 28 January 1754. Bellecompte, *Petition*, Saint-Denis, 21 January 1768. ANOM, COL, C3/10, f. 203–204 and C3/12, s.f. REYDELLET 1994, pp. 50–51.

19 See, for example: Letter from the Council of Bourbon to the Council of Ile-de-France, Saint-Denis, 16 December 1764. ADLR, C^{0}/644.

Its extensive hinterland was inhabited by an indigenous population; deserters often tried to reach the Xhosa territories. Some enslaved people even attempted to return to Madagascar by an overland route, including a group of three people acting on the instructions of an enslaved person named Samel.[20]

According to Governor Magon, however, the success of any such enterprises was extremely limited: 'the wretches […] were immediately discovered and returned to the slavery which they had endeavoured to evade by their escape' (*Magon's Journal*, 17/08/1757. ANOM, COL, C4/9). Tombe (1810, vol. I, p. 89) makes reference to escapees who, 'having arrived in Madagascar, and forced by winds and currents to land on a coast which was held by their enemies, were recaptured and sold'.[21] In the 1790s, a number of enslaved people who had fled from Île de France found themselves in Sainte-Marie.[22] Dalrymple even confirms having met a runaway enslaved person from the Mascarene Islands in Saint-Augustin Bay, Madagascar, in 1752 (Dalrymple, 1935, p. 405).

Another form of maritime desertion involved stowing away on a vessel. This was a very common problem in the Dutch Cape Colony, and Governor W.A. van der Stel made attempts to limit it in 1705 (Ross, 1983, p. 73). Numerous examples of maritime desertion are recorded, including the case of Jan van der Caab, who was able to settle in Middelburg in the Netherlands, and marry a woman from the Dutch province of Zeeland.[23] Further examples can be found in the Mascarene Islands, such as the case of a person named Jouan who was able to escape to Pondichéry by posing as a black freeman, although few details are available.[24] In another case, an enslaved Malagasy person claimed to be a freeman and demanded his freedom (Ève, 2010, pp. 76–80).

The Mascarene authorities introduced severe penalties in order to prevent desertion in all its forms. In 1710, two enslaved Malagasy people were hanged for mutiny on Île de Bourbon (Parat, *Memoir of the Isle of Bourbon*, s.l., 22 December 1710. ANOM, COL, C3/3, f. 82-131). The *Code Noir* (Black Code) of 1723 stipulated that, for a first offence of desertion, the ears would be cut off,

20 *Notariële verklaring* (Notarial statement), The Cape, 3 October 1709. 1/STB 18/155. Worden and Groenewald 2005, pp. 18–19.

21 In 1790, a rowboat was recovered, carrying 26 runaways who had died of starvation (Payet 1990, pp. 57–58).

22 Declaration of arrival of the *Bonne Therese*, Port-Louis, 11 October 1791. MNA, OB/23, No. 551. Declaration of Hiquet and Pastoureau, Foulpointe, 28th frimaire, year IV (17 December 1795). MNA, HB/8, p. 10; letter from Dumaine to the administrators, Foulpointe, 27 September 1790. MNA, HB/1, s.f.

23 *Criminal register*, The Cape, 18 February 1751. Worden and Groenewald, 2005, pp. 286–287; Ross, 1983, p. 78.

24 Order of the Council of the Ile-de-France, Ile-de-France, 27 April 1766. ANOM, COL, C4/16, f. 48-48v. Vaughan, 2001, pp. 41–80.

and that a third attempt would be punishable by death. Deserters also risked death if they failed to surrender immediately. The Cape Slave Code of 1754, supplementing the *Statuten van Batavia* of 1642 and later the *Nieuwe Statuten van Batavia* of 1766, did not contain punishments for desertion, but there were instances of executions or the cutting of tendons (Nederlandsch-Indisch Plakaatboek 1885, vol. I, pp. 572–576; 1891, vol. IX, pp. 572–592; Naudé and Jeffreys 1944–1949, pp. 1–17). There does not appear to have been any code of punishments but, on the Mascarene Islands, minor desertion was likely to have been pardoned or punishable within the confines of the private residence concerned, probably by flogging, as on the Cape (Worden, 1985, pp. 106–108).

Revolts and other forms of resistance

Campbell and Alpers (2005) explain that revolt, in which mostly males took part, was a rarity in the Indian Ocean region, where enslaved females were predominant. The notable exceptions were European possessions, including the French Mascarene Islands and the Cape Colony. According to Vink (2003, pp. 170–171), there are a number of reasons for the absence of major slave revolts in the Indian Ocean. Among other factors, he mentions the closer personal relations between masters and enslaved people, the absence of famine, the prevalence of small-scale slavery, the lack of political tension between the colonies and the VOC, and a relatively equal ratio between enslaved and free people. Worden and Groenewald (2005, p. 21) are of the opinion that the limited extent of creolization prevented rebellions over a prolonged period, since a predominance of enslaved foreigners was conducive to desertion and revolt. Nevertheless, the colonials constantly feared revolts by the servile population, as shown by the fact that enslaved people in both colonies were denied the right of association (Worden, 1985, pp. 115–121).

Ironically, the only revolts on a scale comparable to those observed in the Antilles occurred after the Dutch and French possessions were occupied by forces from Britain, where the slave trade had recently been abolished. Some enslaved people took inspiration from the abolitionists, and they regarded the arrival of the British as a turning point. On the Cape, there were two attempted revolts, one in 1808 and the other in 1825 (Ross, 1983, p. 96). The first was led by Louis van Mauritius, who raised a force of over 300 men seeking the abolition of enslavement, but was defeated before he arrived. The second attempt was

more isolated and took place far from the Cape settlement, but its aim was also to secure greater protection for the servile population (Worden, 2007).

In the Mascarene Islands, the only revolt took place in 1811 at Saint-Leu on Île de Bourbon. For years, the islands had experienced difficulties as a result of the British blockade, resulting in a shortage of vital supplies and an expectation of freedom upon occupation by the British. However, only 500 enslaved people out of a local population of just over 5,000 took part in this revolt, under the leadership of two enslaved Creole people, Elie and Gilles. The rebels gathered in the Ravine du Trou in an attempt to overthrow the established order. They took up arms and attacked settlements before being dispersed by a militia force armed with rifles. The repression which followed was bloody and effectively served as an example to prevent any future revolts (Fuma, 2011).

Forms of resistance other than desertion and revolts can also be identified. One of the most prevalent was suicide, especially on slave ships, where starvation and suicides were common during the voyage. On such example is the *Eemland* in 1682, where 39 enslaved people preferred to drown rather than be recaptured, following a failed uprising (Extract from the journal of the *Eemland*, 21 September 1682. Western Cape Archives (WCA), C/330, f. 65). In 1788, on the *Tigre*, 101 captives jumped overboard, while a heavy-handed response by the crew of the *Bonne Espérance* led a number of rebel captives to throw themselves into the sea.[25] Suicide also occurred at the destinations of enslaved Malagasy people: on the Cape, there was a suicide rate of between fifteen and twenty per cent (Worden, 1985, pp. 135–136). Under the rule of the Dutch East India Company, attempted suicide by enslaved people was punishable by 25 years of hard labour (Van Rossum, 2015, p. 68). Other forms of resistance included discreet attacks against slave masters, such as poisoning. Such acts were frequently committed by enslaved Malagasy people on the Cape and the Mascarene Islands, and were probably associated with trial by *tangena*[26] (Worden and Groenewald, 2005, pp. 482–484; Worden, 1985, p. 133; Vaughan, 2005, pp. 91–93; Ève, 2010, pp. 396–424).

25 Declarations of arrival of the *Tigre*, Port-Louis, 16 April 1788 and 18 April 1788. MNA, OC/40, No. 308 and 310. These are tragic stories. In 1791, the French recovered the body of a drowned *old negress*, together with a nursing infant. Declaration of arrival of the *Bonne Espérance*, Port-Louis, 4 April 1791. MNA, F/10, No. 32.

26 *Tangena*: a poison derived from the fruit of the tangena tree, which was used in Madagascar to determine guilt or innocence by ordeal. In 1775, Japhta of Madagascar attempted to poison his mistress using a snake's head concealed in food. *Criminele verklaring*, 1/STB, 3/11.

Resistance in the East Indies

Unfortunately, the data necessary to document the resistance of enslaved Malagasy people in the East Indies and the Malay Archipelago, where their presence was more limited, are lacking. Little research has been done on the Afro-Malagasy diaspora in the eastern part of the Indian Ocean, much less on resistance by enslaved people there. According to De Silva Jayasuriya and Pankhurst (2003), enslaved Africans were sought-after commodities in India, and Alpers (2005, p. 55) notes that there were very few desertions in India. Although there is no evidence of any deserter communities in Dutch Ceylon, enslaved people are likely to have attempted to find refuge in the independent kingdom of Kandy (Ekema, 2012, p. 61; Vink, 2003). VOC slaving stations meted out severe punishments for desertion, ranging from corporal punishment in Salida and Batavia to capital punishment in Cochin and Colombo (Van Rossum, 2015, pp. 62 and 69; Ekema, 2012, pp. 35–36). In the French communities in the East Indies, severe punishments were also imposed as a means of preventing forms of resistance such as desertion and suicide (Gaudart, 1937, p. 186).

In the gold mines of Sumatra in early August 1734, a dozen enslaved Malagasy males deserted within the space of two weeks. The same thing occurred some months later, this time involving a dozen Malagasy men and boys and one woman (Letter from Padang, 15 March 1735. NA, VOC/2347). There were also deserters in Batavia, the most famous of whom was Surapati, an enslaved Balinese person who succeeded in establishing a community of deserters that supposedly became an independent state in the western part of Java at the end of the seventeenth century (Vink, 2003, p. 174). Desertion also occurred among enslaved people – who were not necessarily Malagasy – on other islands in the Malay Archipelago and in coastal East Africa, including the Swahili Coast and Mozambique.[27]

27 Alpers, 2005, pp. 55–56. The only lawsuit found concerning a Madagascan individual is that of a boy, Augustus van Madagaskar, for having performed sexual acts on a guinea fowl.

Conclusion

In the Indian Ocean, resistance was widespread wherever there was slavery. The Malagasy people, aided by a common language, were able to better organize themselves in order to desert or carry out group attacks. Wherever they were taken, they participated in resistance movements, whether collective or individual. However, it was in the Dutch Cape Colony and the Mascarene Islands in particular that their presence was most keenly felt. That said, resistance movements rarely had a bigger impact than individual or collective desertions.

The myths surrounding enslaved people – often of Malagasy origin – who resisted persist to this day. In the Mascarene Islands in particular, these myths are universal, and are often associated with attempts to return to Africa or the East Indies. One such example is the legend of Maham, chief of around one hundred black deserters who lived in the Salazie uplands of La Réunion. After his death, Maham's body was interred, in accordance with African customs, in a cave that subsequently became a ceremonial tomb for the deserters. It is reported that, in the deepest recesses of the cave, an ossuary and a pyramid of shrunken heads were found (Fuma, 2002). This is a clear reflection of the imagination that these heroes inspired.

Prior to the wave of abolitionist movements in the 1830s and 1840s, the only means of escaping slavery was manumission. It was a psychologically important act, but a rarity according to Campbell and Alpers (2005). There were three cases for every 1,000 people enslaved on the Cape, and most of those manumitted on the Mascarene Islands were Creole people (Shell, 1994, p. 383; Bousquet, 2011, vol. II, p. 349; Allen, 1989). However, manumissions were limited and difficult to obtain. This is clearly demonstrated by the case of Furcy in 1817, who was not freed by his master until 1843, five years before the abolition of slavery, after a protracted court battle (Thureau, 1844). The difference between freedom and servitude persisted over a long period, with resistance – often armed – being the sole means of escaping enslavement.

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CHAPTER 15

SLAVE REVOLT IN BRAZIL

João José Reis

Introduction

Brazilian history is organically linked to modern slavery. While Luso-Brazilian history stretches back over 500 years, barely a fifth of this corresponds to the post-abolition era. Over the course of almost 400 years, indigenous and African populations were used as slave labour. In the beginning of the Portuguese conquest of the territory that was to become Brazil, it was the indigenous populations that were enslaved throughout the sixteenth century and part of the seventeenth century. During the latter period, they were replaced by Africans, particularly as of the seventeenth century. Although Africans were mainly used as workers in the sugar mills, over time they came to occupy the entire sugar production chain, from planting and harvesting to grinding and making the final product, which was exported to Europe. Sugar was thus the classic commodity of a colonial agro-export economy, linked not only to the metropolis of Portugal, but also to other regions, such as Holland, Italy and Germany – countries that had not yet been formed – where the slave business and the slave trade were financed. This traffic, in turn, provided the bulk of the labour exploited by this Atlantic system, and thus remained in its various developments in the production of other goods – particularly gold and coffee – until the final abolition of the traffic to Brazil in the mid-nineteenth century.

Despite the brutality of the situation, slave resistance did not waver. Although not the only forms of collective resistance under slavery, the most common were revolt and the formation of *quilombos* and *mocambos*, the terms used in Brazil for communities of fugitive slaves. Although many *quilombos* were formed gradually – by means of adhesion from individual fugitives or groups – others resulted from collective flights sparked by revolts in one or more plantations, mines or villages. This seems to have been the case for the famous *quilombo* of Palmares, whose initial nucleus was formed by a revolt in a mill in the captaincy of Pernambuco. Fugitives also incited rebellion among enslaved workers on plantations and farms, perfectly reflecting what we understand by the term 'revolt'.

Quilombos

While *quilombos* could be small or large, temporary or permanent, isolated or near populated areas, revolts could be sparked by the desire for timely changes or definitive freedom, either for specific groups or slaves in general. Apart from these wider questions were others relative to the historical context most conducive to the emergence of *quilombos* and revolts, the profile of the participants and leaders and their motivation and inspiration. Such are the subjects of interest to this essay.

The formation of groups of fugitive slaves occurred throughout all of the areas of the New World home to slavery. Although rare, such groups in Brazil sometimes numbered into their hundreds, and even thousands. This was the case in Palmares, a confederation of *quilombos* which survived for most of the seventeenth century. Its population was not, however, merely composed of fugitive slaves, but also outlaws, adventurers and traders, as well as indigenous peoples pressured by the European advance across their land. Africans and their descendants were the main inhabitants, however. Palmares was destroyed in 1694 after dozens of military campaigns (Ennes, 1938; Carneiro, 1988; Freitas, 1984; Alves Filho, 1988; Gomes, 2005).

In the aftermath of such a defeat, the enslaved found themselves unable to replicate anything which came close to that large *quilombo* in Brazil. In order to avoid such developments, the colonial authorities developed efficient control strategies, the most efficacious being the creation of the post of *capitão-do-mato* (bush captain), a militia specialized in tracking down fugitive slaves and destroying *quilombos* (Lara, 1996, pp. 81–109). Another measure was to define a *quilombo* as the grouping of five or more fugitive slaves settled in an empty

area. This would raise the alert of a potential danger and consequently increase the dose of repression.

Although they were mostly small in size and did not therefore pose a substantial threat to slavery, *quilombos* managed to fustigate the regime. One significant problem was that most of them emerged in sites near to sugar plantations, farms, towns and cities on the margins of slavery, instead of in isolated sites far from the surrounding society. This allowed new fugitives to join them easily and facilitated the development of work, friendship, kinship, and business relationships with slaves, freed and free people of colour, white and 'mixed-race' merchants (Reis and Gomes, 1996; Gomes, 2006; Karasch, 1987, pp. 311–315; Guimarães, 1988; Higgins, 1990, pp. 65–68; Reis, 2008, pp. 106–117; Ricci, 1993, pp. 62–63).

Although the majority of the *quilombolas* – as the fugitive slaves were known – did not profess to eradicate slavery, but rather survive at its margins, the fugitives were still a terrible example in a society highly dependent on slavery, which explains the efforts made to repress them. During the first half of the eighteenth century, the authorities in Minas Gerais invented barbaric punishments, such as cutting off a slave's leg or their Achilles tendon. The authorities in Lisbon only gave their approval for the letter 'F' (of fugitive) to be branded on a fugitive's back with a smouldering iron and to cut their ear in the case of relapse (Vallejos, 1985, pp. 1–34).

Despite their differences, *quilombos* and uprisings often converged. In the prosperous mining region of Minas Gerais, various governors were attuned to such a possibility. In 1756, for example, a slave conspiracy was believed to be led by fugitive slaves (Moura, 1981, pp. 112–113; Vallejos, 1985, pp. 24–25). Enslaved people who had fled their masters were also mixed with those who had revolted in uprisings in Bahia in the first half of the nineteenth century. In São Mateus in the province of Espírito Santo, in 1827, fugitive slaves threatened to mobilize slaves from farms to invade the town, but the authorities snuffed the movement out at its source. In the district of Viana, in Maranhão, over two hundred slaves from *quilombo* São Benedito do Céu came to occupy various farms, inciting their slaves to rise in 1867. (Almada, 1984 p. 167; Araújo, 1994). These episodes suggest that the authorities were correct to believe that a large slave uprising could have its origins in a *quilombo*.

Revolts

Generally speaking, *quilombos* did represent a more ambiguous form of rebellion, unlike revolts in a strict sense. Not all revolts threatened to destroy the slavery regime, with many only interested in correcting excessive tyranny and reducing oppression to a tolerable level, claiming rights to specific benefits – sometimes the recovery of lost benefits – or punishing particularly cruel masters and overseers.

Although the *quilombo* was a form of collective resistance to persist throughout the long history of slavery in Brazil, revolts were more common in the nineteenth century. Slavery in Brazil reached its climax in that period, spreading throughout the various sectors of society and the rural and urban economy. It was during the first half of the century that the highest number of Africans landed in Brazil. Despite the ban on the transatlantic slave trade in 1831, the influx continued until 1850, with estimations suggesting that around 800,000 Africans arrived in Brazil over the course of the nineteen years in which the trade was illegal, and a total of 2,000,500 arrived in the first half of the century. The trade was stimulated by the growth of slavery in Brazil, and the latter by the destruction of the plantation economy (especially sugarcane and coffee) during the Haitian Revolution.

The high proportion of slaves in the population, and a high proportion of Africans among slaves, reinforced the collective identity and the disposition for revolt. This does not mean that *crioulo* (or Brazilian-born) slaves were passive. Apart from fleeing, forming *quilombos* and, to a lesser extent, rebelling, they also became involved in movements initiated by other social sectors, such as anti-Portuguese conspiracies and revolts held throughout Brazil from the end of the eighteenth century, or the federalist and liberal/republican uprisings in the 1830-40s. With the decline of the African slave population upon the end of trade in 1850, *crioulo* involvement in slave revolts grew, particularly in the final years of the slavery regime.

Among African slaves, several ethnic groups revealed themselves to be fiercer opponents of slavery than others. Bahia was the scene for numerous slave revolts in the first half of the nineteenth century due to the thousands of enslaved Yorubas (known as *nagôs* in Brazil) who congregated there, as well as the presence of Hausas. These groups had recently experienced warfare mainly in the form of conflicts linked to the expansion of Islam in Hausa territory, the collapse of the Oyo kingdom and the consequent outbreak of violence across the entire Yoruba territory. Rio de Janeiro

and other provinces in the south witnessed few revolts in the same period because the Africans trafficked to the area in the period were mainly of Bantu extraction, without experience in the art of war and mostly young, female, or still children.

The earliest revolts that occurred in Bahia from 1807 to *circa* 1820 were mainly instigated by Hausa slaves, before being substituted by Yoruba. Over 30 conspiracies and revolts occurred, with half of these in the 1820s, which was an intensive decade for the slave trade from Africa. This suggests that recently arrived slaves played a key role in the revolts. Hausa and Yoruba people – particularly the former – had a strong Muslim contingent among them.

Although it was not the only factor behind rebellions among Bahian slaves, Islam was of definite relevance, although only in the 1807 conspiracy and the 1814 and 1835 revolts Muslim influence were documented. In May 1807, rebels hatched a plan to besiege and conquer the city of Salvador. The conspiracy was discovered, however, and smothered at the source. Evidence of Muslim participation included confiscated papers presumed to be written in Arabic, but which unfortunately have been lost. It was discovered that part of the rebels' plan was to attack Catholic temples, burn images of saints in public squares, and to install a Muslim leader to power. (Reis, 2006, pp. 383–418).

The Hausa launched another attack in 1809, this time characterized by the mass flight of slaves from Salvador and towns in the sugarcane plantation region. Five years later, one of the most serious slave revolts of the period took place. Gathering at a *quilombo* on the outskirts of the capital, rebels descended to the farms and whaling stations on the coast, where they had allies. Proceeding to burn fishing equipment, warehouses, houses, and plantations, they also attacked a nearby village, before heading to the sugarcane fields, but were barred by militiamen. Although the majority were Hausa – including the senior leaders – there were Nupe, Borno and Yoruba people among the ranks. The Muslim contribution to the episode has been confirmed by the seizure of written documents and by the title attributed to the main leader, *malami*, which in Hausa refers to a Muslim priest or *malām* (from *mu'allim* in Arabic) (Reis, 2014).

Various revolts took place from 1814 to 1835, mainly in the regions surrounding sugar plantations. These were characterized by the burning of cane fields, masters' homes and *senzalas* (slave quarters) and the murder of overseers and slaves who did not support the movement. Little is known about the leadership, the ideas driving them, and even the repertoire of actions. In 1830, the rebellion migrated from the countryside to the city with the first revolt to occur in the centre of Salvador, where a warehouse packed with newly-arrived Africans was attacked. The uprising was violently stamped out. Finally, January

1835 witnessed the rebellion known as the Malê Revolt, the best known of all due to the ample documentation left behind (Reis, 2003).

The Malê Revolt involved some 600 slaves and freed slaves, with some of them fighting for over four hours in the streets of Salvador. At least 70 died in the clashes and nine were killed by the opposing side. Once defeated, the rebels were punished with death sentences, whippings and deportation. The Muslim presence was widely documented, with the movement led by Muslim preachers mostly made up of Yoruba people. The term *malê* comes from the Yoruba term Ìmàlẹ, meaning Muslim. Few members of other Islamized ethnic groups joined the uprising. A large number of Hausa – the major Muslim nation in Bahia at the time – were initially imprisoned, although mostly released due to a lack of evidence. From the turn of the twentieth century, several scholars suggest that this revolt gave continuity in Bahia to the jihad initiated in 1804 in Hausa territory. Although the ideology of the holy war may have inspired some of its leaders, there is no conclusive evidence that a jihad was declared in 1835. Unlike the conspiracy of 1807, no violent opposition to Catholicism, its symbols and followers was recorded. The main participants – of Yoruba extraction – did not have their own jihadist tradition in Africa, with many of the rebels being non-Muslim Yoruba.

Religion was a language and inspiration not only for Muslim rebels. In an 1826 uprising also in Bahia, the rebel *quilombo* was discovered to have an Orisha house probably dedicated to Shango, the Yoruba god of thunder. And despite a lack of documentary evidence, many Yoruba people involved in uprisings in the period probably relied on assistance from Ogun, their god of war, who had become extremely popular in the conflicts on Yoruba territory in the same era. Elements of African religiosity were also present in other revolts. In a slave conspiracy that occurred in Campinas, São Paulo, in 1832, protective roots prepared by Congolese slaves were used, according to a report, 'to tame the whites in order that the latter's arms wouldn't harm the blacks [...] killing [the whites] and freeing the blacks' (Queiroz, 1977, pp. 216, 219; Pirola, 2011). One of the leaders of this conspiracy was a slave of the Rebolo nation, known as 'Father Diogo', 'father' being the term used to refer to priests of African religions. The leader of a revolt that occurred in 1838 in the coffee-growing region of Vassouras, in the province of Rio de Janeiro, was also known as 'Father Manoel', a revolt involving both African and *crioulo* slaves (Gomes, 2006).

Despite the fact that Afro-Catholicism was a religion primarily used for cultural negotiation, it was also present in slave revolts. Cosme Bento das Chagas, a freed black man who led a slave uprising during the rebellion of the Balaiada

republican movement in Maranhão, in 1835, stated that all of his followers were devoted to Our Lady of the Rosary. He was seen 'carried along in a chair in the arms of black men freeing them from slavery [...] with the procession carrying a selection of church images and vestments' (Santos, 1983, pp. 88, 96–102, 111, 118–119, 132; Araújo, 2008). Soon, many examples emerged. In 1847, enslaved people of Bantu origin devoted to Saint Anthony became involved in a vast conspiracy in various municipalities of the Paraíba river valley in Rio de Janeiro and southern Minas Gerais (Slenes, 1991–92, p. 64). On another occasion, in 1849, rebels in the town of Queimado, in Espírito Santo, were convinced by their leader that their parish priest would persuade their masters to free them on Saint Joseph's day (Cláudio, 1979). Saint Anthony reappears in São Paulo in 1882, by which time Africans, Bantu and others, found themselves in the minority. Before the revolt took place, a complex conspiratorial network was discovered involving leaders who distributed a 'drink brewed from roots' to protect the body, with an image of Saint Anthony as part of rituals attended by the region's slaves. These rebels sought freedom by means of a syncretic religious language, very similar to what would become known as Umbanda, an Afro-Brazilian religion which is still very popular today (Machado, 1994).

Abolition and slave revolts

Slave rebellion did not, however, develop just around religious ideas and symbols. The wave of political and ideological transformations sweeping the Atlantic world in the so-called Age of Revolution influenced black rebellion in the Americas, including Brazil. Although the so-called 1798 Revolt of the Tailors in Bahia was led by free and freed men of colour, who were mostly artisans and soldiers, some slaves also took part. French in inspiration, the revolt's objectives pointed to an end to racial discrimination and, although timidly, an end to slavery. The slave revolution in Saint-Domingue (1791–1804) also had repercussions in Brazil, although not as strongly felt as in the Caribbean. News reports for 1814 suggest that rebel slaves in Bahia spoke of following the example of the revolutionary island. The border between Brazil and French Guyana also witnessed intensive agitation among the enslaved, rumours of uprisings and especially mass flights at the turn of the nineteenth century, although no significant revolt. Haiti was, in fact, mostly present in the minds of free men of colour in Brazil, to protest against racial discrimination, and in

those of fearful authorities and masters in what they referred to as 'Haitianism' (Mattoso, 1969; Tavares, 1975; Reis and Gomes, 2009, pp. 284–313).

Throughout the process of Portuguese decolonization in Brazil, the exacerbated anticolonial discourse came to somehow serve black rebellion. The patriotic propaganda insisted on the metaphor of slavery in order to represent the ties linking Brazil and Portugal: Brazil was Portugal's 'slave' while independence 'would free' Brazilians from its Portuguese 'shackles'. In some cases, the enslaved translated the white men's words into their own cause, particularly *crioulo* slaves more influenced by national culture and patriotic discourse. In 1821, in Itu, São Paulo, a rumour spread among the enslaved that Lisbon had announced an end to slavery, but that Brazilian slave masters and authorities insisted on maintaining the regime. In 1822 – the year in which Brazil proclaimed its separation from Portugal – an insurrection occurred in the town of Serra, in Espírito Santo, when a slave invited others to listen to a priest proclaiming their freedom, 'and everyone appeared at the mass carrying fire arms and sticks' (Ricci, 1993, pp. 222–226, 258; Almada, 1984, p. 166).

Among political shifts, the most significant for slave rebels were the long abolitionist trajectory, from the laws prohibiting the slave trade to those which reformed slavery, and the memorable campaigns in the 1880s, the final decade of the regime. Enslaved people made an active contribution to the collapse and extinction of Brazilian slavery. Their visions of freedom often clashed with the gradualist vision of official abolitionism, as they made their own, often radical reading of conditions threatening the survival of the system.

The proclamation of the 1831 law abolishing the transatlantic slave trade was one such moment of tension. In Espírito Santo, the law was interpreted as meaning emancipation for slaves from the town of Itapemirim. The same law also motivated slaves conspiring against their masters in the coffee-growing municipality of Campinas, São Paulo, in 1832, in a movement previously commented upon in this essay. Although the Campinas conspiracy was discovered and snuffed out, one slave claimed under interrogation to believe that the 1831 law was to abolish slavery altogether. In the very same year, enslaved people from the district of Carrancas, in Minas Gerais, reached the same conclusion. Two years later, frustrated that abolition still was not a reality, Carrancas' slaves organized one of Brazil's most violent uprisings, in which an entire family of white farmers was massacred, including men, women and children. The rebels were a mixture of Africans and *crioulos*. Twenty years later, and also in Espírito Santo, this time in the town of São Mateus, slaves organized another uprising in light of a new law renewing the prohibition of slave trafficking in 1850. The same occurred in Campos, Rio de Janeiro, when enslaved people became agitated after interpreting discussions on the

law as a sign of slavery's definitive abolition (Almada, 1984, pp. 167–174; Andrade, 1998-99, pp. 45–82; Queiroz, 1977, p. 220; Mamigonian, 2017).

Uprisings occurred and *quilombos* were formed in various parts of Brazil in the final days of slavery, despite the fact these were mostly localized movements generally restricted to one or two properties and, in the months prior to abolition on 13 May 1888, mass flights from coffee farms, with or without support from abolitionist agents. There are reports of widespread conspiracies and revolts in São Paulo, little known at the time due to their silencing by the press in order to prevent panic and further incentivize rebellion. Small uprisings were common, in which slaves murdered overseers and masters, and then were delivered surrounded to the nearest police station. There were also revolts that, although quickly snuffed out, aimed to fight for freedom. In 1882, enslaved people at the Castelo farm in Campinas rebelled to the shouts of 'Kill the white man!' and 'Long live liberty!' (Machado, 1994 pp. 73, 92-94; Santos, 1980; Azevedo, 1987; Alonso, 2015, pp. 304–315).

The push for abolition derived from slave revolts did not have to wait for the climax of abolitionist agitation in the 1880s, however. While not all of the uprisings in this era were in favour of definitive liberty, not all of the uprisings in previous eras had aimed merely to reform the conditions of slavery for those involved. Chagas, the leader of the slaves during the Balaiada movement in Maranhão, was known as the 'tutor and emperor of liberty', and he wrote in 1840 that 'the Republic is so as not to have slavery'. In 1867, also in Maranhão during a revolt in the town of Viana, fugitives from a *mocambo* in São Benedito occupied properties with an abolitionist agenda. One of the proclamations of the uprising was a letter the administrator of one of the affected farms was forced to write declaring: 'we'll meet in the field to discuss the liberty of the captives, as we've been waiting a long time for it [...]' (Araújo, 2008, pp. 33–34).

Prior to this, various slave movements that emerged in the 1820s and 1830s across Brazil had sought freedom as a target. The difference was that the later years of slavery saw alliances bloom between slaves and abolitionists. In the run-up to abolition, the political field targeted by slave uprisings expanded, boosting the movement and granting it new and more radical strategies without lending it an entirely new meaning.

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CHAPTER 16

ENSLAVED RESISTANCE IN NORTH AMERICA

Sylviane A. Diouf

Introduction

Resistance to slavery was a constant feature of American society from colonial times until emancipation in 1865. The struggles of enslaved people took many forms, from sabotage and running away to cities and free territories, to marronage, conspiracies and actual revolts. Sabotage was certainly the most widespread expression of resistance. People broke farm equipment, feigned illness, committed theft and arson and sometimes resorted to self-mutilation. Verbal and physical confrontations, gestures, attitudes and looks that showed lack of respect and challenged authority were also part of the day-to-day resistance. These overt manifestations of hostility and insubordination could be brutally punished, as Frederick Douglass recounted, '[Nelly] was whipped—severely whipped; but she was not subdued, for she continued to denounce the overseer, and to call him every vile name' (Douglass, 1855, p. 95).

The most visible rejection of enslavement, however, took the form of escape, and the runaways' most common destination was the Southern cities. In large cities like New Orleans, Charleston and Savannah they tried to melt into communities of free blacks and pass as free themselves. Others opted for foreign territories where they were accorded free status, such as Spanish Florida, Mexico or the Caribbean. When the North abolished slavery between the late

1700s and the mid-1820s, another avenue for the pursuit of freedom opened up. However, mostly runaways from the Upper South (Virginia, Maryland and Delaware) could avail themselves of this opportunity. Getting to the North from the Deep South was an extremely difficult and rarely successful endeavour. After the passage of the Fugitive Slave Act of 1850 that imposed fines on officials who did not arrest runaways, including in free states, thousands of people made their way to Canada, where slavery had been abolished in 1834. In the antebellum period, it is estimated that in excess of 50,000 individuals ran away annually (Franklin and Schweninger, 1999, p. 282). Most, however, were either caught or returned to the farms and plantations.

Marronage

In contrast to the men and women who took refuge in the northern or southern urban centres, others opted for the woods and the swamps (Diouf, 2014). From the early seventeenth century to 1865, these maroons settled and sometimes prospered throughout the slave territories. Maroons, called outliers or simply runaways, appeared in the very first Acts passed by the colonial legislatures from Virginia to South Carolina. American maroons settled in two geographical areas: the hinterland made of secluded, hard-to-reach areas; and the borderlands of plantations and cities. To conceal themselves better, some lived in 'houses' they had dug six feet underground. Maroons were individuals living alone, families, small groups or large ones of up to a hundred people. Like maroons throughout the Americas, they generally did not initiate confrontations, but when attacked, they fought back. Since they were commonly undergunned, they used guerrilla tactics, and the preferred one was to disappear. North American maroons created a unique way of life by developing social and economic networks made of free and enslaved blacks as well as poor whites, and by taking what they needed from slaveholders. Although even the largest and best-organized inflicted few casualties other than economic ones on society, their autonomy and freedom could not be tolerated as they threatened the established order and stimulated desertion among the enslaved population.

Early conspiracies and uprisings

Conspiracies – real and imagined – and actual uprisings were less frequent than marronage and escape, but they were more dreaded. The first significant uprising in colonial times erupted on 6 April 1712 in Manhattan in the city of New York. A group of 23 'Coromantins' (people from present-day Ghana) and 'Pawpaws' (from Benin) armed themselves with daggers, pistols, axes and clubs, and set a building on fire. As white men rushed to the scene, the Africans killed nine and wounded six before escaping to the woods. Seventy men were eventually caught and six committed suicide. Thirteen Africans were hanged; one man was chained and left to starve to death. Several others were burned at the stake – one, accused of killing a white man, was burnt over a slow fire – and another was broken on the wheel. Eight months later, 'An Act for Preventing Suppressing and Punishing the Conspiracy and Insurrection of Negroes and other Slaves' was passed. To discourage revolts, slaves declared guilty of arson, rape, mutilation or murder of white people were to 'suffer the pains of death in such manner and with such circumstances as the aggravation or enormity of their crimes […] shall merit and require' (Hodges, 1999).

The next momentous revolt occurred on Sunday 9 September 1739, in Stono, South Carolina, a colony where the enslaved population outnumbered whites. The revolt's leader was Jemmy (also called Cato) from present day Angola. The group broke into a store to get guns, marched with drums and banners and recruited over ninety people. They engaged the militia, which resulted in several deaths among the Africans, but they regrouped and a number of them tried to reach Saint Augustine, Florida, then a Spanish territory that offered freedom to runaways from the British colonies. In the end, about twenty-three whites and forty-four blacks were killed. Although the revolt was not successful, it instilled dread in the colonists throughout the Thirteen Colonies. The following year, South Carolina – followed by Georgia – passed a drastic slave code, which increased the control of enslaved people, took manumission from planters' hands, placing it with the legislature, and banned drumming (Smith, 2005; Hoffer, 2010).

Two years later, in the spring of 1741, after a series of fires engulfed parts of Lower Manhattan, a 'Negro Plot' was discovered that led to the arrest of 152 enslaved and free blacks including at least 11 men and one woman with Akan names, and 20 whites. After a series of trials, 17 black men, two white women and two white men were hanged; 14 blacks were burned at the stake; and

seventy – who confessed to having been part of the plot in order to be spared execution – were transported to various colonies and countries. Some historians doubt the reality of the conspiracy; others interpret it as typically African; while still others see in it a multiracial movement of the dispossessed (Lepore, 2005; Harris, 2003; Linebaugh and Rediker, 2000).

The Haitian factor

The revolution of Saint-Domingue, which started in 1791, had a profound influence on resistance throughout the Americas, from Venezuela to Colombia, Guyana to Uruguay (Rael, 2015, pp. 100-106). In the United States of America, as in other countries, the black revolutionaries' success not only spread fear in the white population of the possibility of more plots and uprisings, but it also inspired enslaved and free blacks. The arrival in American cities of about twelve thousand enslaved people brought by their owners fleeing the island contributed to both fear and encouragement. Rumours of insurrections organized by 'St. Domingo Negroes' spread from South Carolina to Virginia. In April 1795, a plot partly inspired by the revolutions in France and Saint-Domingue was uncovered in Pointe Coupée, Louisiana, then a Spanish territory. Most conspirators were enslaved but the plan also involved free people of colour, a few Frenchmen and some Native Americans. The ensuing trial showed that the conspirators were well aware of the 1791 uprising and that France had abolished slavery in 1794. Twenty-three men were hanged and thirty-one were banished. Slaveholders were enjoined by the Spanish authorities

> to maintain [their slaves] in such a state of contentment and subordination as may remove from their minds the notions of acquiring a liberty, that has caused the effusion of so much blood to those of Saint-Domingue (Hunt, 1988, p. 28).

The eighteenth century – the height of the slave trade – was the apex of conspiracies and revolts not only in North America but also throughout the Hemisphere; however, conspiracies and episodes of violence never ceased and continued into the nineteenth century. The first major incident took place in 1800, when Gabriel Prosser, a literate twenty-four-year-old enslaved blacksmith, planned to take control of Richmond, Virginia. The initial date for the launch of his uprising was 30 August, but torrential rains prevented it. Prosser was said to have rallied hundreds of enslaved and free men – and two Frenchmen – organized in military divisions to march with a banner reading 'Death or Liberty'. Gabriel, who was influenced by the French and Haitian revolutions,

believed a large coalition of French, free blacks and people of colour would rally around his cry for freedom and he 'was determined to spare those with an anti-slavery reputation – poor whites, mechanics and artisans, Quakers and Methodists, Frenchmen – and only attack planters and merchants' (Sinha, 2016, p. 58). But betrayal by two conspirators enabled the militia to thwart the movement. During the trials that ensued, conspirators showed how much they were fluent in revolutionary concepts. One declared, 'we have as much right to fight for our liberty as any men', while another invoked George Washington (Egerton, 1995, p. 40). Prosser was caught a month later. He refused to name his lieutenants and was hanged, along with another twenty-seven men, while others were deported to neighbouring states.

The largest revolt

Charles Deslondes, a native Louisianan and his two lieutenants, Quamana and Kook of the Akan people, launched what has been labelled the largest slave revolt in American history, on the night of 8 January 1811, on the German Coast, 36 miles northwest of New Orleans, an area where enslaved people were 60 per cent of the population. It was the largest in number of actual participants, two to three hundred. It also counted the highest number of black victims, estimated at over one hundred. However, because the number of white people killed – two – was low, the episode did not get the same kind of attention as Nat Turner's uprising later would. The Louisiana insurgents were representatives of a large swath of the enslaved population. They were men, women, Africans, Creoles, people displaced by the domestic slave trade, field hands, artisans, drivers and domestics. Native Americans were brought in to track them down and a numerically superior force that included the United States Army outgunned them. What followed was a massacre with people mutilated, tortured, slaughtered and hanged. Deslondes' hands were severed; he was shot in both thighs, then through the body, before being burned alive.

Following the uprising, 29 men were tried. They were killed, and several had their bodies or heads exposed on piques. The repression was so savage that even the *Louisiana Gazette* deplored it, 'We are sorry to learn that a ferocious sanguinary disposition marked the character of some of the inhabitants'. The newspaper continued that 'civilized man' should never let himself sink down to the level of a savage. Evidence of the continued fear that the Haitian revolution inspired, the 'spectre' of Saint-Domingue had hung over the incident from the

start: the rumour had circulated that Deslondes was from the island and the insurrection was described as 'a miniature representation of the horrors of St. Domingo' (Paquette, 2009, pp. 72–96).

From Denmark Vesey to Nat Turner

While the 1789 French and the 1791 Saint-Domingue revolutions were the context into which the Pointe Coupée and Gabriel's conspiracies took shape, and Deslondes' insurrection was cast, Haitian independence was central to the largest and best conspiracy in the country. It was organized by Denmark Vesey, a carpenter who had been enslaved in Saint Thomas and in Saint-Domingue for a few months in 1781–82 before living in Virginia and then Charleston, South Carolina. He had bought his freedom in 1800 after winning the lottery. Vesey was said to have recruited widely among the enslaved population – from the city to the countryside –including some men who had been taken to Charleston by their owners who had fled the Haitian revolution. According to trial records, Vesey and his troops planned on taking refuge in Haiti after having burned the city down, killed white men and, in the turmoil, seized ships to sail to the island. Alternatively, they envisioned sailing to Africa. However, a slave divulged their plans. The revolt had been scheduled for 14 July and Vesey, aware of the betrayal, attempted to launch it on 16 June. He failed and, after a trial, he and 34 men were hanged while 30 were deported to the Caribbean (The Trial Record of Denmark Vesey, 1970; Walker and Silverman, 2000).

In the morning of 22 August 1831, the most famous uprising in the United States took place in a rural area of Virginia. Was it a coincidence or did its leader, thirty-one-year-old Nat Turner, place himself into the larger context of Atlantic slave revolts when he launched his uprising on the anniversary of the start of the revolt in Saint-Domingue forty-two years earlier? Recruiting along the way, his initial small group of seven attacked three plantations, killed six people and took money and weapons. By the end of the day, about 40 insurgents had taken part in the movement; 55 whites had been killed as had 50 blacks – many of whom were tortured – and reinforcements had crushed the uprising. Turner went into hiding. He was captured on 21 October and hanged on 11 November. Eighteen men were hanged; 12 were deported and all in all, an estimated 200 black men were killed (Tragle, 1971; Greenberg, 2003).

While mostly initiated by Africans – many of whom used their prior military expertise and cultural traditions – in the early period, revolts were led thereafter

by native-born (Rucker, 2006). Two trends are discernible: the larger number of conspiracies and uprisings took place in the 1730s–1740s, decades that saw the peak of resistance throughout the Americas and, after 1791, due to the influence of the Haitian revolution. In this, North America followed the broad pattern of resistance in the rest of the Hemisphere.

Resistance, whichever form it took, demanded courage and audacity. Runaways, maroons and insurgents, especially, faced a brutal society that was well-armed and numerically superior, and one that could also spy and divide. Beyond the academic debate that categorizes the enslaved experience as a binary 'victimization versus agency', the reality is that it was both. Resistance was embedded in the very foundation of slavery.

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CHAPTER 17

THE PARTICIPATION OF BERBER, NUBIAN AND SUDANESE SOLDIERS IN THE MUSLIM CONQUEST OF THE IBERIAN PENINSULA

(Eighth-Twelfth Centuries)

Salah Trabelsi

Unlike the long and exhausting war started by the Muslim armies against North Africa in 21 *Al-Hajri* (AH)/642 of the Common Era (CE), the conquest of the Iberian Peninsula was epitomized by its ease and brilliance. It is undoubtedly important to remember that the capture of Carthage (*Muharram* 78 AH/March 697 CE) by the Arabs, as well as that of the major regions of the extreme Maghreb (*Dhul-Qa'dah* 91 AH/August 709 CE) were only possible after fifty years of violent fighting and bitter defeats (Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam, 1974, pp. 135, 138; Ibn 'Idhārī, 1983, vol. I, pp. 34–5, 43). According to medieval documentary sources, the attack on the heart of southern Europe at the dawn of the eighth century was conducted with incredible daring and speed. This striking contrast between the two ventures surprised historians to the point that some saw the campaign against Visigothic Spain as a phenomenon contrary to the natural order of things (Lévi-Provençal, tome 1, 1999, p. 2).

In fact, the breakthrough on the western shores of the Mediterranean seems to mask even more unusual realities. Arab and Latin chronicles, although often laconic and incomplete, agree that the raids, under the command of the Berber Tāriq ibn Ziyād, involved very few Arab fighters (Ḥimyarī, 1937, p. 9). These fighters are said to have numbered only around three hundred[1] and, if Ibn 'Abd al-Ḥakam and Ibn

1 1867.*'Akhbār madjmū'a fī fatḥ al-Andalus wa dhikri 'umarā'iha*, E. Lafuente y Alcantara (ed. and Spanish translation), *Colección obras arábigas de historia y geografía que publica la Real academia de la historia, Tomo primero.* Madrid, Rivadeneyra, p. 6.

ʿIdhārī are to be believed, just a handful of men – barely sixteen individuals (Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, op. cit., p. 138). The first task force in Europe would therefore have comprised mainly African recruits. This information, at first glance insignificant, paves the way for new perspectives that highlight the great diversity of the actors and gives this venture back its African and Mediterranean dimension. It therefore shifts the focus towards a pluralist history freed from the diktat of conventional and obsessive thought patterns that bring two homogeneous blocs into conflict: Islam and Christianity, East and West.

The same texts also teach us that the meeting between the two armies took place on the plain of Guadalete (or *Wādī Lakka*) (from 28 Ramaḍān to 5 *Shawwāl* 92 AH/22–29 July 711 CE). It ended with the crushing defeat of Roderick, King of Spain (r. 710–11 CE). It is difficult to pinpoint the exact position of the battle with any certainty. Most Arab historians and geographers agree that it is located on the bank of the river, near Algeciras, in the *kūra* of *Shadhūna*, a district of Medina Sidonia (Ibn ʿIdhārī, op. cit., vol. II, pp. 3, 8; *ʾAkhbār madjmūʿa,* op. cit., pp. 8–9; Maḳḳarī 1968, vol. I, p. 249, vol. III, p. 24; Ibn Khallikān, 1972, vol. V, p. 322). On the announcement of the victory of his lieutenant, the Umayyad governor of the Maghreb, Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr, hastened to join him at the head of an army of ten thousand soldiers, mostly Africans, from the month of *Ramaḍān* 93 AH/June 713 CE. After conquering the cities of *Ḳaramūna*, Seville, Mérida and Córdoba, the two armies met in Toledo (Ibn ʿIdhārī, op. cit., vol. II, p. 16; *ʾAkhbār madjmūʿa,* op. cit., p. 18). Yet what is most surprising is the silence of the Arabic texts on the black troops engaged on European soil.

Generally, and apart from a short chronicle attributed to the geographer Isḥāq ibn al-Ḥusayn, the texts only refer to a single category of soldiers, the Berbers. However, everything suggests that the initial exploit, which sealed the annexation of a major part of the western world, was that of a combined army, bringing together Berbers and Sudanese; all barely Islamized and only superficially Arabized.

Obviously, it is difficult to specify the exact number of Sudanese soldiers that landed on the European front in the month of *Rajab* or *Shaʿbān* in the year 92 AH/April or May 711 CE. From where did they come, exactly? We do not know, neither do we know whether or not they were free. However, some modern historians (Cuoq, 1985, p. 64), wanting to give a categorical opinion, have assigned them a more servile status and Nubian origins. Nothing is less certain, however, especially since the lack of documentation raises multiple problems. It must be said that the documentation for the period prior to the

second half of the eighth century remains very sparse. It would undoubtedly be ill-advised to follow a single hypothesis in Hispanic history at this point.

Perhaps it would be appropriate to recall a factor that recurs fairly frequently in medieval historical tradition: the invisibility of a significant portion of the populations living on the edge of the Sahara and who were, clearly, black-skinned. Strangely, this sociological and human reality generally passes unnoticed. Once again, the example of the Almoravid Prince Yōsuf ibn Tāshfīn must be quoted. Despite the usual euphemisms drawing attention to his brown complexion, this hero of al-Zallāḳa was of extremely dark hue (Ibn Khallikān op. cit., vol. VII, p. 125; Ibn Abī Zar, 1860, p. 190; Zereklī, 1986, tome 8, p. 222). Son of a sub-Saharan concubine, Ibn Tāshfīn was also completely ignorant of the language of his Arab contacts and communicated with them through interpreters (Maḳḳarī, 1995, vol. VI, p. 124).

It is therefore certain that soldiers originating from the edges of the Maghreb and *bilād al-Sūdān* were involved in the European venture. Often used by Arab geographers, this generic name does not allow their exact identity to be specified. Either way, it is highly probable that the army of Tāriq ibn Ziyād included Nubian and Beja soldiers, Blemmyes and people from Kānem, Bornū and Kawar, to which must be added hostages and slaves taken from the Kutāma, Zenāta, Hawāra, Ṣanhāja and Masmūda Berber tribes (Ibn ʿIdhārī, 1983, vol. I, pp. 41–3). It is also known that after the Egyptian conquest, the Nubians were subject to violent attacks between the years 21 AH/641–2 CE and 31 AH/651–2 CE. Troubled by the Nubians' fierce resistance, Abd Allah ibn Saʿd ibn Abī Sarḥ, Vice-Governor of Egypt and foster brother of the Caliph ʿUthmān (r. 23 AH/644 CE–35 AH/656 CE), decided to offer them a peace treaty. However, one of the clauses in this pact, known under the Hellenistic Arabized form of *baḳṭ* (Balādhurī, 1983, pp. 225, 238; Ibn Abī Dīnār, 1993, p. 42), demanded the annual delivery of three hundred and sixty slaves from the Nubians (Balādhurī, op. cit., p. 238). The historians ʿAbd al-Hakam and al-Balādhurī also point out that the same obligation was imposed on the Berbers of Cyrenaica who were forced to pay the sum of 13,000 dinars as proof of their abdication (Balādhurī, op. cit., p. 225; Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam, op. cit., pp. 116–7). This demand was quickly commuted to human specimens (Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam, op. cit., p. 132). For their part, the Tubū (Chad), Hausa (Northern Nigeria) and Zaghāwa peoples (inhabiting the region between Lake Chad and the Bahr al-Ghazal) were subjected to the same ignominy following the attacks by ʿUḳba ibn Nāfi in 46 AH/666 CE beyond the oases of Zawīla and Fezzan (Balādhurī, op. cit., p. 226; Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, op. cit., p.132; Ibn Abī Dīnār, op. cit., p. 42).

In fact, we have very few written testimonies about the early days of the war in Spain. However, it is important to emphasize one essential fact. Most Arab

historians agree on the low participation of Oriental and Arabic immigrants in Tāriq ibn Ziyād's expedition. These low numbers are undoubtedly explained by the engagement of a large part of the Caliphate armies in Sindh, Transoxiana, Khawārezm and Samarḳand. Furthermore, the extent of military operations and the distance from his generals naturally increased the distrust felt by the Caliph al-Walīd ibn ʿAbd al-Malik ibn Marwān (r. 86 AH/705 CE–96 AH/715 CE). What he feared most was to lose control of the prefects who were far from the centre of the Caliphate, separated from it by water and inaccessible mountains. Initially, he showed his hostility to such a distant venture, but on the insistence of the governor of the Maghreb, he changed his mind. It was not until 714 CE that he hurriedly dispatched eighteen thousand men to Mūsā ibn Nuṣayr.

Arab chroniclers do not fail to point out the irony of enlisting and arming enslaved people who were captured in raids or bought. In fact, this is a much more complex phenomenon, common to many cultural areas that based their defence system on an army of captives. It is an almost universal reality to which history testifies, beyond medieval Muslim spaces. As B. Ares, C. Bernard and A. Stella (2006) show in their collective work, in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, Cádiz, like other Iberian cities, had many legions of black *(morenos)* and mulatto *(parados)* soldiers. It is also interesting to note the importance of this model in the Kingdoms of Spain and the rest of the Muslim world. The bravery of the formidable Nubian archers, whose unfailing reputation dates back to the times of the Pharaohs and Ptolemies is well known. The same is true of the Berber horsemen who, more than once, enabled their queen Al-Kāhina (Balādhurī, op. cit., p. 231; Ibn ʿAbd al-Hakam, op. cit., pp. 134–6) and prince Kusayla (Mālikī, 1983, vol. I, pp. 33–47; Ibn ʿIdhārī, op. cit., vol. I, pp. 28–32; Ibn Khaldūn, op. cit., vol. IV, pp. 222–3, vol. VI, pp. 127–8, 172–4, vol. VII, p. 11; Ibn Abī Dīnār, op. cit., pp. 44–5) to defeat the first Muslim raids.

Regarding the twists and turns of the first engagements in Europe, it was primarily the Spanish geographer Ishāq ibn al-Ḥusayn[2] who explicitly mentioned

2 Apart from his first name and his father's name, we know little about the precise identity of this author. None of the major biobibliographical works, such as *al-Fihrist* of Ibn al-Nadīm, the *Muʿdjam* of Yāḳūt al-Ḥimiyarī or Ibn Khallikān's *Wafayāt*, mention him. Apparently, Iṣhāq ibn al-Ḥusayn may have served as a source for Ibn Khaldūn, since he is quoted twice in his *Muḳaddima* about the geography of the seven climates, as Iṣhāq ibn al-Haṣan al-Khāzinī. According to Ibn Khaldūn, 'he is one of the most distinguished geographers'. He also specifies that the geographer al-Idrīsī was inspired by him to write his book, dedicated to the Norman king, Roger of Sicily (cf. Ibn Khaldūn, 2000, pp. 86–7). We also find him quoted by the same Ibn Khaldūn with a variant of the name *(Ibn Iṣhāḳ al-Munadjdjdjim, the astronomer*): (cf. Ibn Khaldūn, 2006, vol. I, p. 5; A. Codazzi, 1929, p. 379).

the presence of black soldiers on Spanish soil, writing in around 340 AH/950 CE in his work *Áḵām al-murḏjān fī ḏhikri al-madā'ini al-maṯhhūrati fi kulli makān*

> After Tāriḳ had crossed the sea, he went to the rock that bears his name. Then the black slaves (Sudans) moved forward to fight. On seeing their terrifying shape, the Goths were panicked. The Sudans seized the imprisoned Goths, slaughtered them and pretended to eat them, which increased their fear and dread (Iṣḥāq ibn al-Ḥusayn, A. Codazzi (trans.) 1929, pp. 413–4).

For his part, the Egyptian historian Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, who wrote a century earlier, tells the same tale in his chronicle *Futūḥ Miṣr (*Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam 1974, p. 138) albeit with a slight variation. In his version, the pretence of anthropophagy, aimed at frightening the Visigoths, is attributed without distinction to all soldiers he calls 'Muslims' (ibid.). We also find a similar scene related by the Spanish historian Ibn al-Ḳūtiyya (1994, p. 77), that he places in the city of Cartagena. Aside from their variations, these narratives present a common thread and an undeniable connection. Clearly, the brief mention of African fighters seems to refer to an original source. Despite its biased insinuations, the engagement of these soldiers at the heart of Western Europe is clear. The silence of Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam and Ibn al-Ḳūtiyya on the presence of Sudanese elements remains to be explained. Did these authors compile the same chronicle? Or have their testimonies been taken from separate works?

Certainly, Iṣḥāq ibn al-Ḥusayn (op. cit., p. 414) offers us the only narrative that can be credited with preserving this fragment of an apparently ancient chronicle. Indeed, he is the only one to mention a valuable indicator which, while breaking with the course of a traditional historiography, paves the way for a less polarized reading of the central position of the Arabs and their relentless conflict with the Christian West. It is also known that several tens of thousands of Africans were subsequently employed in Spain and Portugal, under the aegis of Umayyad princes (136–423 AH/756–1031 CE), Taifa lords (423–83 AH/1031–90 CE) and the Almoravid (448–542 AH/1056–1147 CE), Almohad (525–668 AH/1130–1269 CE) and Castilian (718 AH– /1318 CE–) kings.

With the growth in human trafficking between the two shores of the Mediterranean basin, their numbers increased dramatically. Finally, whether moving willingly or displaced by force, large groups of black men, women and children were quick to mix with Hispanic-Arab society. Despite the ethnic barriers and the violence they had to endure, many of them ended up putting down roots. This was a lasting phenomenon that would deeply mark the history of Spain and the Christian West. We do not have significant quantitative

data, but literary, legal and historical sources offer analogous and consistent testimonies regarding the roles and activities that were attributed to such people at all levels of Andalusian society.

Enslaved people did not all come from the same world. They were a mixed ethnic and national mosaic. At the same time, Arabic texts highlighted the differences in status between enslaved persons of European descent and those of African origin. These social disparities, including in high-ranking military and political functions, were not unique to the Iberian world. More than their fair-skinned counterparts, enslaved blacks were often exposed to colour prejudice (Djāhiz, Risāla fī fakhr al-Sūdān, 1964, tome 1, pp. 173–226; Ibn Ḳutayba, 1992, p. 26; Al-Masʿūdī, I, pp. 82–3; Ibn Khaldūn, vol. I, p. 92; Ibn Buṭlān, Risāla, 1957).[3] Alongside the mass of Spaniards and neo-Muslims (*muwalladūn*), Slavs and Sudanese formed an essential component in the settlement structure of the Peninsula. Numerically, they were ranked third; an intermediary position, just behind the Berbers but well ahead of the Arab and Oriental immigrants who, despite their political supremacy and successive waves of immigration, remained in the minority. While enslaved people originating from continental and northern Europe were called *Saḳāliba (*and also *mamālik, ghilmān* and *fitiyān)*, their coloured counterparts were generally identified by the generic term of *ʿabīd* and that of *Sūdān*. Most of them came from West Africa. Seville, like the other Andalusian kingdoms, had a strong army led by *Saklabis* and Africans.[4]

For many centuries, there was mass movement of populations from one continent to another and from one culture to another. According to Ibn Hawkal (2001), Al-Andalus was the greatest centre for human trafficking in the Muslim world. It is difficult to precisely quantify the number of trafficked persons in the absence of reliable figures, but most Arab travellers and geographers claim that the slave trade flow was substantial. The markets of Seville, Cordoba, Valencia and Lisbon were hubs for myriad wealthy merchants – Muslims, Christians, Verdun Jews or Radhānites (Ibn Khurdadhbeh, 1889, p. 153). The raiding networks extended over vast areas of land and sea, linking the Sahara to the Red Sea and the Maghreb, Galicia and Portugal to the Canary Islands, Verdun to Narbonne, Dalmatia to Venice and Central Europe to the Baltic Sea.

Very early on, a diverse society emerged in which the quest for slaves became a major issue (Ibn Hawḳal, op. cit.). Sudanese, Berbers, Slavs, Galicians,

3 These texts offer valuable insights for a comparative approach to racialized discourse across space and time (Wheeler, 2000).

4 *Letter written by the Emir Abû Yaʿḳūb Yūssuf ibn Tāshfīn to al Nāṣir li dīn Allah Tamīm ibn Al-Muʿizz ibn Bādis,* Arabic text published by Lévi-Provençal in *al-Andalus*, vol. XV, 1950, I, pp. 114–24.

Lombards and Calabrians, whether domestic staff, agricultural workers (Ibn Bassām, 1998, vol. I, p. 198), soldiers, miners or craftsmen, were deployed in all areas of economic and social activity (Ibn al-Ḳūtiyya, op. cit., pp. 94–5). Obviously, it was primarily women who were sought as servants, nurses or simply objects of sexual pleasure, and they succeeding in becoming more involved with the rest of Hispanic-Islamic society. This peculiarity could be explained in part by a provision specific to Muslim law regarding the concubine who has a child by her master. Theoretically, despite the differences between legal schools, in the event of recognition by the father of the child, the enslaved woman, known as *umm walad*, could no longer be sold or transferred. She became free, *ipso jure*, following the death of her master, but apart from this specific condition and the procedures of manumission or redemption of freedom, some enslaved individuals with remarkable talents and faculties were able to exert a notable influence in Iberian society. Among the most outstanding examples were the famous women who arrived in Spain to whom Arab chroniclers attributed incomparable qualities, such as ʻÁida al-Madaniyya, the concubine of Ḥabīb ibn al-Walīd al-Marwānī, called Daḥūn. The latter had fallen in love with her during a pilgrimage to Arabia and had her brought back with him to Spain. She came from Medina and had very black skin. She was one of the most cultured women of her time. She knew how to recite from memory ten thousand ḥadīths, collected from Mālik ibn Anas (d. 179 AH/796 CE), the leader of the school of Medina and author of *al-Muwaṭṭāʾ,* the first corpus of Muslim law that has been preserved for us. The texts mention other cases such as Faḍl, ʻAlam and Ḳalam. Of Basque origin, the latter was a very erudite captive, a poetess with an admirable mastery of the arts of singing and composition. To these few examples of exceptional women, we should probably add the emblematic figure of a fugitive from slavery, Abū al-Ḥasan ʻAlī ibn Nāfiʻ' (m. beginning of *Rabīʻ* 238 AH/May–August 852 CE), known as 'Ziryāb' (the blackbird) because of the colour of his skin and the softness of his voice. After fleeing from his master in Baghdad, this talented musician came to Cordoba where, rising to the top of society, he helped to bring the artistic and cultural influence of the Andalusian model of life to its apotheosis. His influence is still felt today all around the Mediterranean and as far as the borders of Ibero-America (Ibn al-Ḳūtiyya, op. cit. pp. 112–3).

Apart from the text of Iṣḥāq ibn al-Ḥusayn, a series of geographical, historical and bibliographical collections provide information that highlights the continuity of an African presence on Spanish soil. This information can be found in particular in works by Ibn Abī Zarʻ, al-Maḳarrī, Ibn al-Abbār,

al-Himyarī, Ibn al-Athīr, Ibn ʻIdhārī, Ibn al-Khardabūs, Ibn Khallikān and Ibn Khaldūn (2006, vol. VI, pp. 220–2). It is in Ibn Khallikān (Lagardère, 1989) that we find the most explicit information on the role played by Sudanese soldiers during the famous battle of al-Zallāḳa, which took place on Friday 12 *Rajab* 479 AH/23 October 1086 CE. In the record that he dedicates to the Almoravid prince in his bibliographical dictionary, *Wafayāt al-aʿyān wa ʾanbāʾabnāʾ al-zamān*, the author talks of the black soldiers who accompanied the European cavalcades of the Saharan Emir, Yūsuf ibn Tāshfīn. They were equipped with armour and shields of *lamṭ* (oryx) skins, Indian sabres, long spears and javelins made from beech and fir. While reporting their vigorous intervention on this occasion, the author describes them as leading actors in the defence of the last Muslim kingdoms of Spain.

We know that this new intervention by the African armies was a result of an urgent plea from the King of Seville, al-Muʻtamid Muhammad ibn Abbad (r. 461 AH/1069 CE–482 AH/1090 CE). Unable to withstand the Castilians and fearing an end as dire as the one that befell the kingdom of Toledo, al-Muʻtamid (as he was known) decided to ask the Africans for help. Other Andalusian kings, advised by qadis and religious men, joined him. Agreeing to their request, the Almoravid prince, Yūsuf ibn Tāshfīn (r. 1071 CE–1106 CE) landed at Algeciras at the head of an expeditionary force of over twelve thousand men made up of Berbers and Sudanese. These figures are undoubtedly all the more unverifiable because they vary constantly in the Arabic texts.

On the announcement of the landing of the African troops, al-Himiyari (1938, p. 88) tells us that the King of Castile summoned a powerful army of forty thousand men and called on his Catalan and Galician neighbours for assistance. More than all the other Arab historians, Ibn Khallikān and al-Maḳarrī give us significant details on the decisive role of the black guard of the Almoravid Emir. Both these authors specify that the Berber prince had an elite force of approximately four thousand Sudanese who, on the given signal, threw themselves into the fray, spearing the horses and completely disrupting the army of Alfonso VI, King of Castile and León.

Wounded, and with his troops decimated, the king finally managed to take refuge on a nearby hill. Under cover of night, he returned to Toledo with a small group of survivors (Ibn al-Athīr, 1898, pp. 482–6), two thousand horsemen according to some, but three hundred, a hundred or even just a few dozen according to others. The author of *al-Ḥulal al-mawshiyya* reiterates this information (*al-Hulal al-mawshiyya,* 1911, p. 33). From the moment that the Sudanese elite troops, until then kept in reserve, entered the fight, the Castilian

army was completely overrun and defeated. A young black soldier managed to get close to the Christian king and seriously wound him in the thigh. As al-Maḳḳarī tells us, reproducing Ibn Khallikān's narrative almost in its entirety four centuries later:

> Meanwhile, a young black, armed with a dagger, reached the tyrant Alfonso. He severed the straps of his coat of mail and stabbed his thigh and part of his saddle (al-Maḳḳarī, op. cit., vol. IV, p. 367).

For his part, the author of *Wafayāt* reports that:

> The Emir of the Muslims rode on his horse, surrounded by the elements of his cavalry, his Ṣanhādja and his tribal chiefs. They rode towards Alfonso's camp, on which they fell, entered and killed his defenders. […] The Christians returned to their camp as soon as they knew that the Emir was there. Yūsuf ibn Tāshfīn rushed at them to keep them away. Then he came back and drove them away. They pursued him, but he escaped. Attacks continued on both sides until the Amir of the Muslims ordered his Sudanese guard, ḥashamahu al-Sōdān, to intervene. About four thousand of them went ashore. They threw themselves into battle, armed with their *lamṭ* shields, Indian swords and *al-zān* javelins. They struck the enemy cavalry with their lances, piercing their horsemen who retreated with their arrows in terror. Alfonso ran at a black slave who had exhausted all his arrows. He tried to hit him with a sword, but the Sudanese grabbed him and grabbed the reins of his mount. He pulled a dagger from his belt and stuck it in his thigh, splitting the straps of his chain mail and ripping off a piece of his saddle. Thus, the glimmer of victory came in the middle of the day. God restored the hearts of Muslims and made his religion triumph (Ibn Khallikān, op. cit., vol. VII, p. 118).

With this victory, the Almoravid Emir was bestowed with unrivalled prestige and authority. Consequently, the battle of al-Zallāḳa is celebrated by all Arab authors as an epic and redeeming event. Its hero, Yōsuf ibn Tāshfīn, exalted and transcendent, is seen as a providential man, come to return power, moral and military splendour to an offended Islam. But shortly afterwards, he had to return in haste to Africa, leaving a large part of his troops in Seville. On his return to Morocco, he tried to consolidate his control over the trans-Saharan trade networks. He established a new army, reinforced with black troops and European mercenaries. Once his hegemony was assured across the kingdoms of Maghreb and Ghana, he once again took the road to Al-Andalus, first in 481 AH/1088 CE, then in 483 AH/1090 CE. After seizing Grenada, Malaga, Seville, Cordoba, Badajoz, Almeria and Valencia, he established himself as the absolute monarch of a vast Euro-African empire extending from the Senegal River to Andalusia (Ibn Khaldūn, op. cit., vol. VII, pp. 127–8).

There are many examples of intermittent circulation of dependent populations throughout the Middle Ages between the two shores of the Mediterranean. Despite their shortcomings and silences, the documentary sources sometimes convey a wealth of information, with valuable details that appear only incidentally in the texts. These barely perceptible signs give ample and cumulative expression to a resonant, plural history that breaks with the linearity of the familiar narratives; they can therefore be used to reconstruct the facts and reposition them amid the great variety of dynamics and actors. In the centuries that followed the victory at al-Zallāḳa, transmigrations accelerated. From the Battle of Alarcos (9 *Shaʿbān* 591 AH/25 July 1195 CE) to the Battle of Las Navas de Tolosa (Ḥiṣn al-ʿIqāb) (14 *Safar* 609 AH/1 July 1212 CE), Ibn Abī Zarʿ describes processions comprised of Slavs, Andalusians, Kabyles, Arabs and Africans – multiple identities – and the example of thirty thousand black militiamen forming the escort for al-Nāṣir li-Dīn Allāh who, 'armed from head to toe, surrounded the red tent' of the Almohad prince (Ibn Abī Zarʿ, 1860, p. 340).

These few elements, briefly brought together here, invite us to deconstruct the obsessive theory of an age-old confrontation between two implacably opposing blocs; a vision based on the binary paradigms of blacks and whites, slaves and free, East and West, Islam and Christianity. As we have seen, the documentary sources can be used to widen the scope of the study and reassess the place of the actors. They provide significant data that put the centrality of the Arabs into perspective and pave the way for a historiographical investigation that could shed new light on the dynamics and plurality of this long history of Euro-African interaction.

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CHAPTER 18

HAITI AND GLOBAL AFRICA

Matthew J. Smith

'Black Africa' and 'Caribbean Africa'

The transatlantic corridor – that route which for centuries set thousands of captured Africans on a ruinous course from their continent to unknown places in the Indies, a route of loss and survival, destruction and resurrection, a graveyard for the ancestors, and a route of possibilities for the descendants – that was the route taken in 1976 by one of new Africa's progenitors, President Léopold Sédar Senghor, to the land of the New World's genesis, Haiti. Senghor arrived in Port-au-Prince on 17 February, his final and most anticipated stop on a tour of the Francophone Caribbean. Encomiums of the meeting of the twain were abundant. The Senegalese press treated the visit as the 'long-awaited meeting between Black Africa and Caribbean Africa'.

Senghor was ecstatic to acknowledge the influence of his Haitian forebears, particularly Haiti's most distinguished man of letters, Jean Price-Mars, on the intellectual development of modern Africa. 'Haiti represents for us Senegalese the most militant [emissaries] of Négritude.' (*Le Nouvelliste*, 18 February 1976, p. 1). Zambian President Kenneth Kaunda visited Haiti in April of the previous year. Haiti's victory against Europe's great powers made Haitians the greatest examples of African success outside the continent. 'I have felt', Senghor asserted, 'vibrating with force the umbilical cord which the centuries of distance have connected again'

(Ibid.). Haitian President for Life, Jean-Claude Duvalier returned the sentiment, likening the enthusiastic reception for Senghor by Haitians to 'receiving a parent whose renown reflects the pride of our origins' (Ibid.).

These tributes were not mere words of emotion. Colonialism, and the inhuman trade in African bodies since the fifteenth century, brought black people from Africa to the Caribbean and also cut off their direct contact with their homeland. Divided and brutalized on plantations, they were forced to keep Africa in their minds as they created something else in a foreign place. The roots were always there. In Haiti, as writer Gérard Jolibois pointed out in an essay dedicated to Senghor, the ethnic origins of Haitians can be traced back to Senegal and West Africa: Wolofs, Serer, Fula, Mandinka and especially the three principal ones, Senegalese, Congos and Aradas. Haitian culture, most of all the Vodou religion, 'preciously protects' these memories of the homeland (Ibid.).

This history accounts for the striking similarities between West Africa and Haiti ('Caribbean Africa') that Senghor commented on eloquently on his visit. Haitians, he stated in his public address in Port-au-Prince, 'were the first to refuse to abandon themselves to act like other races […] to distant Africa your people had indeed succeeded in bringing with them "the rage of life", this power of creation which, in the twentieth century has invaded all the arts' (Ibid.).

There exists, much more than shared imaginaries, a subterraneous connection between Africa and Haiti that endures despite the distance of centuries. It was Aimé Césaire, the Martinican thinker with whom Senghor and Léon Damas of French Guiana forged the idea of Négritude as students in France in the 1930s, who credited Haiti as the root of an independent black aesthetic. After his own visit to Haiti in 1944, Césaire famously proclaimed that it was in Haiti that Négritude 'stood up for the first time'. The implicit meaning in Césaire's assertion was that when the enslaved Africans who were brought to labour on the plantations in French Saint-Domingue triumphed against their colonists in 1804 and created the independent free State of Haiti, their victory was also an African victory. Jean-Jacques Dessalines, Haiti's first ruler in 1804 put it simply when he said that these African revolutionaries had 'avenged America'.

Toussaint Louverture, Dessalines and their successors were the pioneers of the 'rehabilitation' of Africans that Senghor noted in his address in Haiti. As the first independent black republic, Haiti was then and is just as much now viewed from various perspectives as a reflection of all that was considered good and bad about Africa. For more than two hundred years, travellers to Haiti have remarked freely on the striking similarities between Haiti and African nations: the language, habits, customs and attitudes of its majority population are all

presented as African in origin and presentation. It is for these reasons that for most of its independent life Haiti has been viewed, as one *National Geographic* writer said, as 'West Africa in the West Indies'(Scofield, 1961, pp. 227–259). There exist good reasons why this moniker has had such durability. The comparisons are clearly rendered on the surface of Haitian daily life. But the view is inaccurate. It presupposes a fixity of experience impossible to sustain given the violence of slavery and the trepidations of centuries of tumultuous national history. More problematic still, it does not sufficiently account for the ambiguous and complex ways in which Haitian intellectual discourse wrangled with the place of Africa in the nation state.

The nineteenth century call

Africa has always been the nucleus of Haitian self-imagination. At independence, two out of every three Haitians were born in Africa (Casimir, 2000). The very act of returning the former French colony to its Indigenous name, Haiti, – Ayiti in the original Taino spelling – was a defiant one, an erasure of the colonial hold and the damage that came with it. The first constitution of Haiti proclaimed all Haitians as blacks. Racial prejudice was a foreign concept, an imposition of the European mind as rationale for its abuses of the African body.

If blackness in 1804 was associated with Africanness then Haiti had proudly accepted itself as the vindication of Africans. European observers disturbed over Haiti's existence – a land without slavery or colonial rule; a living challenge to all presuppositions of black infantilism – would treat the country as a laboratory to prove or disprove the perceived incapacity of black rule. More than this, Haiti's failings would be held up as justification for colonialism in Africa – a promotion of white control of blacks to save them from a dangerous primitivism. This psychological symbiosis between Haiti and Africa was profound. The burden Haiti carried in its first half century was to be an example for Africans across the diaspora. From Mississippi to Mombasa, what Africa's daughters and sons could accomplish was to some degree reliant on how Haiti developed.

The views of racist observers of Haiti's progress since 1804 sharpened in Arthur de Gobineau's influential 1854 racist treatise *Essai sur l'inégalité des races humaines* (Essay on the Inequality of the Human Races). To the extent that Haiti figured it was considered as exemplary of African backwardness. In Haiti there were mostly blacks,

> who although only their grandfathers knew Africa were still under the influence of it […] their supreme joy is laziness; their ultimate reason is murder […]. The history of Haiti, of democratic Haiti, is a long relationship of massacres (Gobineau, 1967, p. 76).

Gobineau's views were repeated in substance by troops of acolytes. None had more power and influence on late-century views of Haiti than Spenser St. John. St. John's *Hayti, or the Black Republic* presented Haiti in stark relief, a country in perpetual despair. Its fundamental fault was its Africanness.

> As long as [the black man] is influenced by contact with the white man […] he gets on very well. But place him free from all such influence, as in Hayti, and he shows no signs of improvement; on the contrary, he is gradually retrograding to the African tribal customs, and without exterior pressure will fall into the state of the inhabitants of the Congo (St. John, 1884, p. 134).

St. John's views extended notoriously to Haitian culture, particularly Vodou, which he presented as a cannibalistic cult. This argument was influential. Haiti existed principally in this negative way and so too did Africa. There was ready support from those seeking racialist justification for their disdain of African peoples. J. A. Froude in a widely read dissertation on the necessity for European colonialism over Africans on the continent and in the Caribbean was quick to point to independent Haiti, a country wracked by cycles of political instability. 'The effect of leaving the Negro nature to itself is apparent at last […]. Hayti is the most ridiculous caricature of civilization in the whole world' (Froude, 1888, pp. 305–306).

At a time when European thinkers revelled in the repetitiveness of Haitian instability and slandered its Africanness, it was a Haitian writer who issued one of the loudest and earliest defences of Africa in the nineteenth century. Anténor Firmin, a lawyer, politician and intellectual from the northern city of Cap-Haïtien published in 1885 the book, *De l'égalité des races humaines*. In its title it was an explicit rejoinder to Gobineau. More substantively, Firmin insisted on Africa's centrality in world history. As European powers shared up African territory among themselves at the Berlin Conference, Firmin, who held his own among Parisian philosophers, argued that Africa was the epicentre of global civilization. There was no categorical scientific evidence of black inequality. And Haiti was the central argument for the progress of African people. Through its hero Toussaint Louverture, Haiti revealed, 'the astonishing and rapid evolution which Africans have undergone' (Firmin, 2001, p. 369). Toussaint, 'this son of Africa' forced the rest of the world to take note of the achievements of blacks in the Caribbean (Firmin, 2001, p. 374). Firmin presented Toussaint as a symbol of African potential on the continent and in the Caribbean:

> His glory is that of humanity as a whole, but it enables and fills with particular pride all the members of the African race whose marvellous aptitudes Toussaint so perfectly embodies. All these facts allow us to affirm that, when we study the rate at which the Black race has evolved with a measure of impartiality, it is impossible not to conclude that it shows itself eminently suited for all sorts of intellectual and moral achievements […]. What other proof of the equality of the races do we need if we find no philosophical or scientific significance in the comparison of the initial state and later social development of the different races? (Firmin, 2001, p. 377).

Firmin was not anomalous among Haitian intellectuals of his era. His contemporaries wrote liberally about their country's place, each offering his own rationalization, each stating his own defence of Africa and Haiti. It bears reminding that these Haitian writers penned their works in the late nineteenth century. There was as yet no full sense of a pan-African agenda and the concept of black freedom was often detached from universal claims. Indeed many of his peers shared his views of black equality using Haiti's history as evidence, but did so to justify Haitian worthiness for Eurocentric civilization models. They often dissociated themselves from the Africa of their times, a respected motherland no matter how debased they regarded its culture. Hannibal Price's *De la rehabilitation de la race noire par la république d'Haïti* (On the Rehabilitation of the Black Race by the Republic of Haiti) made it a point to separate blacks in Africa and elsewhere in the diaspora from the conditions of Haiti (Nicholls, 1996, p. 129). With few exceptions, all of these writers denied African culture and its remnants in Haiti as having worth. On the contrary, Haitian culture added to the conditions that kept Haiti in a retrograde state. Haitian achievement demonstrated its preparedness for European civilization.

Haiti's elite would work assiduously to continue the pattern of French colonists in eliminating Haiti's African heritage. As Haitian sociologist Jean Casimir has stated of the century after 1804,

> In the conception of the political elite the Haitian emerged from the victory of the slaves over their masters. In order for the country to participate in the international community, the Haitian State considered no alternative solution, but to expel Africa, Africans and all their daily life and culture from the history of the country (Casimir, 2000; Ramsey, 2011).

The twentieth century response

The new century would reify Euro-American views of Africa and Haiti while challenging earlier arguments of Haitian intellectuals. For the Haitian Republic, the occupation of the country by the United States Marines in 1915 was the greatest blow to its pride. After more than a century of successfully protecting its independence from foreign encroachers, Haitian politics had collapsed to such an extent that its sovereignty would become absorbed in the expanding monolith of the United States empire. It was in this maelstrom of violence, abuse and wounded national honour that a younger generation of Haitian writers found a new way forward through Africa. The African heritage resuscitated in these years was promoted actively by members of Haiti's intellectual class, composed of younger elites and members of a rising black middle class. They were principally men who envisioned Africa differently from their forebears.

The lead influencer of this new direction was Jean Price-Mars. Price-Mars, an educator, ethnologist and thinker, studied closely Haitian society and its past. He searched experience, not just facts, to find the answers as to why Haiti arrived at a point of foreign control. His labours – thoughtful and exhaustive – were investigations of rural life, urban attitudes and, most profoundly, an archaeology of Haitian culture and customs that produced two important volumes. In the first, *La vocation de l'élite* (The Vocation of the Elite) (1919), he chastised Haiti's elite classes for their denial of the Haitian peasantry as having a perceived lack of civilization. This social group, the largest population of Haitians, who were pejoratively called the *moun andèyo* (the outside people), were the real custodians of Haitian culture and an African way of life in the Republic. The more direct children of the eighteenth century revolutionaries, they were unconsciously the carriers of the African consciousness that Haiti's national imagination prided. And in their language, diet, customs and beliefs was a Haitian sensibility, truer and more determinative than the self-conscious Francophilia.

The weight of his critique was great. Price-Mars' challenge was a rebuttal of the previous generation of Haitian intellectuals who, in spite of their racial pride, held French manners in the highest esteem. Price-Mars was the most respected intellectual in the country whose inspiration cast wide among educated urbanites. His words commanded attention. A decade after *La Vocation de l'élite* came his most powerful treatise on these matters, the remarkable *Ainsi Parla L'Oncle* (So Uncle Said) (1928). In this collection of lectures on closely studied ethnographical research, African culture was explicitly identified as the core of Haitian identity. Price-Mars' assessment was scathing:

> But, by an irresistible logic, the more we forced ourselves to believe that we were "coloured" Frenchmen, the more we simply forgot to be Haitian […]. As this process occurred, the word "negro", formerly a generic term, acquired a pejorative meaning. As for that of "African", it always has been and is the most humiliating term by which a Haitian can be addressed […]. Ah! I know what repugnance I will encounter in daring to speak to you of Africa and African matters! The subject seems inelegant and completely devoid of interest to you, doesn't it? […] For heaven's sake, my friends, do not scorn our ancestral patrimony. Love it, consider it as an intangible whole (Price-Mars, 1995, pp. 146, 147, 151).

The cultural embrace of Africa was a raison d'être for Haiti's intellectuals, who joined Price-Mars in the Indigenist movement of the late years of the United States occupation of Haiti. In *Sales Nègres* (Filthy Negroes), Jacques Roumain, the brilliant Marxist poet and novelist, presented the racism and oppression of black people as a universal condition that bound Africa with the Americas together as the 'wretched of the earth':

> *Well it's like this:*
> *We others*
> *Negroes*
> *Filthy negroes*
> *We won't take anymore*
> *That's right*
> *We're through being in Africa*
> *In America*
> *Your negroes*
> *Your niggers*
> *Your filthy negroes.* (Roumain, 1945, p. 33).

The respected poet Léon Laleau, offered a view of Africa at the centre of the Haitian body that was typical of his peers in his 1931 poem *Trahison* (Betrayal):

> *This obsessive heart which does not relate*
> *To my language and my customs,*
> *And on which bites like a spike*
> *Borrowed sentiments and European customs*
> *Do you feel this suffering*
> *And this unequalled despair*
> *In taming, with words from France*
> *This heart which has come to me from Senegal?* (Laleau, 1981, p. 110).

Haitian thought had gone beyond Firmin, Price-Mars and Louis-Joseph Janvier. The romantic vision of Haitian Indigenous culture and its African roots was also a concerted protest against the American occupiers; a rejection of a white foreign invasion. In this rejection came a new Haitian nationalism. This protest charged the political atmosphere and contributed to a series of protests in 1929–30 that would precipitate the end of the United States occupation in 1934.

Nationalism served as reinforcement of what scholar J. Michael Dash has called an 'Africanism' in Haitian social discourse. The writers, militants, intellectuals, artists and black professionals of the 1930s insisted on viewing their world – its past, present and potential – through the lenses of African difference. They were buoyed by outside developments. Négritude, like the Harlem Renaissance of the 1920s, moved outward from the diaspora in concentric circles that returned always to Africa and to Haiti, the two synonymous now in a different way in the mind of an awakened and educated black youth. In the United States and the Caribbean, plays, books and articles about Haiti proliferated. Trinidadian Marxist philosopher C.L.R. James published in 1938 his famous *The Black Jacobins*, a history of the Haitian Revolution viewed as précis for an African revolution against colonialism that he hoped would also be energized in the Caribbean. As James succinctly stated on these years, 'the road to West Indian national identity lay through Africa' (James, 1989, p. 402). Haiti was regarded the most African of the continent's offspring. All of this served to vindicate Price-Mars' successors, that later generation that desired to make more of this 'Africanism' in a renewed Haiti.

The group that came to represent this tendency most called themselves *Les Griots*, which by its name harkened to the West African image of poets and storytellers. The short-lived journal of the same name was the space for their expression of an Africanist vision of Haiti

> [our] Latin culture is nothing but the legacy of a small group of Haitians represented by our intellectual elite […] our African heritage is pervasive in the majority of the Haitian people to the extent that it construes an anatomo-psycho-physiological substratum (Dash, 1981, p. 114).

The cultural position had become an ideological one. It further guided Haitian positions taken toward global African politics. The Second Italo-Ethiopian War, in 1935-1936, was a source of obvious bonding over the question of African liberation equated by 'Africanist' Haitian writers such as François Duvalier and Lorimer Denis, as being in common cause with Haiti. In 1936 they wrote:

> We Haitians, a Negro group lost in the basin of the West Indies, in this great current of pan-Africanism, which is taking shape, […] we the Haitian youth have determined to press deep sympathy in the face of the serious problem facing this country […]. For if we truly wish not be outstripped by the rapid progress of people of race and to live up to their racial consciousness, we must reject all the aberrant ideas on which we have lived from 1804 to nowadays (Duvalier, 1968, pp. 729-730).

Yet at the moment of wider movements for decolonization in Africa, Haitian Africanist claims drifted even farther from their cultural antecedents toward a baldly self-serving paradigm of control. In 1957, the year Ghana declared independence from Great Britain, becoming the first decolonized sub-Saharan African country to do so, Haiti was thrust headlong into a chaos of political violence and bruising ambition that would result in the ascension of François Duvalier, also known as 'Papa Doc', to the presidency. The founding of the repressive Duvalierist State was part of a metamorphosis of statist interpretations of Haitian black consciousness, which transformed into its ugliest variant, Duvalierism.

It is no small coincidence that one of Haiti's most tangible ties to the continent was forged in these years. In the mid-1960s, after Duvalier declared himself President for Life, and after independence of the Congo in 1960, French-speaking Haitians were encouraged to migrate there. Thousands did. A new Haitian awareness of Africa could be said to have developed through contacts made during this experience.

The Duvaliers' rule, for all its viciousness, claimed itself founded on African consciousness. François Duvalier seized each moment he could to prove this. Consider the lavish welcome of Ethiopian Emperor Haile Selassie I to Haiti in April 1966. According to Duvalier,

> the history of the noble peoples of Africa is staked, like that of Haiti, on moments of uneasiness […]. Haitians are aware of the solidarity of its destiny with all the people of the Third World, because Haiti is already engaged in a struggle for a decent life ('L'important discours du Président à vie, François Duvalier,' Le Nouvelliste, 25 April 1966, p. 1).

The sentiment of union with Africa was genuine to the extent that it reinforced a philosophy long-nurtured in Duvalier's writings, if not in his governance.

The visit of His Majesty Emperor Haile Selassie I succeeded in projecting the Duvalierist State as a pro-African State. So too did Senghor's visit ten years later when François Duvalier's son and successor, twenty-four year old Jean-Claude was in power. Haitian and African pride in these events was justifiable. It could not conceal, however, the corruption of a regime that had become universally

reviled for its oppression. Worse, it twinned Haitian black consciousness – so long in formation, so deeply connected to Haiti's glory – with tyranny.

What did Senghor make of this in 1976? He most certainly knew of the protests and the resulting tortures, exiles and murders that had become part of Haitian reality. The issue faced by independent Africa was the same as Haiti's Caribbean neighbours: how do you engage with a nation state with whom you share such powerful historical and racial alliances, but that is at the same time despotic?

The complexity of the situation influenced diplomatic relations with Haiti as the twentieth century drew to a close. When, a decade after Senghor's Haiti trip, the Duvalier dictatorship was toppled amid a burst of grassroots resistance, the rest of the black world rose in solidarity for Haiti. The linkages between 1804 and the struggle for freedom in Zimbabwe and against Apartheid in South Africa fit into a wider history of black resistance that consciously tied Haiti to independent Africa. These political ties in the post-Duvalier era were more tangible than before.

The twenty-first-century echo

In 2004, on the two-hundredth anniversary of Haitian independence, President Jean-Bertrand Aristide was forced into exile under controversial circumstances. He went first to the Democratic Republic of the Congo and then, after a brief sojourn in Jamaica, settled for seven years in South Africa. The South African Government under Thabo Mbeki invoked Haiti's place in Global Africa in supporting the decision to host Aristide despite local criticism. Mbeki had been the only African head of State present at the Haitian bicentenary celebrations where he claimed that he was working 'together with the leadership and people of Haiti' to address 'the problems facing this inspirational home of African freedom'. Aristide himself was only too willing to point out the similarities between both places. In a doctoral dissertation in linguistics, later published as a book while in exile, he emphasized that the Swahili word *Haitii* means 'do not obey', a suitable parallel for his country's history (Aristide, 2011). Molefi Kete Asante, African American professor in the United States, put it even more directly: 'Haiti is the African's epic against colonialism' (Asante, 2011, p. 4). As before, there were more than a few in the Caribbean and Africa who found ulterior motives behind African embrace of Haitian leaders who had fallen out of favour.

A far less contestable solidarity forged when the massive January 2010 earthquake devastated much of Port-au-Prince. African countries drew on historical obligation to call for further support of Haiti, the first black republic in the world. Among the more dramatic displays of support for Haiti was Senghor's successor, President Abdoulaye Wade's offer of land to Haitians wishing to repatriate to Africa. His country joined more than two dozen African nations that pledged funds in excess of US$50 million for Haiti which, in addition to concerts, drives and volunteer relief assistance, demonstrated the indelibility of Haiti's place in the global African conscience.

This union continues today as more Haitians reside and work in Africa and more Africans live in Haiti. One such person, Belmondo Ndengué, a Cameroonian living in Port-au-Prince, captured over two hundred years of history in a statement on what he had gained from living in Haiti:

> *After all this time spent on this corner of the Earth, extended providentially in what I call Caribbean Africa, I cannot return to the circumstances which led me here. I lived in Europe and one day, love and fate propelled me here. I expected to spend four years and go back. In the end, I stayed in a country that allowed me to better understand the Africa that I had left for several years.*

As important as these political and historical ties are, they cannot supersede the cultural bonds that connect Haiti to Africa. If Haiti is not quite West Africa in the West Indies, it does contain highly pronounced African aspects of its culture – a creolized form that is a recognizable voice in a rich transatlantic dialogue that stretches across the diaspora. It is in the adaptations and advancements of the remarkable circumstances of Haitian history that proof exists of the presence of a global African consciousness and one that over time has influenced the continent as well. The music of Haiti provides a clear example. Haitian commercial music – *Konpa, twoubadou* and *rasin* – contains sonic elements of Africa as well as the rhythms and syncopations of Haiti's closest neighbours. A worldly listener can hear strains of Congolese soukous in its guitar lines even though its creators deny conscious influence. Haitian music has in turn influenced the development of music forms in other parts of la Francophonie. Zouk from Martinique is partly rooted in Haitian music, and zouk has inspired the exciting Ivorian dance music zouglou, widely popular also in Burkina Faso, Cameroon and Gabon.

These cultural genealogies can be traced back and forth across the Atlantic, each branch further evidence of African paternity. The history of Haiti proves that the power of Africa in the diaspora is greater than its retentive value; it is its inspiration of ideas and dominant influence in the creation of new forms of expression and resistance that are its ultimate force.

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CHAPTER 19

MAROONISM AND RESISTANCE IN THE AFRO-COLOMBIAN PACIFIC

Rafael Antonio Díaz Díaz

Resistance and confrontation: between enslavement and freedom

In the general context of the historical experience of African diasporas in the Americas, the Colombian Pacific scenario exemplifies a fundamental and meaningful dynamic in the social, cultural and historical endeavours of Afro-Colombian peoples. In this area, African and Afro-Atlantic shades took on particular stand-out features, some of them associated with, or analogous to, certain natural habitats and African peoples. These included the construction of family networks of wide-scale cognitive scope, in addition to permanent colonization and amphibian culture, as we will discuss. It could be said that the African diaspora represents the conversion of the Atlantic experience into the Pacific one, which may well have spread out from Mexico's Pacific coasts to the southern tip of the Americas.

Nevertheless, what has perhaps made the greatest mark on the history of Afro-Colombian peoples in the Pacific is the manner in which the spectre of confrontation was faced or resolved within the structure of political and social domination and the context of enslavement, colonialism and capitalism. Two cross-sectional, large-scale effects characterized such confrontation: on the one hand, a consistent creative disposition to subvert the ruling order or

regime, particularly that of slavery; on the other, and as a consequence, the varied but constant composition of community fabric for collective and signature action. This, in reality, was reflected in a prodigious scenario of social, political and community movements that stood up to the various powers threatening their historically constructed territorialism, including officially sanctioned, guerrilla and paramilitary violence, as well as drug trafficking and political and administrative corruption.

Overall, resistance in the Afro-Colombian Pacific demonstrates that although there is no watertight way to compartmentalize freedom and slavery, the two conditions are to be considered beyond codes, while noting their prevalence. The two intertwine, creating a tension ratcheted up by social practices, racial representations and discussions which not only create feelings of freedom as a political tool for confrontation and struggle, but also project exclusion. It should be emphasized at the outset that it was, in many ways, indigenous Colombian Pacific groups that ushered in the process of resistance and confrontation in the face of the conquistadors and Spanish power.

Political mapping of the resistance: biogeographic, regional and spatial contexts

The biogeographical landscape of the Colombian Pacific was a determining factor in the mobilization of Afro-Colombian peoples, to such an extent that a 'political resistance map' has been woven, showing the relationship between Afrodescendant communities and their biogeographical environments. That is to say, a cultural and political construction and appropriation of the territory by Afrodescendant communities and other social groups, such as indigenous populations and mixed-race peoples, which enabled them, by means of various tools and strategies, to stand up to, evade, and settle into the enslaved and colonial society which exploited, controlled or punished them, or reduced them to an inferior class of person in discussions and representations within the ruling regime.

The Colombian Pacific currently comprises the Colombian provinces of Nariño, Cauca, Valle del Cauca, Chocó and Antioquia. The macro-region or set of geographical areas on which we would like to focus can be called 'the lowlands of the Colombian Pacific', as a continuation of West's own idea (1957, 2000). It is, of course, a diverse regional set-up, notwithstanding that several common characteristics are to be found throughout. Its manifold, multi-faceted connections across the coast and inlets going up the western mountain range

link it to inland areas and the valleys between the Andes, Antioquia, Cauca, Nariño, Valle del Cauca, Risaralda, Caldas and Quindío. In this context, Cali and Popayán represented two zones of seats of slavery and of landholders, estate and mine owners within the regional set-up.

In concrete terms, the lowlands of the Pacific extend from west to east, from the coast to the foothills on the western side of the Andes Mountains, and from north to south, from the south of the Darién region (where Colombia now meets Panama) down as far as the province of Esmeraldas on Ecuadorian territory. According to West, 'this is a strip of land almost a thousand miles long and between 80 and 160 kilometres wide' (West, 1957; 2000, p. 31). Sea, coast, rivers, inlets and swamps, forests and gentle hills are the main features of this landscape. The element of water, in all its manifestations, stands out as a natural icon here; this is demonstrated by the fact that the area has one of the highest rainfall levels in the world, and certainly one of the very highest in the Americas. West describes one of the area's notable features as the 'humid tropical forest' covered by 'a canopy formed of gigantic trees' with 'hundreds of rivers which run down the slopes of the mountains and hills between the forests heading towards the sea' (West, 1957; 2000, p. 33). This water, and the profusion of forests, flora and fauna, provided the backdrop against which emerged the culture and ancient wisdom of indigenous peoples and Afrodescendants. Rivers are a means of communication par excellence; their banks and neighbouring areas serve as centres for populations and fixed and transient settlement. Such movements are influenced not only by surface groundwater levels, river currents and tides, but also by the dynamics of gold prospecting, namely the demand among slave gangs and free people.

Aquatic cultures and regional biogeography

Given the ubiquity of water in its various manifestations and the social and regional relationships that formed around it, it became necessary to develop the concept of 'aquatic culture', which the Colombian sociologist Orlando Fals Borda proposed towards the end of the 1970s in his fundamental work *Historia doble de la Costa* (1979; 2002). Although the concept came about from Fals Borda's analysis of regions of the Colombian Caribbean at the time, in particular the amphibian areas of Mompox and San Martín de Loba, its theoretical foundation refers to or describes aquatic landscapes and social organizations similar or comparable to those we have already described. In other words, we deem it useful and relevant

to employ the concept of amphibian culture in analysing and describing the social dynamics of resistance and Maroonism in the Afro-Colombian Pacific. Amphibian society and culture form a structural part of a broader concept and of Marxist genealogy, like the concept of social formation, built on a network of regional links which vary in time, society and space. In particular, the 'concept of amphibian culture contains ideological elements and articulates psychosocial expressions, attitudes, prejudices, superstitions and legends which are linked to rivers, channels, ravines, hillsides, beaches, wetlands and rainforests'. As such, in spatial terms, it defines 'a fluvial area of hillsides, hamlets and villages, flood-prone and dry', both in a linear order and in disparate places 'along watercourses' (Fals Borda, 1979; 2002, pp. 18–19).

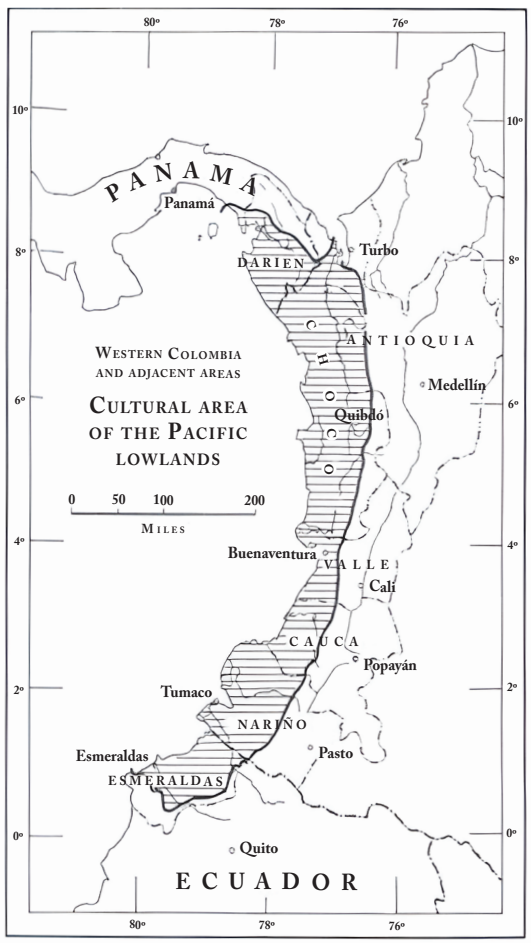

FIGURE 1.
Mapa Costa Pacífica Colombiana.
Source: Revista Colombiana de Antropología, Vol. 39, Bogotá, Enero-diciembre 2003, pp. 203-235. U. Oslender (2003, p. 209).*
DOI: https://doi.org/10.22380/2539472X.1241

The boundaries, names, and designations used do not imply official endorsement or recognition by UNESCO and are for illustrative purposes only.

However, in this regard, amphibian culture and its social and economic expressions portray the dynamics according to which the yield from livestock farming and agriculture depends heavily on 'the rhythm of the floods and droughts of rivers and channels' (Fals Borda, 1979, 2002, p. 23). This rhythm also influences and determines the time and space in patterns of settlement, thereby giving settlements regular, irregular, fixed or temporary cycles and seasons. The superstitions and legends of this landscape, dominated by water, but created, controlled and appropriated by community environments, continually lead to what Fals Borda calls the 'mythological idealisation of amphibian culture' (1979, 2002, p. 26) which, as we will see, finds one of its most representative icons in the devil or the demon.

The Colombian Pacific could be regionalized in some way, taking Buenaventura as a distinct reference point between southern and northern areas. The southern Colombian Pacific stretches out from a zone irrigated by the Mataje River, at the borders between Ecuador and Colombia, up to San Juan to the north of the port of Buenaventura and northwards from the San Juan River (Almario García, 2012, p. 73), then from the San Juan River northwards towards the Darién region in the northern Colombian Pacific, which is occupied for the most part by the current department of Chocó. In colonial times, this area was broken down into five 'countries' or 'regions', according to the proposal put forward by Jiménez: Nóvita, Citará, Tatamá, El Raposo and El Baudó (Jiménez, 2004, p. 3). In reference to the economic structure, society and conventions, Jiménez suggests that Nóvita constituted gold country, Citará farming country and El Baudó shelter country (Jiménez, 2004, p. 1).

African origins: ethnonyms, ethnicities and regional proveniences

This was the scenario that faced the thousands of enslaved people arriving from different regions of Africa, who reproduced among themselves or formed mixed relationships with indigenous peoples or, to a lesser extent, with white people. Judging by certain demographic data, the majority remained within their own Afrodescendant community. Vanín, one of the great Afrodescendant poets of the Pacific, paints the process from its beginnings in a poetic and illustrative way:

> [...] and then they brought negros who would irrigate themselves like purslane on a beach [...] along the silent riverbanks, maroons or free men, but free anyway, to found

> races and cultures, with everything against them, penniless and without means, but with the great flourishing riverbank to themselves and their future relatives, with the great richness of the countryside, of trees, and of creatures to fish and hunt (Vanín, 1998, p. 265).

Enslaved Africans arrived in the Colombian Pacific during the colonial period, originating from a vast chain of African regions stretching from Senegambia to Angola. According to current research on the subject, it is practically impossible to give precise figures with regard to their specific points of origin within Africa. It is nevertheless possible to determine African areas, regions and scenarios in general, with similar tendencies found in the Pacific, Colombian Caribbean Atlantic and inner Andean areas. According to an ethno-linguistic and onomatopoeic study carried out by de Ganda, the following constitute the areas and groups from which enslaved people arrived in various areas of the Colombian Pacific in the eighteenth century: Senegambia (Mandinga, Casaca, Bran, Bambara, Guagui, Canga, Tambo, Taui andmani); Grain Coast (Setre/Kru); Gold Coast (Mina, Fandi, Nango, Ati, Aguamu, Coto, Ocara, Asante/Ashanti); Bight of Benin (Arará, Chala, Popo, Lucumí, Bomba, Ayobi, Betre); Bight of Biafra (Carabalí, Viví, Cuco); Central Africa (Congo, Luango, Matamba, Mondongo, Pango, Bamba, Manyoma, Bato) (De Friedemann, 1993, pp. 52-53). It would be pertinent to add references to ethno-linguistic groups such as the Malinke, Akan, Gá-Adangme, Ewe, Yoruba, Fon, Ijo, Igbo, Ibibio, Efik, Ngola and Kongo, among others.

Colmenares sets out the same African regions of origin by analysing deeds of sale and purchase for slaves sold in the port of Cartagena de Indias between 1705 and 1748 and tallying groups of enslaved miners in Chocó in 1759 (Colmenares, 1979, pp. 47–48). I found similar African regions of origin by examining records of sales of slaves registered in the notarial archives for the regional urban area of Bogotá during the first half of the eighteenth century (Díaz Díaz, 2001, pp. 79–81).

West (1957; 2000, pp. 159–161) calls attention to a noteworthy identity and relationship phenomenon with Africa, which is still present in the Afro-Colombian Pacific: many surnames within the Afro-Colombian population are associated with, and derived from, the names of the ethnic groups, people, or African cultures of origin of enslaved people. Listing these names takes us on an interesting geographical and cultural trip around the African Atlantic: Mina, Biáfara, Carabalí, Cetre, Lucumí, Arará, Congo, Mandinga, Angola, Chambá, Bran, Luango, Canga, Cambindo, Cuenú, and Congolino, among others.

The slave uprisings: historiographical perspectives

In 1728, there was an uprising of enslaved people in the mining areas of Tadó and Nóvita. Barule, one of the leaders of the uprising, claimed that 'to kill whites is a good thing, and then Chocó will be finished […]' (Colmenares, 1979, p. 101; Leal, 1998). This incisive statement calls into question whether uprisings of enslaved people in the Afro-Colombian Pacific were central and fundamental to the construction of *maroon* societies. This theme has been touched upon by historiography from different angles and perspectives, and with differing degrees of emphasis. The importance of Afro-Colombian Maroonism in the Pacific has been recognized since the 1960s, but it was possibly of even greater importance than the earlier development of Maroonism in the Colombian Caribbean, where the arena of San Basilio de Palenque constituted a kind of historiographic icon.

Of particular note among these initial studies were the works of Jaramillo Uribe (1963, 1989, pp. 59 et seq.) and Escalante (1981, pp. 72–78), who had already made reference to the arena of San Basilio de Palenque in 1954. However, by way of contrast, the emblematic study of the governance of Popayán put forward by Colmenares in the 1970s (1979, pp. 100–105) gave unprecedented importance to tensions between enslaved people and those who traded them, as seen in individual runaways, rebellions, Maroonism and the constitution of arenas. By then, Colmenares was already referring to the arena of Patía, which in turn became the arena of El Castigo, one of the inevitable areas of flight for many of the enslaved people fleeing from the Pacific zone. In fact, the palenque of El Castigo appeared on the eighteenth century arenas map compiled by de Friedemann (1993, p. 71), next to the aforementioned 1728 arena of Tadó. The striking thing about these maps by de Friedemann of seventeenth- and eighteenth-century arenas is that they include no other arena in the Pacific Corridor, save those of El Castigo and Tadó. This suggests that the dynamics of uprisings and Maroonism are likely to have transcended the simple formation of arenas in their analyses, putting forward other means of and strategies for freedom, a perspective that is noted in McFarlane's (1991) study, even if the concept of Maroonism is not very common in the Afro-Colombian Pacific.

In light of this initial historiographical scenario, with Escalante's timely, scaled-down and newly unveiled appraisal, by 1954, a more recent scenario became established. The manifestations and dynamics of resistance in the Afro-Colombian Pacific were studied from a more systemic, structured and

contextual perspective. Furthermore, we witnessed a dismantling of academic traditions which fed on the visions of dominance and hegemony of the systems of slavery, colonialism and republicanism. There was thus a break from historiographical images, which ultimately gave the historical subject of enslavement the position of central player in 'local freedom societies' (Almario García, 2012, p. 74). In other words, a set of libertarian and insurgent communities was being formed at a time of aesthetic construction of diverse political identifiers of freedom within the slavery system (Jiménez, 2004, pp. 15–20). This fracture in the historiographical image of enslavement was accompanied, complemented and fed by several studies and analyses which, along with the conjunctural advent of independence and the republic, gave conceptualized transcendence to slave rebellion through protest marches, insubordination and buttresses to the hegemonic construction of the nation-State, in addition to inter-ethnic and political relations. The results can be seen in the work of Zuluaga and Bermúdez-Escobar (1997), as well as in studies by Almario García (2005 and 2012) and Díaz Casas (2015). Almost uniquely, Leal (1998) introduced a novel and provocative element which has not yet been properly investigated: the possible connection between uprisings of enslaved people in the Colombian Pacific and those in the Caribbean, particularly the English-speaking Caribbean, whence Barule, the leader of the Tadó uprising, came in 1728.

Trunks and branches: societies and territorialities in freedom

Meanwhile, gold, mining, slavery, rivers, forests, punishment, complex mine estate set-ups, order, inter-ethnic relationships, subversions, extended families and branches are all factors and elements that came together in the construction of these regional societies and communities which, following Almario's lead, we can name and characterize as 'local societies in freedom', constructed against the grain of the demands of 'an enslaved society' (Almario García, 2012, p. 74). The array of regions of the Pacific area and the human groups contained therein, along with the biogeographical landscape, economic structures of gold production and slave relations and connections led to the establishment of places from the perspective of tensions in a region which is simultaneously a mining border and central and self-sufficient in its resistance and cultural creativity. The paradox and dialectics of a marginal frontier region come through particularly strongly in

Popayán and Cali, for example – they are not only centres of gravitational power, but are also, first and foremost, a set of Afro-descendant communities. Both are either autonomous or semi-autonomous, and benefited from or experienced precarious control in centre-periphery relations. They were also subjected to the realities of mining levies and the dynamics of disposal and supply, along with precarious communication channels, local autarchies and weak control, charters and diffuse orders, or lack thereof. This was a context of subversive disarray based on territorial political appropriation in order to resist, to accommodate and to spread their own community environments.

These tensions and contradictory feelings became apparent within the framework of a particular intermingling of enslavement and freedom, germane to the existence of the inherent gaps in colonial enslaved societies. For this reason, we have proposed the historical possibility of referring to the existence of a private life among enslaved people in their confrontations with enslaved society (Díaz Díaz, 2011, p. 227 et seq.), which negotiated the construction of a feeling of freedom - freedom in enslavement in a proper way, where space, territory, and habitat were 'spatial surroundings […] placed in the service of the practices of reaction, resistance, accommodation and autonomy' (Díaz Díaz, 2011, p. 232). Particularly around the Pacific rivers in the colonial era, the ecclesiastical authorities complained perpetually about the absence of religious instruction and evangelization. This led to the creation of a long series of popular Christianisms, popular or vernacular religiosities and the abundance of open or covert dances accompanied by the consumption of crafted beverages.

A central and decisive dynamic in the formation of these 'local societies in freedom', according to Almario García (2012, p. 74), was the fabric of family networks and longitudinally dispersed populations based on the gangs of enslaved miners following the outline of the rivers flowing towards the sea. This was studied systematically by Romero (1995) and is referred to as offshoots or trunks, in which the role of enslaved women producing children with different enslaved men, along with territorial or population appropriation, bound these cognitive networks to their territory, following or emulating African patterns of the extended family that required a cyclical and constant colonizing mobility across more or less extended areas. In these gangs of enslaved people, the node or knot of family relationships and the grim necessities of group solidarity which enabled the formation of 'free societies' were located both inside and outside the colonial slave order, as qualities woven into women.

Conclusion: poetics and performance of the Pacific culture

Meanwhile, the struggle for freedom was echoed in the construction of their own oral, magical and mythical culture, as expressed poetically by Vanín (1998, p. 276): 'A festival was created on the basis of language, and this festival of fables and ten-line stanzas and quatrains combined with the musical high points of "currulaos" and "jotas", the racket of the drums and the sound of the marimbas'. For three renowned analysts of Afro-Colombian cultures, the central position occupied by the devil or demon is a distinctive feature in the constitution of Afro-Colombian cultures in the Colombian Pacific. (Almario García, 2012, p. 77; Jiménez, 2004, p. 22 et seq.; Vanin, 1998, p. 276). The devil or demon signified cultural appropriation and a political shift in meaning from the fear of whites and the slave order, and this was being complemented by an enthusiastic oral tradition, marimba music, motley dances, parties, popular religious festivals and celebrations of the moral solidarity of death as expressed during wakes. The Afro-Colombian cultures of today's Colombian Pacific still represent this lively, libertarian desire which also served, and continues to serve, as a collective catharsis for enslavement. Such manifestations are ultimately a representation of African roots that transformed in the context of the Colombian Pacific and established themselves as part of the founding order of the plurality of Colombias from the inception of the diaspora.

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CHAPTER 20

AFRICAN BRAZIL:

Geographies, Cartographies and Invisibilities

Rafael Sanzio Araújo dos Anjos

Introduction

Africa has continued to be the most important continent in supporting and maintaining the structure of the world over the last five centuries, particularly with regard to the formation of the New World, America and the enrichment and strengthening of modern Europe. Brazil finds itself in a unique position in this global context, since it is the contemporary political unit with the highest historiographical figures recorded for the forced importation of various African population groups from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries. In this sense, there is a need for more accurate interpretations of not only the movements of its populations from their first formation onwards, but also the overall result of these processes within the geographical space. In other words, a greater understanding and representation of past and present diaspora dynamics must be sought, along with a better interpretation of resistant and surviving territorialized identities.

The demand for a clear understanding of the complexities of societal dynamics is great, and there are few disciplines better placed than geography and cartography to assist in the representation and interpretation of the many issues emerging at this historic moment. Geography remains the best instrument for observing what has happened, as it shows the signs of spatial historicity, that is

to say that it tracks the agents operating within the current spatial configuration. It can also suggest what might happen; it is possible to capture the force lines of territorial dynamics and pinpoint the structural possibilities for the space in the near future. The geography of African origin examined here brings to the fore one of the long-forgotten 'invisible Brazils', which refers to peoples and territories that have existed and continue to survive, but in a marginal, non-official sense, rather than in full. This geography of exclusion and conflict is called into question in this chapter, which proposes alternative readings and representations of the geographic space to give proper consideration to the conflicting complexity of the existing-resisting Africa in Brazil. Maps, in turn, are graphical representations of the real world and remain effective tools for reading and interpreting the territory in question. They can be used to reveal territorial aspects of the social constructions and natural features of the area and, in this very way, show geographical facts in their fullest sense. It is important to remember that a map is not a territory in itself; rather, the products of cartography present the best possibilities for the representation and reading of the history of a territory (Anjos, 2007). Photographs are another important resource used in the process of building geographical knowledge, especially for those representations and interpretations of time, space and society that do not crystallize and are not static (Anjos, 2009). This paper seeks to contribute to the expansion of knowledge of territorial references for the centuries-old displacements between Africa, America and Brazil, and of the main configurations and spatial factors of the African matrix in Brazil, in particular those of quilombos.

Geopolitics of colonial imperial Brazil and the African diaspora

We can understand the historical movement of the great navigations as a direct consequence of the geographical process of territorial domination that was developed, matured and implemented by European powers, especially those of the Iberian Peninsula. The geographical horizon of its land area was significantly expanded by the coming together of new cultures, identities and territorialities. The result of this was a profound change to world cartography from the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries, especially in terms of the new territories incorporated, the new borders established and enforced, and significant development in the techniques of the discipline.

This long period in human history was characterized by a new phase in the relationship between humans and nature. Geography and cartography developed within this context and were used to serve this major project for a justified dominance of the world. The Atlantic Ocean served as an important stepping stone for the main economic and trade flows from the fifteenth to the nineteenth centuries, involving Europe, Africa and America. Goods from Europe, the Orient and the colonies crossed the seas, along with the slave ships departing from the network of European ports and the coasts of the African continent. This ocean became the great cemetery of the centuries for the African-American diaspora.

Along the Europe-Africa-Europe route, the ships left the European slaver ports loaded with weapons, textiles, beverages and other goods. From the African ports came salt, precious stones, coffee, sugar, ivory, and other tropical products, along with humans. The America-Africa-America route was characterized primarily by the displacement of various ethnic groups, along with their cultural and technological baggage, for the purpose of the occupation and formation of the new colonial territories. Tobacco ('rope smoke'), spirits (cachaça), potatoes, peanuts and other merchandise were exported from the eastern coast of the Americas. The America-Europe-America route provided sugar, spirits, cocoa,

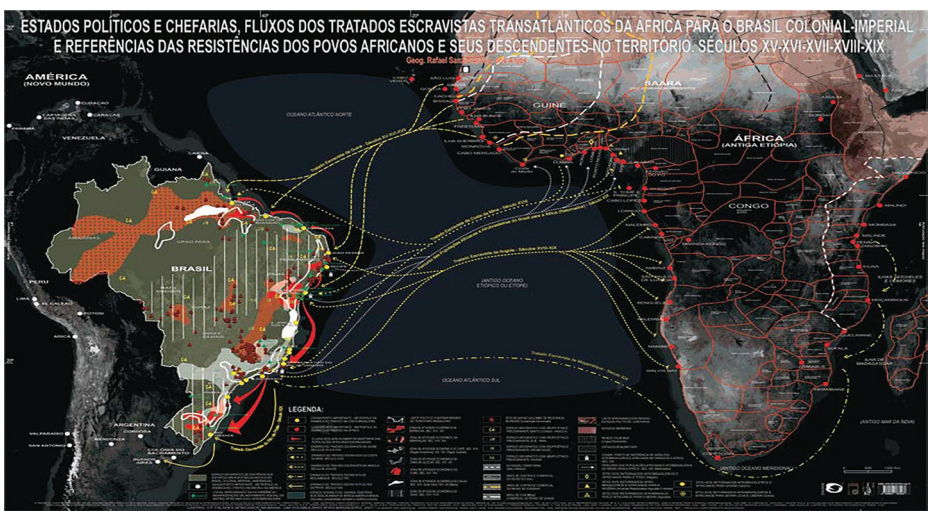

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FIGURE 1. *African Brazil*

Source: Anjos, 2014*b*.

tobacco, coffee, rubber, precious stones, cotton, potatoes, sunflower products, tomatoes, corn, pepper and vanilla, among other goods; barley, cattle, oats and rye were sent to the New World. The following thematic map shows the main territorial sources in Africa over these four centuries of trafficking, along with the geography of the diaspora that formed and was structured on the shores of the Atlantic, despite the contradictions of the dominant system.

In slaveholding America, *quilombo* referred to a concrete geographical expression of conflicts within the dominant system and was a reconstruction and elaboration of a type of territorial organization that already existed in southern Africa. The vast extent of 'free' settlements developing on Brazilian Atlantic shores, with a form of territorial organization of African origin, had the common features of a safe, secure but not necessarily isolated space, with equal conditions for the majority of community relations and freedom of access to land, as well as a possible basis for confrontations and wars. Figures 2, 3 and 4 show examples of the organization of African spaces built in the New World and, in particular, of the distribution of houses and the structure of surveillance and protection of the quilombo. In this sense, the African and the American quilombos have fundamental similarities. These African sites in the Americas were a spatial manifestation of continental extension, with a collective desire to resist the society of oppression and perverse exclusion.

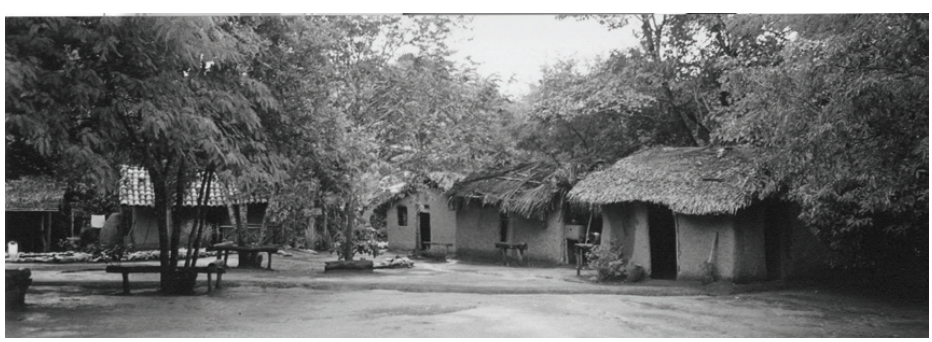

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FIGURE 2. *Aspects of space typology and distribution of homes of Maroons in colonial Brazil.*

Source: Anjos, 2007*a*.

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FIGURE 3. *Examples of the stoves and wood ovens used by Maroons in colonial Brazil.*
Source: Anjos, 2007*a*.

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FIGURE 4. *The guard and surveillance system of the Maroons in colonial Brazil.*
Source: Anjos, 2007*a*.

In Brazil and Uruguay, they were, and still are, referred to as *mocambos*, *calhambo* and *quilombos*; in Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico and Cuba they were called *palanques*; *cumbes* in Venezuela; *marrons* in Haiti, the Caribbean Islands, Suriname, the Guianas, Jamaica and the United States of America; *cimarrons* in several other parts of Spanish-speaking America and *Bush Negroes* in French Guiana (Anjos, 2009). The following section will explore some of the references for spatial expression in colonial-imperial African Brazil.

Africa-Brazil diaspora and displacements within the Brazilian territory: fifteenth to nineteenth centuries

The first half of the nineteenth century was characterized by various treaties for the abolition of the slave trade, which in Brazil occurred only in 1850. The great extent of illegal and clandestine activity means that the statistical data available on demographic movements is very inaccurate. Owing to European geopolitical pressures, this was the period in which bilateral links between the African and American continents unravelled, with the destruction of the triangular trade routes between America, Africa and Europe. Brazil nevertheless continued to be a slaveholding country for 66 years (and the United States of America for over 90 years) following independence. The fact that this political, economic and territorial structure was maintained in the country for nearly four centuries, along with the sheer number (although not properly quantified) of Africans imported up until 1850, demonstrates the extent to which the slave society was able to stabilize and develop, even in a context of political conflicts and economic and social contradictions.

The slave states attempted to crush various African matrices within the colonial territory as a strategy to hinder the organization of enslaved people, extinguish their languages of origin and make it impossible for them to maintain their cultures. In other words, genuine processes were created with a view to stripping these populations of African origin of the key characteristics of their identity, thus leading to a dilution of African ethnic identity. This is yet another geographical factor that contributes to the lack of ancestral references with which to indicate the origins of the Afro-Brazilian population, causing deep-rooted interference with Afro-Brazilians' citizenship and sense of territorial belonging. It is important to emphasize that not only were sub-Saharan African populations responsible for the effective occupation of the Brazilian territory and for constituting its workforce, but they also made, and continue to make, an irreversible mark on Brazil's social, technological, demographical and cultural evolution. This contribution has been preserved and recreated throughout the centuries, despite the system's counter-policies. Historically, various sectors of the Brazilian population have been victims of all kinds of discrimination and prejudice.

Of these, ethnic discrimination, which affects the country's Afrodescendant population in particular, is undoubtedly the farthest reaching, in both social and territorial terms, owing to its widespread demographic expression and manifestations.

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FIGURE 5. African Brazil. Africa-Brazil diaspora and displacements within Brazilian territory (Fifteenth to Nineteenth centuries).

Source: Anjos, 2014*b*.

The following section will present some considerations with regard to the spatial expression of contemporary African Brazil.

'Visible-invisible' African structural matrices in contemporary Brazil: twentieth to twenty-first centuries.

Brazil is the nation with the second-largest population of African descent on the planet; it is in relation to this group of people that the most discriminatory twentieth- and twenty-first-century statistics have been produced, which is indicative of socioeconomic depreciation. With certain exceptions, the Afro-Brazilian population is the worst-placed population in society and in the territory at large. Being an Afrodescendant in Brazil is a now centuries-old risk factor – a challenge in terms

of human survival, requiring extra effort to attain visibility in the dominant system and, above all, necessitating additional energy to integrate, and be integrated, into the territory. In this respect, two emblematic contexts are of particular note.

The demographic question surrounding 'African Brazil' remains unanswered and Afro-Brazilians remain underrepresented because the official racial assessment criteria have led to an underestimation of the actual number of Afro-Brazilian citizens in the country. The Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE) continues to classify individuals as *brancos* (white), *pretos* (black), *amarelos* ('yellow', i.e., Asian) or *pardos* ('brown', i.e., 'mulatto'). Those who declare themselves white, black or 'yellow' are considered to be so, and all the 'others' are classified as 'brown'. This institution recently added the category of *índios* (Indian).

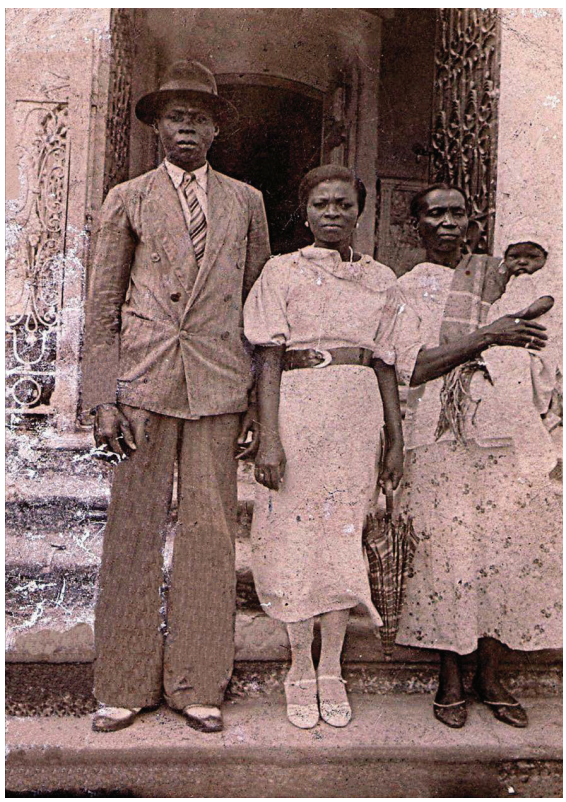

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FIGURE 6. *Family photograph of Mr Chico, his wife Viscência, his mother, and his son Fernando. Salvador, Bahia, 1930s. (Anonymous)*

The graph below shows the evolution in the black and 'mulatto' populations, as reported in censuses ranging from 1940 to the most recent in 2010, and shows some relevant findings. Firstly, the modest growth rate for the black population, with a deep-rooted link to the enslaved contingent, appears to be a reflection of the racism and colonial mentality that persists in Brazilian society. Secondly, the spectacular growth of the 'mulatto' population over the decades is a real phenomenon. How can this be explained? The important issue of the 'mulattoization' of the population of Brazil is one which has not been properly reflected upon by the Brazilian people and has gone unnoticed for several decades.

Let us recall here that the notion of being mixed race is associated with a blurring of the identity, place in society and ancestral references of an individual – in short, the individual's territoriality. There are thousands of men, women, children and elderly people who feel that they do not have a definite place in the social structure of the country, and that the process of 'whitening' is a means of integrating, participating in and being 'seen' in society.

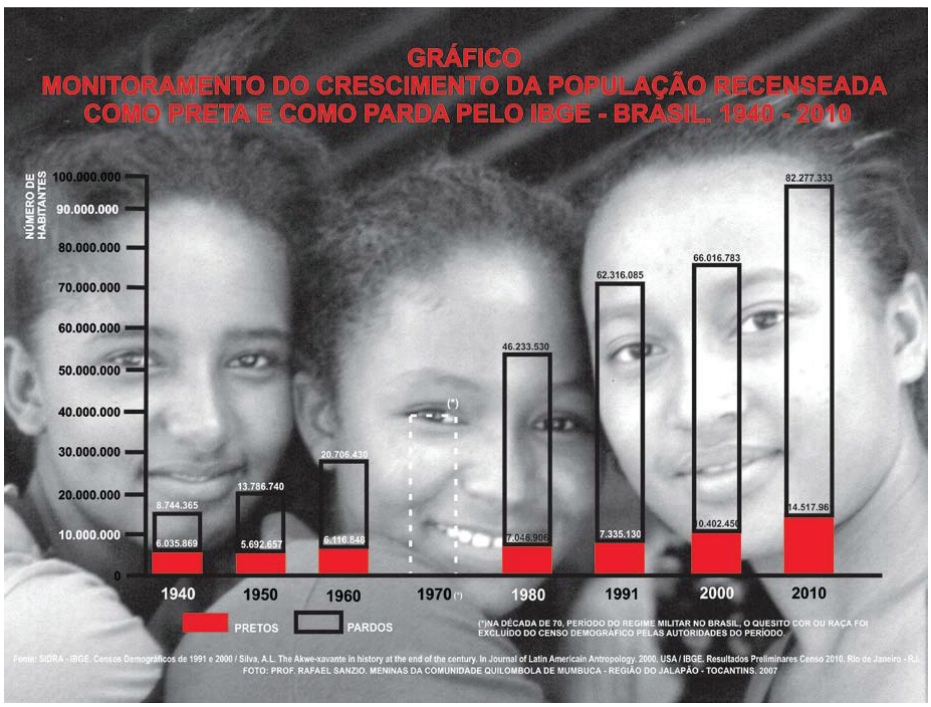

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FIGURE 7. *Monitoring Graphic of Black and Mulatto population growth by IBGE. Brazil (1940–2010).* (The red bars show the black population; the transparent bars show the 'mulatto' population).

Source: Anjos, 2014*a*.

A particularly noteworthy aspect of the invisible African geography in contemporary Brazil is the purposeful forgetting of territories descending from the former quilombos. Although some 130 years have passed since the *Lei Áurea* was sanctioned by the imperial regime, both history and the Brazilian system continue to associate the Afrodescendant population with the image of slavery. The quilombos are still viewed as something of the past, as if they have no part to play in the contemporary life of the country. The actions of the decision-making sector have proven to be conflicting and contradictory. Despite the constitutional provisions of 1988 and the requirements set by certain official bodies to address the demands of contemporary quilombos, the handling of this issue has been characterized by episodic and fragmentary actions, on an almost structural level. This has compromised the direction of a defined policy aimed at solving the fundamental problems, namely the recognition of these communities within the Brazilian social system and the demarcation and denomination of the territories occupied.

Aside from the fundamental structural question of the effectiveness of the land tenure system, in other words, the official definition of the Afro-Brazilian border, we can also highlight other structural problems affecting contemporary quilombos, such as the lack of systematized knowledge of the know-how, technologies and references of the life and survival of the quilombo peoples.

Figure 8 shows a spatial representation of a traditional quilombola *terreiro* (yard), to the north of Goiás, in the large territory of Kalunga, where the organization and use of well-defined spaces reveal a logic of survival and life maintenance, including the place where flour is produced, the place where surpluses are kept for exchange or sale, the place where cakes and biscuits are baked, the element of community in the manufacture of cassava flour, the sacred place where the pestle is found and the area where animals are grouped together. The use of space and the maintenance of the environment (the proximity to the river and the presence of numerous trees involved in the different uses of the territory) demonstrate the strong connection of the traditional space with nature.

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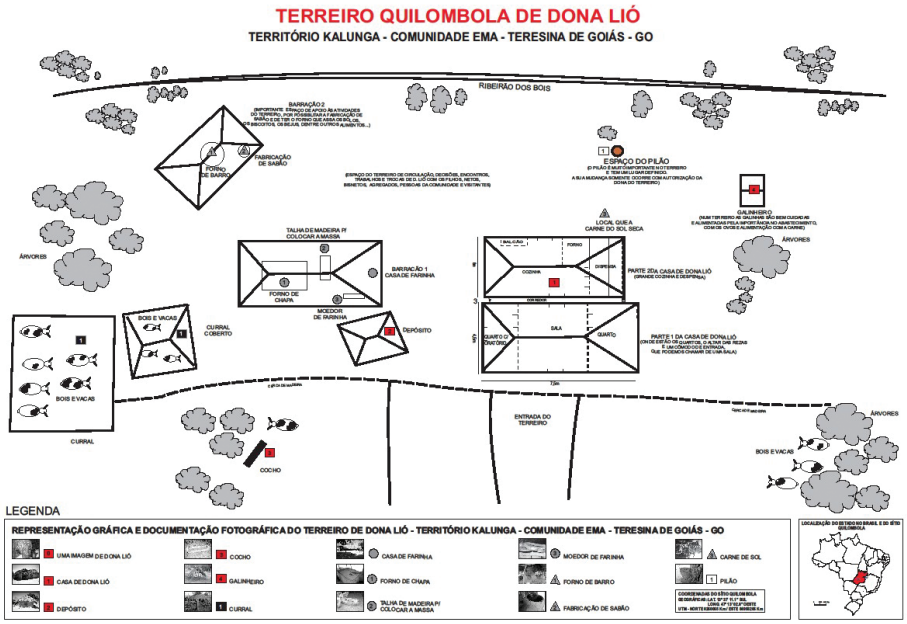

FIGURE 8. *Kalunga territory – Ema community – Teresina de Goiás, GO*
Source: Anjos, 2011

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FIGURE 9. *Family in Kalunga territory (Cavalcante, GO, 2011).*
Source: GEOAFRO Project (Anjos, R. S. A. UnB-UFBA).

Conclusions and recommendations

Bearing in mind that analytical constructions and speculations are, by nature, inexhaustive, we can conclude and recommend what follows below.

The strategy of misinforming the Brazilian population with regard to the African continent is an obstacle to a real perspective of racial democracy. We must not lose sight of the fact that one of the main obstacles to the inclusion of the Afrodescendant population in Brazilian society is the inferior position in which the education system has placed Afro-Brazilians. This situation will be able to change only if a more aggressive educational policy is adopted and the focus is directed towards demystifying the African continent for the Brazilian population. This is a structural point in a process of change aimed at enabling Brazilians of African descent to be genuinely better respected within the dominant system. Misinformation remains a large part of the problem; the position of Africa, generally one of the last continents to be tackled by schools and official compendia, needs to be changed in industry and, above all, by teachers in the classroom.

The visibility and recognition of all existing and territorialized African matrices in modern-day Brazil constitute the main societal challenge of a continental country, with the presence of harmful and racist daily practices in almost all dimensions of the current system. Figure 10 graphically shows the size of the African and Afro-Brazilian matrices that resist and survive in the territory (maracatú, capoeira, Xangô, Rio Abaixo, types of samba, contemporary quilombos, among others), as well as the distribution of the population of African origin in practically the entire geographical space. It also shows the current diasporic movements, such as the globalization of capoeira, with significant records on all continents except Africa (we have a paradox here) and the recent displacements of African populations from the Congo (Congo River basin) and various points in the Caribbean towards Brazil (entry via the northern region). This document also maps the territories of the traditional 'Indigenous' peoples (Brazil, much like other countries, has not been able to resolve this colonial denomination of the traditional communities resulting from territorial occupation). It is clear that the spatial distribution being concentrated in the north-north-east area of the country is due to the long-standing process of expulsion of these peoples through European territorial domination.

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The boundaries, names, and designations used do not imply official endorsement or recognition by UNESCO and are for illustrative purposes only.

FIGURE 10. *African Brazil (Twentieth and Twenty-first centuries).*

Source: Anjos, 2014*b*

Another structural point, also relating to the country's decision-making sector, concerns the establishment of the conditions necessary to implementing a more realistic census that better portrays Brazil's ethnic diversity. This subject is complex, since it means changing population measurement methods, which explains why we do not yet possess the evidence to produce an official record of 'African Brazil'. Should this be given political priority, we believe that it would still be possible to review the methodological procedures for the next official census, which could incorporate the advances already made in the hundreds of ethnic census experiments already carried out by teachers and directors in the nation's schools.

The issue of Brazil's quilombo communities must cease to be handled through one-off, sporadic actions and hampered by conflicts of institutional responsibilities – a significant and seemingly persistent feature of the first decade of the twenty-first century. The current model for managing the demands of the quilombolas in the country is divisive and could still be changed. Localized victories reflect neither an action plan with principles and parameters in the short or medium term, nor a perspective of strengthening the now centuries-old quilombola struggle.

It is a widespread premise that information alone does not equate to knowledge. However, with the help of science and technology, information can show us that we are able to collaborate in modifying isolated and superficial policies in order to support the adoption of concrete measures to change the urgent situation of the populations of 'African Brazil'.

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CHAPTER 21

COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVES ON THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY IN THE AMERICAS AND AFRICA

Ana Lucia Araújo

Introduction

Starting in the eighteenth century and throughout the nineteenth century, legislation banned the slave trade from Africa, and then gradually abolished slavery in the Americas. Through insurrections and massive flights, enslaved men and women, as well as black abolitionists who joined anti-slavery organizations, were protagonists in the movement for the legal abolition and ending of slavery in the Americas and Africa. By the end of the nineteenth century, European powers largely utilized the end of the Atlantic slave trade and the consequent abolition of slavery in the Americas to justify the scramble for Africa that divided the continent among European powers. As European colonization evolved, slavery was banned in various parts of Africa; and yet in some parts of the continent, colonial powers introduced slavery-like labour regimes, which included not only forced labour for long hours under strict surveillance, but also physical punishments.

Gradual abolition in North America

The abolition of the slave trade from Africa was the first of the many steps that led to emancipation in the Americas. The first measures to prohibit imports of enslaved Africans to the thirteen British colonies in North America were

introduced in the first half of the eighteenth century and were motivated by the fear of slave insurrections led by newly arrived enslaved Africans.

In 1776, the independence of the British Thirteen Colonies that became the United States broke ground for the gradual abolition of slavery in the United States. Led by Creole elites, independence movements were not devised, either in the United States or in other parts of the Americas, to emancipate the enslaved population, especially in the regions where the institution of slavery was central to the economy. Even in the areas where bondage was not dominant, slave owners opposed the emancipation, leaving the enslaved population to face the long path of gradual abolition.

The American Revolutionary War fuelled anti-slavery discourses and the early abolitionist movement. Enslaved men and women actively participated in this process by petitioning their masters to obtain freedom and in some cases rewards for past services (Sinha, 2016, pp. 41–44; Araújo, 2017, pp. 49–51). After the end of the war and with the rise of the French Revolution in 1789, anti-slavery activity spread in Europe and the United States. This new context opened the path for the passage of gradual emancipation legislation.

During the 1770s, several US northern states ratified legislation freeing newborns to enslaved mothers. Yet the eighteenth-century emancipation legislation did not liberate any living slaves, but only the future offspring of bondswomen, in most cases only when they reached adult age. In March 1784, Rhode Island adopted an act that launched gradual emancipation. The children of enslaved women were to be freed: males upon reaching the age of 21 years, and females upon reaching the age of 18. Also in March 1784, Connecticut finally passed an act freeing the children of enslaved mothers born after the date of its passage and upon reaching 25 years of age. Eventually, an additional act passed in May 1797 reduced the age to 21 (Araújo, 2017, p. 51).

In the northern states with large numbers of enslaved individuals, gradual abolition took even longer to be accomplished. New York passed legislation freeing the children born after the enactment of the law on 4 July 1799. Still, it determined that freed male children had to serve the owners of their mothers until 28 years old, and freed female children until 25 years of age (Berlin, 1998, p. 234; Gellman, 2008, p. 153; Harris, 2003, p. 11; Araújo, 2017, p. 51). In 1804, New Jersey finally enacted legislation freeing newborns to enslaved mothers. However, the act liberated only the children of enslaved mothers born after 4 July 1804, and established age restrictions: 25 years old for males and 21 years old for females (Gigantino, 2015, p. 117).

Radical ruptures: the birth of a Black nation

As gradual abolition progressed in the north of the United States, the climate of social unrest continued in continental France and its colonies in the West Indies. On the eve of the French Revolution, an organized abolitionist movement emerged in continental France with the creation of the *Société des Amis des Noirs*. In 1788, when the Estates General was called in France, the newly created society seized the opportunity to intensify anti-slavery propaganda. But as the French Revolution evolved it became clear that the establishment of equality of rights excluded the populations of colour and was not intended to end slavery in the colonies, because the institution generated immense profits for France. Even after the fall of the Bastille in July 1789, the National Assembly granted only white planters the right to vote for the permanent assembly in Saint-Domingue's elections of 1790. White planters and French revolutionaries refused to award political rights to the free population of colour.

Eventually, Saint-Domingue's populations of colour initiated an anti-colonial rebellion. In 1791, a decree by France's National Assembly finally gave voting rights to free coloureds who owned property and were born of two free parents. Affected by the news of rapid changes brought by the French Revolution, Saint-Domingue's enslaved population took the opportunity to join the struggle for freedom as well. Although the populations of colour were ready to fight the enslaved rebels, as their demands for political rights from the French National Assembly were denied, they decided to take arms against the white planters, taking the enslaved rebels as their allies (James, 1963, p. 89).

In 1791, a great slave revolt broke out in Saint-Domingue, which eventually led to the decree of 1794 that abolished slavery in the French West Indies and the Indian Ocean. In 1801, Toussaint Louverture, one of the major leaders of the insurrection, called a Constituent Assembly. The new constitution, promulgated in July 1801, established that the entire island of Hispaniola, including the Spanish portion, was part of the French empire. It also confirmed the prohibition of slavery in Saint-Domingue.

This was an important victory, but when Napoleon Bonaparte came to power in 1799, he rejected Saint-Domingue's autonomy. In February 1802, he sent an expedition of 22,000 soldiers to Saint-Domingue to fight Louverture. In May 1802, Bonaparte issued a decree re-establishing slavery in the French colonies. Louverture was imprisoned and deported to France, where he died one year later. But the rebels continued fighting. As thousands of soldiers of Bonaparte's

army succumbed to the epidemics of yellow fever, the insurgent bondspeople eventually defeated the French troops.

On 1 January 1804, Jean-Jacques Dessalines declared Saint-Domingue an independent nation. Saint-Domingue became the first colony in the Americas to abolish slavery altogether while simultaneously breaking its colonial ties with a European power. The new nation was renamed Haiti, and Dessalines was appointed lifetime governor-general. The new black nation became the symbol of freedom for the populations of African descent in the Atlantic world, and a reminder of the cruelties of slavery. For white planters and slave owners in Europe and the Americas, the simple existence of Haiti was a constant reminder that a nightmare could become reality.

In the following years, the process to prohibit the Atlantic slave trade continued to evolve. In 1807, Napoleon Bonaparte crossed Spain to invade Portugal. In that same year the British Parliament abolished the international slave trade to the British colonies. Also in 1807, following the mandate of the Constitution of 1787, the United States Congress passed an act (made effective in 1808) prohibiting the international slave trade to its territory. Moreover, in 1808, the French and Spanish alliance was dismantled. To resist French occupation, a series of *juntas* (councils) were created all over Spain, and eventually led to the establishment of the Cortes of Cádiz in 1810. Spain's first national assembly with representatives from its various colonies, the Cortes of Cádiz started discussing the abolition of the slave trade and slavery in the Spanish empire. Between 1814 and 1820, the end of the Napoleonic Wars led to the legal ban on the slave trade in France, Portugal, and Spain, even though the illegal trade persisted for several years (Quirk, 2011, p. 61).

Slavery expansion during the period of legal abolition of slavery

The abolition of the British slave trade was the first response to a powerful social movement gathering thousands of people who, for moral and religious reasons, condemned the persistence of the evil institution even though it still generated significant profits. In the first two decades of the nineteenth century, the movement to abolish slavery in the British West Indies grew as well, owing firstly to the emergence of slave rebellions in Barbados, Guyana, and Jamaica, and secondly to the activities of the Anti-Slavery Society that gathered hundreds

of thousands of signatures demanding an end to slavery, better conditions for the enslaved populations, and gradual emancipation.

After intense debates in the months that followed, the Slavery Abolition Act of 28 August 1833 declared the end of slavery in the British colonies starting on 1 August 1834. The Act formally freed nearly 800,000 enslaved persons. But except for Antigua, in all other British colonies of the West Indies bondspeople older than six were submitted to a period of apprenticeship: four years if they worked as domestic servants and six years if they were agricultural workers (Lightfoot, 2015). Moreover, the Abolition Act included a provision to compensate 46,000 slave owners with £20 million. Intended to control the former enslaved population, the apprenticeship system maintained intact most elements of the old relations between master and bondspeople (Drescher, 2009, p. 212).

By the time slavery was outlawed in the British empire, the industries of tobacco, rice, and cotton had quickly expanded in the south of the United States, where slavery was central to the economy. The process of legal abolition of slavery remained gradual, varying from state to state: New York abolished slavery in 1827, Rhode Island in 1842, Pennsylvania in 1847, and Connecticut only in 1848. Although New Jersey legally abolished slavery in 1846, newly freed slaves became apprentices for life. Consequently, they only obtained free status when slavery was eventually abolished in the United States two decades later (Gigantino, 2015, pp. 214–215).

By 1850, the division between free states and slave states became clear: slaveholding states were willing to fight to keep slavery alive. When Lincoln was elected president of the United States in November 1860, the abolitionist movement had been established in the country for almost a century. Additionally, the number of states where slavery had been abolished exceeded the number of slave states. Still, during the presidential election campaign, southerners stepped up the call for secession because despite Lincoln's moderate positions regarding slavery, he was not a representative of the southern planters and slave owners.

In December 1860, the South Carolina General Assembly issued a proclamation announcing its secession from the United States, an action it justified by the growing hostility on the part of the free states to the institution of slavery. During the four months following South Carolina's secession, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, Texas, and Louisiana announced their separation from the Union, forming the Confederate States of America. Although Lincoln sought to appease the southerners by promising not to interfere in the states where slavery existed, the country was too divided to be soothed. Five weeks after his inauguration, the Civil War exploded. In the three months that

followed this event, Virginia, Arkansas, North Carolina, and Tennessee joined the Confederacy, which later elected Jefferson Davis as its president.

As the Civil War progressed, many enslaved people ran away, whereas others were freed by the federal government to fight alongside the Union Army (Berlin, 2015, p. 15). On 17 July 1862, the Congress of the United States passed a second Confiscation Act emancipating all enslaved individuals owned by Confederates. This measure opened the path for the Emancipation Proclamation of the Confederate States of the South issued by Lincoln on 22 September 1862 (effective on 1 January 1863). The Proclamation was part of a strategy to fight the Confederate States and gain the support of freed slaves who would be able to join the Union Army. The proclamation freed more than three million enslaved men, women, and children, favouring the enlistment of black soldiers in the Union Army (Foner, 2014, p. 7). Eventually, after four years of bloody civil war, slavery was abolished in the United States through the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution of December 1865. The abolition of slavery that followed the end of the Civil War in the United States was exceptional to some extent because it freed a much larger number of enslaved men, women, and children (approximately 4 million) than previous emancipations. Also, except for those in Washington DC, slave owners were not paid indemnities (Araújo, 2017, p. 64).

Abolitions in Latin America

The early rebellion that gave birth to the Mexican War of Independence in 1810 was a popular movement. Its leaders called attention to the problem of racial and social inequalities that separated white Creole elites from the great majority of the poor colonial population of colour (Andrews, 2004, p. 87). Two years after Mexico's independence, on 26 September 1823, the Constituent Assembly passed a decree that prohibited the transatlantic slave trade to Mexico. Even though the Mexican Constitution of 1824 did not address the issue of slavery, constitutions of various Mexican states, enacted between 1824 and 1827, either abolished slavery or determined that newborns should be manumitted (Legaspi, 2013, pp. 22–26). Eventually, President Vicente Guerrero issued a decree on 15 September 1829 ending slavery in Mexico. Still, slavery continued to be the object of decrees, and it was included in the articles of the next two Constitutions of Mexico, suggesting that it remained a crucial problem until the eve of the Mexican Revolution (Baumgartner, 2015).

Between 1811 and 1842, the Atlantic slave trade to the various former Spanish colonies in Central America and South America was legally abolished. Yet from 1843 to 1847 it reopened in Peru, and in Argentina and Uruguay between the 1820s and the early 1830s (Borucki, 2015, pp. 50-51). Except for the Dominican Republic, which abolished both the slave trade and slavery in 1822, all the other former Spanish colonies adopted gradual abolition by first enacting free womb legislation and only later abolishing slavery. Chile and the Río de la Plata respectively enacted free womb laws on 15 October 1811 and on 31 January 1813 (Feliú, 1973, pp. 39–40; Andrews, 1989, p. 59; Edwards, 2020, p. 4). The regions of present-day Ecuador, Colombia, Peru, and Venezuela passed free womb legislation in 1821, Uruguay in 1825, and Bolivia and Paraguay in 1831 and 1842 respectively.

The actual demise of slavery was a lengthy process in South America. Chile was the first country in South America to legally abolish slavery. But a few days after the first decree of 24 July 1823, another decree established a series of restrictions to awarding the legal free status to the former enslaved men and women. Eventually the Chilean Constitution enacted on 29 December 1823 permanently abolished slavery. On 12 December 1842, during the Uruguayan Civil War, Uruguay enacted a law abolishing slavery. But a system of apprenticeship was established for women and children and then reversed only with the end of the war in 1853 (Borucki, 2015, p. 136).

During the next two decades, except for Brazil, Puerto Rico, and Cuba, slavery was abolished all over the Americas. In 1847, Sweden ended slavery in its American colony, Saint Barthélemy. In 1848, slavery was banned in the Danish West Indies, in Martinique, Guadeloupe, and French Guiana (Jennings, 2000). The regions of present-day Ecuador, Colombia, and Panama passed legislation prohibiting slavery in 1851 (effective 1 January 1852), most of Argentina in 1853, Peru and Venezuela in 1854, Bolivia in 1861, and Paraguay in 1869 (McGraw, 2014, pp. 28–29; Andrews, 1989, p. 57).

Brazil and the Spanish West Indies

The end of the slave trade and the gradual abolition of slavery occurred later in Brazil (Alonso, 2015, p. 109). Since 1808, when the Portuguese royal family moved to Rio de Janeiro to escape Napoleon Bonaparte's invasion and opened the Brazilian market to the importation of British manufactured goods, Britain had increasingly pressured Portugal to end the slave trade to Brazil.

British pressure continued after Brazilian independence in 1822. Eventually, on 7 November 1831, the Brazilian Congress passed the Feijó Law prohibiting imports of enslaved Africans to Brazil. The Law of 1831 created a new category of "liberated Africans". Once their status was confirmed, these Africans were employed by the Brazilian State to perform public works, or by private individuals for whom they were to work as servants or free workers for a period of 14 years (Mamigonian, 2017). But despite this legislation, the illegal slave trade to Brazil continued until 1850, when the Eusébio de Queirós Law (Law No. 581) outlawed slave imports to Brazil for a second time.

Despite legal prohibitions, the slave trade from Africa to Cuba continued. Whereas in Spain the debates about gradual emancipation intensified after the deposition of Queen Isabella II in 1868, in Cuba the colonists from the eastern part of the island embraced the idea of independence in an uprising that gave origin to the Ten Years' War (1868–1878) (Cowling, 2013, p. 39). Slave rebels and free coloureds, who were also the subject of discrimination under colonial policies, joined forces with the elite groups to fight for the abolition of slavery and for independence from Spain (Ferrer, 1999, p. 27). Spanish elites feared the movements for independence, and on 4 July 1870, the Spanish Parliament passed the Moret Law. Similar to free womb legislation in other regions of Latin America, the Law also included numerous restrictions (Araújo, 2017, pp. 72–73).

In the decade after the passage of the Moret Law, the number of enslaved people in Cuba decreased from nearly 300,000 to 200,000. Still, few of the emancipated slaves were individuals of working age (Scott, 2000, p. 73). On 28 September 1871, the Brazilian Congress passed the Rio Branco Law (Law No. 20140) freeing enslaved newborns. Yet the new law imposed several restrictions (Araújo, 2017, pp. 74–75). Moreover, in the province of São Paulo, slave owners who freed 158,093 slaves as a result of the Law of 1871 obtained approximately 414 *contos* and 882 *mil-réis* in financial compensation (Butler, 2000, p. 28). Meanwhile, following popular demonstrations in several Spanish cities, on 22 March 1873 the Spanish Parliament passed a law ending slavery in Puerto Rico, which freed around 29,335 enslaved individuals (Schmidt-Nowara, 1999, p. 153; Figueiroa 2005, p. 126). Yet, as in the British West Indies, the law established that newly freed slaves would have to work under three-year labour contracts with their former masters.

Cuba maintained slavery for seven more years. Eventually, on 13 February 1880, the Patronato Law was passed by the Spanish Parliament. In theory, the new Law abolished slavery and established an eight-year period of apprenticeship. The *patronato* eventually ended on 7 October 1886, two years prior to the established

date of 1888. As many *patrocinados* obtained their freedom in the five years that followed the creation of *patronato*, at the final demise of this system, Cuban registers included approximately 99,566 *patrocinados* (Scott, 2000, p. 140).

In Brazil, the Sexagenarian Law (1885) emancipated enslaved individuals older than 60 years (Soares, 2007, p. 299; Cowling, 2013, p. 42). The growth of the abolitionist movement and the ineffectiveness of the two emancipationist laws were evident. But since the 1870s, and especially during the 1880s, bondspeople had organized massive manumission campaigns as well as massive flights in urban and rural areas (Gomes, 2004, p. 742; Castilho, 2016, p. 88). Slave insurgency, along with widespread demands to end slavery, contributed to deepening the crisis of the Brazilian slave system (Machado, 1994, pp. 76, 82). Fearing revolts, masters freed thousands of enslaved men, women, and children, whereas hundreds ran away in the coffee zones of Brazil's southeast. Still, slaveholders counted on their representatives in the Chamber of Deputies to obtain financial compensation, or at least some kind of measure allowing them to maintain the relations of dominance with the future freed population (Albuquerque, 2009, p. 105). On 13 May 1888, Princess Isabel, the regent, finally signed the Golden Law, which emancipated nearly 700,000 enslaved men and women (Costa, 2008, p. 10).

Abolition of slavery in Africa

Trade relations developed during the era of the Atlantic slave trade had opened the path for the European conquest of Africa. At the end of the nineteenth century, Britain, France, Portugal and other European States gradually imposed their presence on the African continent, fuelling a process that was defined as the scramble for Africa. The new rule led to the gradual legal prohibition of slavery on African soil. However, emancipation was a lengthy and complex process that varied over time and from region to region. Slavery existed on African soil prior to the contact between Africa and Europe. Likewise, the Muslim slave trade (mainly to North Africa and the Middle East) and the African internal slave trade, which provided captives to the continent's internal market, emerged before the Atlantic slave trade and persisted throughout the nineteenth and the twentieth centuries.

Although slavery in Africa differed from the racialized chattel slavery that prevailed on the American continent, the development of the transatlantic slave trade had affected the nature of slavery in Africa (Lovejoy, 2012). The end of

the Atlantic slave trade during the second half of the nineteenth century led many African societies to develop an export-oriented agricultural economy that largely relied on slavery as a mode of production (Manning, 1990, p. 106). Yet, in regions like West Central Africa, slavery continued expanding during the entire nineteenth century (Candido, 2020, pp. 70–71).

Measures to legally prohibit the slave trade and slavery on African soil were used to justify European conquest and colonization. Starting in the second half of the nineteenth century, Britain signed several treaties with African States, including Egypt, Zanzibar, and Madagascar, to legally ban the slave trade (Quirk, 2014, p. 73). Despite these agreements, during this first phase, Britain tolerated the existence of what many British officials defined as 'domestic' slavery, perceived as a more benign and acceptable kind of bondage (Quirk, 2014, p. 95). In regions controlled by the Portuguese, such as Angola, slavery was abolished in 1869. Yet in the three years that followed, Portugal imposed an apprenticeship system on former slaves. Slavery remained alive in Angola far beyond the date of its legal abolition (Schenck and Candido, 2015, p. 218; Candido, 2020, p. 71).

Whereas local rulers, slave traders, and slave owners met the prohibition of slavery with resistance, enslaved men and women took these opportunities to assert their freedom by running away from their masters, returning to their former villages, and creating new communities, very often far from their region of origin (Lovejoy, 2012, p. 253; Klein, 1998, p. 159; Rodet, 2015). As was the case in the Americas, enslaved people themselves were central protagonists of emancipation (Lovejoy, 2012, p. 261).

The consolidation of colonial rule at the turn of the twentieth century offered a more favourable context to the legal end of slavery in Africa. In 1900, Britain legally abolished slavery in its occupied zones in Nigeria. In 1905, France legally prohibited slavery in its West African colonies (Rodet, 2005, p. 363). But despite legal abolition, slavery persisted on the ground. Moreover, European colonial rules in zones controlled by France, Portugal and Belgium imposed on Indigenous populations slavery-like coercive labour regimes. Still today, residents of Angola remember the *contratado* system of forced labour imposed by the Portuguese, which existed until 1962, as slavery-like working conditions (Schenck and Candido, 2015, p. 216). In most African regions, slavery had disappeared by the time of the Second World War. Although illegal, depending on the period and region, slave labour resurfaced several times. An iconic example is Mauritania, where although slavery was first legally banned

during the French colonial rule in 1905, a law abolishing slavery in the country was enacted in as late as 1980 (Drescher, 2009, p. 454).

Limits of emancipation

The abolition of the slave trade and slavery in the Americas and Africa was a long and complex social and economic process. The legal end of the Atlantic slave trade and slavery was possible through the actions of enslaved men and women who challenged their legal status by organizing rebellions and massive flights, and who, along with other social actors, led campaigns for the passage of anti-slavery legislation. Beyond the legal prohibition of slavery, both in the Americas and Africa bondspeople were protagonists in their emancipation. Still, in most regions of the Americas and to some extent in some regions of Africa, former slave owners obtained financial compensation to cover the loss of their enslaved property, whereas former enslaved persons never obtained financial or material reparations for slavery. In the period that followed the abolition of slavery in the Americas, freed people continued facing economic and social exclusion. Likewise, during European colonial rule in Africa, formerly enslaved persons were submitted to inhumane forms of labour exploitation that very often were associated with slavery. Today, despite the illegality of slavery, working conditions analogous to slave labour remain a reality in the Americas and Africa.

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CHAPTER 22

MUSLIMS' RESISTANCE IN THE AMERICAS

Sylviane A. Diouf

Introduction

During the time of the transatlantic slave trade, West African Muslims were enslaved all over the Americas, and a variety of witnesses recorded their presence, activities, and particularities (Diouf, 2013). In the form of accounts of missionaries, planters and travellers, runaway notices, police reports, newspaper articles and the Muslims' own manuscripts, the trace left by these hundreds of thousands of men, women and children can be found in more than 20 colonies and countries in the Caribbean region and in South, Central and North America.

Among the captives were teachers, students, memorizers of the Qur'an, long-distance traders, pilgrims travelling to Mecca, soldiers, farmers, and herders. They were prisoners of wars and raids or victims of kidnappings. They came from diverse geographic areas, were of varied ethnic origins, and spoke different languages. Yet Muslims were linked, in the Americas and in West Africa alike, by not only their common faith, but also Arabic, a language that the most educated could speak, write, and read. Bilali Mohamed, who was from Guinea and was enslaved in the state of Georgia, expressed this well when, during the War of 1812, he told his owner he could 'answer for every Negro of the true faith, but not for the *Christian dogs* you own'. The Muslims on the plantation were diverse in their origins and languages, but they were united in their 'true faith' (Coulter, 1940, pp. 83–84).

Revolts at sea

One of the first acts of resistance by Africans was to revolt in the coastal slave pens and on board ships. Over 530 such revolts and conspiracies have been documented, but the true number may be over 1,000. People from Senegambia, the most heavily Muslim of the areas affected by the transatlantic slave trade made up 6 per cent of the deportees; they accounted for 115, or 22.6 per cent, of the uprisings. Tellingly, the rate of resistance in Senegambia was highest between 1761 and 1776, when events in northern Senegal resulted in large numbers of Muslims being captured and deported.[1] Their enslavement by Christians may have been a further reason for them to rebel onshore and at sea.

A ship revolt that almost succeeded - and inspired Herman Melville, who turned it into the novel *Benito Cereno* - was led by Muslims on the *Tryal,* which was taking them from Santiago, Chile to Lima, Peru. They rose on 27 December 1804 – a week after they boarded the ship – on the eve of Laylat al-Qadr, rendered variously in English as 'the Night of Power' or 'the Night of Destiny', the most sacred day of the holy month of Ramadan. The *Tryal*'s captives planned to sail back to Senegal and they had the captain sign a 'contract' to that effect. He testified that 'they knew how to write in their language'. The ship was eventually taken over after a fierce battle (Grandin, 2014, pp. 171–181).

One successful revolt organized by Muslims occurred on the *San Juan Nepomuceno* in 1800. The captives, described as 'mostly Negros and Moors from Senegal' forced the first officer to take the ship from Montevideo, Uruguay to Saint-Louis, Senegal, where they arrived several months later. Following this odyssey, the viceroy of Peru recommended that the Spanish Crown bar Muslims from the Americas because they 'spread very perverse ideas among their own kind. And there are so many of them in this realm' (Grandin, 2014, pp. 182–185). The 'rebelliousness' of the Muslims was nothing new; it had been noted and denounced for centuries.

1 Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database. http://www.slavevoyages.org (Accessed 4 October 2015).

The Muslim ban

On 11 May 1526, the Spanish Crown passed the first in a series of anti-Muslim decrees. It prohibited the introduction of *gelofes,*[2] 'negros' from the Levant, blacks who had been 'raised with the Moors', and people from Guinea. Four years prior, the Wolof had led the first revolt by enslaved Africans in the New World. They had risen on the sugar plantation of Christopher Columbus' son, Diego Columbus, and killed a dozen white settlers. Wolof uprisings had also occurred in Puerto Rico, Colombia and Panama. In 1532, Spain issued a further decree, stressing the threat posed by 'arrogant, disobedient, rebellious and incorrigible' Wolof who had killed a number of Christians (Saco, 1938; Mari, 1979, pp. 90–98). On 14 August 1543, the Crown banned the introduction of free and enslaved Muslims who had newly converted to Catholicism, because they had caused much 'inconvenience' in the past. Finally, on 16 July 1550, the introduction of blacks from the 'Levant and Guinea' was once again proscribed because they were 'mixed with the Moors'. In addition to the alarm caused by the uprisings, the possibility that Muslims could convert Native Americans was a great source of concern for the Crown (Herrera y Tordesillas, 1726–1727, p. 175).

Religious and cultural resistance

In Catholic lands, the enslaved population was excluded from the white community but included in the spiritual realm. Baptism of the 'heathens' was obligatory, but Muslims were hard to convert, as noted by Father Jean-Baptiste Labat, who was posted in the French Caribbean from 1693 to 1705: 'When they [Muslims from Senegal] are brought in the islands, it is better not to take them, for they never embrace the Christian religion'. This was also the opinion of Father Vidaud, who worked in eighteenth-century Martinique (Debien, 1974, p. 254; Du Tertre, 1868, p. 106; Labat, 1979, p. 203).

Given that overt defiance was met with harsh punishments, many Muslims pragmatically underwent fake conversions. In nineteenth-century Brazil, the French envoy Arthur de Gobineau stated:

> *Most of the Minas, if not all, are outwardly Christians, but they are actually Muslims, but as this religion would not be tolerated in Brazil, they hide this fact […] Notwithstanding*

2 Wolof from Senegambia, many of whom were Muslim.

> *outward appearances, I have been able to ascertain that they faithfully cherish the beliefs they bring with them from Africa and zealously hand them on, since they study Arabic thoroughly enough to understand the Koran, at least roughly* (Raeders, 1934, p. 75).

As forced conversions became the policy in Protestant colonies in the late 1700s, the Muslims' response was similar. In 1834 in Kingston, Jamaica, Richard Madden noted that 'very few' Muslims renounced their religion. 'But this they do not acknowledge because they are afraid to do so' (Madden, 1835, p. 102).

While they resisted conversion, whether overtly or secretly, Muslims continued to follow the precepts of their religion, including abstinence from pork and alcohol and observing the fast for Ramadan, the fourth pillar of Islam. In the French Caribbean, the refusal of pork was so widespread that in 1672, the governor wrote, 'This people cannot see any longer how to feed the slaves for bacon is their aversion and they eat it only through force'. In the United States of America, Salih Bilali was described by his owner as 'a strict Mahometan; [he] abstains from spirituous liquors, and keeps the various fasts, particularly that of the Rhamadam [Ramadan]'. In Jamaica, Muhammad Kaba from Guinea acknowledged that 'whenever he wished to observe one of the Mahometan fasts, he pretended to be sick'. After the failed 1835 Muslim uprising in Bahia, police carrying out a search of a secret Qur'anic school found a calendar showing the days of Ramadan (Diouf, 2013, pp. 94–95, pp. 119–123).

The third pillar of Islam, the giving of charity, was also observed by a number of Muslims, as was making freewill offerings known as *sadaqah* in Arabic, or *saraka* or *sara* in the Sea Islands of the United States, in Trinidad, Carriacou, Grenada and Brazil. In the United States, this practice consisted of Muslim women handing out rice balls, while in other areas they handed out various food offerings; this Islamic tradition was one adopted by non-Muslims in the Caribbean (Diouf, 2013, pp. 91–93).

The Muslims' resistance to religious and cultural eradication manifested itself in the manner in which some continued to adhere to the Islamic dress code. In the Sea Islands of Georgia, Muslim women wore veils. White turbans, fezes and skullcaps were worn by men in Cuba, Trinidad, the United States of America and Brazil, as were long, flowing tunics and wide trousers. The imam John Mohamed Bath, chief of the Free Mandingo of Trinidad, 'always appeared in public in the dress of a Moslem priest' and the Senegalese emir Samba Makumba wore 'a flowing white tunic' (Diouf, 2013, pp. 101–111). The Muslim insurgents in Bahia in 1835 wore white tunics and skullcaps, indicating the holiness and sacredness of their mission. To the African Muslims, the overt

symbols of their faith and, for some, of their former status, were quite significant. Their dress meant resistance to not only Christianity, but also to acculturation.

Muslims used other forms of resistance, including freeing their coreligionists. In Trinidad, they formed an association whose objective was 'to maintain their religious profession'. They raised funds and purchased the Muslims who were still enslaved or had just arrived. In Brazil, Muslims pooled their resources to buy the freedom of 'any one of their number who was the most respected'. In addition, as Gobineau remarked, 'Every year, they buy […] a certain number of their compatriots. Often they send them back to Africa' (Raeders, 1934, p. 75).

Literacy, conspiracies and uprisings

Muslims were also involved in conspiracies and revolts. In Saint-Domingue, the *Marron* François Makandal was a Muslim who 'had instruction and possessed the Arabic language very well'. He had planned to poison the wells of Cap-Français and attack the city – before he was betrayed and burnt at the stake in 1758 (Madiou, 1981, p. 35; Melvil-Bloncourt, 1864, pp. 438–456; Diouf, 2013, pp. 216–220). A man from Jamaica, known as Boukman, galvanized the men and women who began the 1791 uprising on 21 August. Bookman, or 'man of the book' – the Qur'an – was how a Muslim was referred to in West Africa. Boukman has been known throughout history as a Vodun priest because the participation of Muslims in the revolt has been largely ignored. Yet Colonel Malenfant, who fought against the insurgents, made it clear that there were Muslims in their ranks who carried papers written in Arabic (Malenfant, 1814, p. 211).

From 1807, Muslims – many of whom had arrived in the wake of Usman dan Fodio's jihad in Nigeria – were involved in a series of conspiracies and revolts in Bahia. House searches led to the discovery of weapons, talismans and documents written in Arabic. The largest uprising occurred on 25 January 1835 – Laylat al-Qadr – a decidedly Islamic choice. The insurgents assaulted the National Guard, the police barracks and the city jail, and fought against the cavalry. After a long and deadly fight, the revolt was crushed (Reis, 1993). It must be noted that not every Muslim uprising should be viewed as a jihad, which must adhere to strict rules of engagement and occur for specific reasons.

Literacy was another weapon of resistance. Through the written word, Muslims communicated plans of revolt, maintained the cohesion of their community, taught their religion in secret – sometimes in underground Qur'anic schools, as was the case in Bahia – and manufactured talismans for protection.

Writing, which included numerous references to the Qadiriyya Sufi brotherhood, was an integral part of who the Muslims were; it was a means by which they could preserve, express and pass on their religious beliefs, identity and rejection of enslavement (Diouf, 2013).

Throughout the Americas, enslaved Muslims – like their non-Muslim counterparts – engaged in acts of resistance, but theirs included the overt or secret upholding of Islam, the creation of mutual aid societies to free coreligionists, the sporting of Islamic attire, the production of various writings – from letters and excerpts of Islamic texts to copies of the Qur'an – and uprisings. Being based on Arabic literacy, religious networks, Islamic traditions and the upholding of the five pillars of Islam, it was a distinctly Muslim resistance.

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CHAPTER 23

LADY OF THE ROSARY, MAMETO KALUNGA

Black Brotherhoods and Devotions in the Luso-African Atlantic

Lucilene Reginaldo

Brotherhoods, devotions and Black experience

The first lay brotherhoods in Portugal date back to the thirteenth century. Under the invocation of a patron saint, these associations held spiritual exercises as well as performing works of social philanthropy and providing assistance to their members (Penteado, 1995, pp. 15–52; Saunders, 1994, p. 204). By combining new Tridentine spiritualities with the practices of mutual aid societies from the Early Middle Ages, such as the craftsmen's guilds, the brotherhoods went beyond strictly religious functions. They provided protection in times of disease, hunger, imprisonment and death, as well as organizing parties and other social activities. The commitment or statute, approved by the civil and/or ecclesiastical authorities, was a formal registration of the founding of a brotherhood (Reginaldo, 2018, p. 269). This document set out the religious standards, such as regular devotional practice and celebrating the patron saint's day, as well as commitments determining the rules of association, such as membership criteria, the organization of elections, a definition of positions on the management board, and the practice of mutual aid and philanthropy where appropriate.[1] New, more modern criteria for belonging to brotherhoods were successively introduced, almost always added to the social

1 It is known, however, that many brotherhoods whose activities were recorded in a range of documents, had no written commitment. These organizations are often identified as brotherhoods of devotion.

demarcators of the old regime and the associative practices inherited from medieval times. Thus, the new legal statuses (slave and freedman), as well as skin colour (white, black, brown, mulatto) and generic or specific geographical origin (ports of embarkation, ethnic identities and 'nations') became basic criteria for the constitution of Iberian and American brotherhoods (Fonseca, 2010, p. 436; Reginaldo, 2011, p. 155; Reis, 1996, p. 12; Soares, 2000, pp. 222–23; Viana, 2007, p. 154).

Since 1485, when the first Kongolese people had been shipped in the fleet commanded by Diogo Cão to Portugal, many Africans had come to the Kingdom to be instructed in the faith, culture and languages of the western world. Some of those who landed in Lisbon and the other ports in the north and Algarve were free individuals, representatives of *Manicongo* and members of the African kingdom elite. Most, however, came to Portugal as slaves (Boxer, 1989). Conversion to Catholicism occupied a central place in the relationship with the peoples of Africa, both on the continent and beyond (Thornton, 1992). Thus, the brotherhoods became important tools in the catechesis of Africans remaining within their dominions, as well as their descendants enslaved in other parts of the Iberian Peninsula and the Americas.

The first black brotherhood in Lisbon was set up at Igreja de São Domingos, with its first statute approved in 1565 (Lahon, 1999, p. 61). In the 1580s, the brotherhoods of Our Lady of Guadalupe were created at Convento de São Francisco, along with another under the invocation of Jesus Maria José, at Convento do Carmo. Between the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, several black brotherhoods were set up in Portugal. It was from then onwards that the primacy of the Rosary became clear. In Lisbon, at the beginning of the seventeenth century, the Rosário dos Pretos brotherhood was set up at Convento do Salvador. Between then and the mid-eighteenth century, four more brotherhoods were founded, three of them dedicated to the Rosary: Rosário a Resgatada at Convento da Trindade, Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Pretos at Convento da Graça and the Confraria de Nossa Senhora do Rosário e dos Santos Reis Magos. Black brotherhoods could also be found in other cities outside of Lisbon with a high concentration of people of African origin: Évora, Alcácer do Sal, Setúbal, Vila Viçosa, Grândola, Montemor-o-Novo, Estremoz and Elvas, in the Alentejo. And black brotherhoods were also present in the Algarve and to the north of the Tagus (Lahon, 1999b, pp. 140–41; Fonseca, 1997, 1996, pp. 151–76). In summary, by the eighteenth century, the cult of the Rosary had spread throughout Portugal. By then, an association had already

been established between this devotion and the black population (of both slaves and free people) in the Kingdom.[2]

Meanwhile, on the African continent the link between devotion to the Rosary and the local people was becoming ever clearer. The first brotherhood of Rosário de Luanda had been set up by the Church of the Jesuit College in the early seventeenth century, bringing together freedmen and slaves belonging to the Jesuit Fathers and, above all, denoting the imposition of a catechetical project (Cadornega, [1680] 1972, pp. 14–15).[3] The second was established in 1628 by Bishop Frei Francisco do Soveral.[4] This parish was mostly frequented by local people and catechesis carried out in the local language.[5] In the eighteenth century, this brotherhood gave its name to the Rosário neighbourhood which, indeed, had become a kind of slave camp since the middle of the seventeenth century (Venâncio, 1996, p. 39). Although missionary catechesis still prevailed, there is evidence of emerging preferences and identifications. In the early eighteenth century, a brotherhood of black devotees was founded on Príncipe Island, dedicated to the Rosary of Our Lady (Santa Maria, 1707, book I, pp. 265–67; book V, pp. 445–46.). During the same period, in São Tomé, the native population felt that they 'owned' their devotion to such an extent that they did everything possible to prevent the founding of a white brotherhood also devoted to Our Lady of the Rosary. It is noteworthy that the black brotherhood, founded in 1526, was by far the oldest (Santa Maria, 1707, book V, p. 436).

In Portuguese America, the brotherhoods were essential to the expansion and maintenance of Catholic worship (Salles, [1963] 1992; Boschi, 1986; Scarano, 1978). Since the beginning of colonization, many brotherhoods had been founded by (or for) Africans and Creoles. In fact, the same observation can also be made for other regions of the Americas where the Catholic religion was imposed more systematically and slavery brought together many Africans and their descendants (Ciro, 2000, pp. 190–214; Garcia, 2000, pp. 137–69;

2 Attempts to compile a complete, if not exhaustive, list of the brotherhoods devoted to the Rosary of Our Lady in Portugal, exclusive of blacks and freed slaves, may well suffer from significant omissions. To access such lists see: Santa Maria, 1707, books I to VII; Brásio, 1944, pp. 99–104; Lahon, 1999*a*, p. 70.

3 *Petição da Irmandade de São Francisco Xavier*, 1701, Cx 16, doc. 17, Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Angola.

4 José Carlos Venâncio describes this as 'a chapel belonging to the Jesuits, especially to serve their slaves'. I believe the author has confused this church with the existing chapel at the college, since no known documentary records, to date, carry any reference to these links. Bishop Soveral's establishment of the brotherhood and 'black parish' demonstrates the subordination of the Black Church to the diocese, which is confirmed by consulting the eighteenth century provisions (Venâncio, 1996, p. 39).

5 Reports by Governor Fernão de Sousa. Biblioteca da Ajuda, Codex 51-VIII-31, sheets 19–29, vol. II (see Cadornega [1680] 1972, p. 28).

Germeten, 2013; Graubart, 2011, pp. 1–22; Valerio, 2020, pp. 1–22). The oldest known statutes suggest that the first brotherhoods of the Rosary established on Brazilian soil were those of Rio de Janeiro, Belém and Bahia, founded respectively in 1639, 1682 and 1685 (Carneiro, 1964, p. 88).

The emergence and proliferation of black brotherhoods was directly linked to the growth of the slave population and that of freedmen, along with the need for catechization, implicit in the colonial project. Another contributing factor, which was also encountered in Iberian lands, was the increasing interest in these institutions among slaves and freedmen. Based on the wills of freedmen and freedwomen in Salvador, Kátia Matoso (1982) and Inês de Oliveria (1998) found that between the years 1790 and 1830, only 21.6 per cent of the freedmen and 18.5 per cent of the freedwomen who left wills did not belong to brotherhoods. The majority belonged to more than one, and many to three, four, five or more brotherhoods. This interest certainly stemmed from the material and spiritual support offered by these groups, as was true of brotherhoods in general, but perhaps even more so in the case of the black brotherhoods (Reis, 1991, pp. 206–09; Delfino 2017, pp. 318–24).

These brotherhoods were generally managed by an administrative board, divided hierarchically into several positions according to specific functions. In the context of a slave society, the unparalleled possibility of managing funds raised among the brothers or through alms certainly mobilized slaves, freedmen and free people of colour to join a brotherhood or even aspire to hold one of the management positions. There are records of fierce disputes over the issue of positions on the brotherhoods' boards, involving black brothers but also members of the white population (Reis, 1997, pp. 7–33). Until the mid-seventeenth century, the roles of treasurer and clerk were usually occupied by white men. However, from the eighteenth century onwards, both in Portuguese America and metropolitan Portugal, men of colour were gradually winning the right to these prestigious roles (Reginaldo, 2011, pp. 178–80).

Africans, Creoles and people of mixed race who congregated in brotherhoods could also build, guard and administer their churches and chapels. In the first half of the eighteenth century, the Rosary brotherhoods of Olinda (Pernambuco), Baixa dos Sapateiros (in the city of Bahia) and Rio de Janeiro suffered attempts (both successful and unsuccessful) to usurp their temples (Bacelar, 1974, p. 44; Quintão, 2002, pp. 105–07). These events would appear to attest to the solidity and commodity of these coveted temples and, at the same time, to the difficulties faced by their administrators in preserving and maintaining the autonomous space.

The black brotherhoods also had their own particularities as regards the presence and participation of women. The majority were mixed, allowing both sexes to participate. An interesting phenomenon specific to the black brotherhoods comes to light when we turn to male and female membership patterns, namely the presence of a large number of women and the attribution of prominent female positions, such as queens and judges (Mulvey, 1980, pp. 258–59; Russel-Wood, 1974, p. 584). These positions were not merely symbolic. Among other obligations, they played an important role in collecting resources and organizing parties for the patron saints, with great responsibility for the success or failure of such festive events.

The patron saint's day was the highlight of the brotherhoods' calendar in terms of public visibility and the number of people coming together. These festive occasions presented the black brotherhoods with an opportunity to mark their place of distinction in colonial society. The parties organized by the black brotherhoods were not confined to liturgical acts (Eugênio, 2002, pp 32, 34, 36). They were also an opportunity for less restrained and less solemn expression, which took place outside the church, involving music, dancing, and feasting washed down with a lot of *geribita* (sugarcane spirit) (Scarano, 2001, pp. 467–86). During the devotions' saints days, the devotees would play their instruments, sing in their languages and dance 'in their own way', as requested, in 1786, by the black devotees of Gloriosa Senhora do Rosário in the City of Bahia.[6] Not only were the parties organized by the black brotherhoods unparalleled occasions for African cultural expression, but they also provided special opportunities for the recognition of differences within the African and Creole communities (Fromont, 2013; Reis, 1996, p. 9; Souza, 2002, pp. 215–16; Valério, 2019).

On various occasions and in different contexts, markers of ethnicity and/or origin were explicit in the brotherhoods. However, this was clearly not a simple transposition of African identity references to the Americas. These ethnicity indicators could indeed be very complex and creative (Soares, 2000, p. 232; Reginaldo, 2011, p. 151; Parés, 2015, pp. 3–5). There are examples of Africans creating private brotherhoods, such as the *Jejes* in Cachoeira (Bahia) and the *Mahi* in Rio de Janeiro in the eighteenth century (Oliveira, 1997, pp. 9–36; Soares, 2000). At times, different 'nations' made African alliances, as proposed

6 'Application of Black Devotees of the Brotherhood of Senhora do Rosário', Bahia, 1786, cx. 71, doc. 12235 [old numbering system], Arquivo Histórico Ultramirino; copy courtesy of Maria Inês Cortes de Oliveira. These devotees asked Queen Maria I for permission 'for great general festivities to celebrate our Lady, with masks and dances in the Angolan language using the appropriate instruments, songs and praises'.

by the founding brothers (Africans from the Costa da Mina and Luanda) of the Senhor Bom Jesus da Redenção brotherhood, instituted in Salvador's Corpo Santo chapel.[7] The Creoles, in turn, were also able to create their own exclusive brotherhoods, as occurred in the parish of São Gonçalo, Vila de Cachoeira, Bahia, where a brotherhood was instituted in 1800 under the invocation of Bom Jesus da Cruz.[8] However, as already pointed out, the equations were not fixed, as shown by the close relationship between Angolas and Creoles in the Rosary brotherhoods.[9] The Angolas of Bahia were nominally associated with the formation and history of the Rosary brotherhood in Baixa dos Sapateiros.[10] However, this phenomenon was not exclusive to Bahia, with Angolans and Creoles also frequently holding privileged positions in the Rosary brotherhoods of the Diocese of Pernambuco.[11] It is possible that the identification of Angolas with Catholic brotherhoods of various invocations, especially those of the Rosary, resulted from a combination of historical contingencies and collective experiences. Precedence is a relevant factor in this history. In the seventeenth century, when the brotherhood of Rosário dos Pretos das Portas do Carmo was created, along with its counterparts in Bahia, Rio de Janeiro and Pernambuco, 'the numerical superiority of blacks from Angola and Kongo was incontestable'. For this demographic reason, these first brotherhoods may have

7 'Commitment to the Brotherhood of Senhor Bom Jesus das Necessidades e Redenção', Corpo Santo chapel, Instituto dos Arquivos Nacionais/Torre do Tombo (IAN/TT), Chancelarias da Ordem de Cristo, D. Maria I, book 5, pp. 51v–60, ch. XII.

8 'Commitment to the Brotherhood of Senhor Bom Jesus da Cruz by the Creoles of Vila de Cachoeira', Parish of São Gonçalo dos Campos, 1800, ch. XI.

9 Like other African identities forged in the diaspora, the Angola identification is rather generic and imprecise, both in ethnic and more specific geographical/regional terms. In Bahia, as in other parts of Brazil, the term Angola was used to identify various populations shipped to the Americas mainly through Luanda, the capital and port of the most important Portuguese enclave on the African coast.

10 Until the approval of the statute in 1820, the management of this prestigious fellowship was the responsibility of both Angolans and Creoles. 'Commitment to the Brotherhood of Nossa Senhora do Rosário dos Homens Pretos', 1820 (Farias, S. O. 1997). Other brotherhoods active in the city of Bahia during the eighteenth century also gave special preference to Angolans and Creoles on their boards: the Rosário brotherhoods of the parish of São Pedro, Conceição da Praia and Matriz da Vitória. 'Commitment to the Brotherhood of N. S. do Rosário dos Pretos, João Pereira', Parish of São Pedro, IAN/TT, Chancelarias Régias/Ordem de Cristo, Book 297, pp. 168v–178; 'Commitment to the Brotherhood of N. S. do Rosário dos Pretos' in the Parish of Conceição da Praia, Bahia, 1768, IAN/TT, Chancelarias Antigas/Ordem de Cristo, Book 306, pp. 16-22; 'Commitment to the Brotherhood of N. S. do Rosário dos Pretos' in Matriz de N. S. da Vitória, Bahia, IAN/TT, Chancelarias Antigas/Ordem de Cristo, Book. 297, pp. 58–63.

11 'Commitment to the Brotherhood of N. S. do Rosário dos Homens Pretos' in Vila de Santo Antonio, Recife, Bishopric of Pernambuco, IAN/TT, Chancelarias Antigas/ Ordem de Cristo, Book 283, pp. 116-117; 'Commitment to the Brotherhood of N. S. do Rosário dos Homens Pretos' in the Parish of Santo Antonio do Cabo, Bishopric of Pernambuco, Chancelarias Antigas/Ordem de Cristo, Book 283, pp. 110–115.

been made up almost 'exclusively of Angolas and their descendants'. (Bacelar e Souza, 1974, p. 9). The presence and establishment of Catholicism in the former Kingdom of Kongo and in Angola since the mid-sixteenth century was one of the fundamental reasons behind the close ties established between the Rosary devotion and the Angolas in the Portuguese Americas. Indeed, it could be argued that these ties were initially woven by the first groups of Central Africans who disembarked in Bahia, Rio de Janeiro and Pernambuco. For these communities, the world of Catholicism and, above all, the experience of the links between conversion and conquest, along with Africanized Christianity over a long period of contact, were especially significant (Schwartz, 1994; Thornton, 1998; Sweet, 2007; Fromont, 2014). We may in fact need to cross the Atlantic to the territories of Kongo and Angola to comprehend all the dimensions of the Rosary's popularity. This might allow us to better understand the phenomenon of the Lady of the Rosary's popularization among slaves and their descendants in the Americas and, perhaps, her transformation into Our Lady of Kalunga.

From Lepanto to Kalunga: the transfiguration of the Lady of the Rosary into *Mameto Kalunga*

Originally, the Rosary devotion bore no relation to African populations and their descendants. This devotion emerged in the early thirteenth century in the context of the struggle against modern 'heresies' (Souza, 2001, p. 382), and was then practically forgotten until the second half of the fifteenth century. During that period the German Dominicans, fearful of the threats posed by the schism that would eventually lead to the Reformation, decided to reinvigorate the devotion revealed to Dominic. In 1475, the first brotherhood of the Rosary was founded in Cologne, Germany (Sousa, 1977, Vol. I, pp. 353-54). After the Battle of Lepanto in October 1571, a confrontation that finally ended the Turkish dominion of the Mediterranean Sea, Our Lady of the Rosary became associated with the struggle of the Catholics against the infidels, 'chosen' as patroness of the new spiritual conquests (Souza, 2001, p. 385). In this offensive context, the Rosary of Our Lady – a devotion held dear by the leading missionary orders in the first centuries of contact – landed in Africa as part of the Portuguese conquests and gradually took on new meanings among Central Africans.

There were other known devotions during the African conquests, also related to missionary orders. The devotion to Saint Benedict, which has close ties with the Franciscans, was already very popular in Portugal in the early seventeenth century,

i.e. a few decades after the saint's death, which occurred in Palermo in 1589 (Morabito, 2000; Vicent, 2016; Garcia, 2016). This phenomenon was doubtless directly related to the promotion of devotions to black saints, a particularly interesting chapter in the history of popular devotional practices promoted by the Council of Trent (Santos, 2016, pp. 138–57; Santana, 2018, pp. 77–85). The first chronicles of the devotion to Saint Benedict in Angola date back to the end of the seventeenth century. At that time, one of the altars of Luanda's Church of the Rosary was dedicated to the black saint of Palermo (Cadornega, [1680] 1972, p. 27). The 'legend' that the mother of Saint Benedict was a native of Kissama, a region south of the Kingdom of Angola, can also be traced to the same period. This legend of a birth on African soil suggests that identification with the saint held other interpretative possibilities in addition to physical appearance (Cadornega, op. cit., p. 27). In any case, similarity of colour may also have been relevant in identification with the black Carmelite saints Elesbaan and Iphigenia. In the second half of the eighteenth century, there was a small chapel in Luanda dedicated to Saint Iphigenia (Amaral, 1961, pp. 409–20), in which there was also an altar dedicated to Saint Elesbaan. It would appear that the Carmelites were chiefly responsible for the propagation of these devotions in the Iberian Peninsula as well as in the Americas (Oliveira, 2008).

It is true that, although relevant, physical appearance was not the only factor in the identification of Africans with Catholic devotions. Re-significations of Christian symbols, including images of saints, were certainly not limited to the way things looked. The analogy also came in more abstract terms. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, Christian religious objects were being used throughout Kongo in the same way as other *nkisi-fetiches* considered sources of spiritual power (Horta, 1997, pp. 301–21). In this sense, the intense circulation of crucifixes, rosaries and images of saints was also an expression of African re-readings in the very act of producing sacred objects, as Fromont (2014) suggests.

In this context, the devotion to Saint Anthony also has a particular history as one of the most expressive examples of the complex and profound appropriation of Christianity by Central Africans. While the Portuguese attributed to the saint 'all the victories [they had] in the wars against the heathens of the hinterlands [...] those same "heathens" [...] [venerated him] with the title of God Saint Anthony, and it was not uncommon for them to [carry] his image around their necks.'[12] The history of the great popularization of this devotion began with

12 Order of the Governor and Captain-General of the Kingdom of Angola [Marques de Lavradio] to the Overseas Council, 19-08-1750. AHU, Angola, Cx. 37, doc. 50.

the movement led by Kongolese noblewoman Dona Beatriz Kimpa Vita who, as Saint Anthony in the flesh, preached the unification of Kongo and a new interpretation of Christianity. Considered an instrument of the demonic arts by the Capuchins, Kimpa Vita was accused of heresy and burned at the stake in 1706 (Thornton, 1998). The popularity of Saint Anthony was unquestionable in eighteenth century Kongo and Angola, so that he may have crossed the Atlantic, adopting African contours along the way. This hypothesis is corroborated by the small images of the saint carved in pine discovered in Vale do Paraíba Paulista, a region where a large population of slaves originating in Central Africa was concentrated (Slenes, 1991–92, p. 65).

African reinterpretations of the Lady of the Rosary also appear to have made the journey across the Atlantic. The encounter with the Lady of the Rosary, or rather, the identification of the saint with the blacks, is one of the main themes of the Congado.[13] Congadeiro tradition tells the story, in verse and prose, of the day Our Lady appeared in the sea and, after several failed attempts by white priests and musicians, was led to the beach by African drums. In the fifteenth century, Our Lady held the titles of Hebrew Miriam and *Slella Mari*, so that while this identification in the tradition of the Congados with water, and more precisely with the ocean, was not invented by today's Congadeiros or their ancestors (Kiddy, 2000, p. 49), it did take on African dimensions in its expression through that tradition.

In verses recorded in the rich songbook of the Congados, the Lady of the Rosary was also called *Mameto Kalunga*. This is a respectful term of address also used for female positions in Angolan and Kongolese Candomblé. *Mameto* can be translated literally as mother, or our mother, in the spiritual sense. As shown from the very first ethnographic documents on these religious practices right up to the latest studies, the holy mothers of Angolan Candomblé bear the name *Mamêto de Inkice* (Carneiro, 1954, p. 193). To explore the meanings

13 This dramatic dance is a cultural manifestation with a marked Central African influence. Various themes can be presented, combined in various ways, highlights of which include: the coronation of the King of Kongo, the meeting of the blacks with Our Lady of the Rosary submerged in water, and the life of Saint Benedict, among others. The first records of such events date from the eighteenth century. From the beginning of the twentieth century, they have been the subject of studies by folklorists, historians, anthropologists and ethno-musicologists. See, among others: Gomes, Núbia Pereira de Magalhães; Pereira, Edimilson de Almeida. *Negras raízes mineiras*: *os Arturos*. Juiz de Fora, Ministry of Culture/ UFJF, 1997; Gabarra, Larissa Oliveira. *O Reinado do Congo no Império do Brasil. Congado de Minas Gerais no século XIX e as memórias da África Central.* Rio de Janeiro, 2009. Rio de Janeiro: Pontifical Catholic University of Rio de Janeiro (Doctoral thesis).

of *mameto,* after crossing the Atlantic, we must go a little deeper into Central African history.

In *Mbundu* oral traditions, the *malunga* (plural of *lunga*) are insignias of belonging and power, 'a sacred relic that comes in many physical forms but generally takes the form of a human figurine carved in wood'. The *Mbundu* explain that the first *malunga* were brought from *Kalunga*, from the 'great water', by their ancestors. Joseph Miller (1995, pp. 58–59) further suggests that the identification of *Kalunga* with the Atlantic Ocean appears to have come later, after the Portuguese established themselves on the coast. It is possible that the meaning of *Kalunga* as a land of the ancestors was shared by various *Mbundu* groups, which explains the name of *Kalunga* as a title for a great lord or distinction for a chief or *Soba* among the *Ndembu* (Vansina, 2004, pp. 190–91). *Mameto Kalunga* nevertheless carries many meanings: recognition of authority, a privileged relationship – constituted by spiritual kinship – with the land of the ancestors. It is possible that, as the Atlantic slave trade imposed itself as an increasingly dreaded and sometimes relentless reality, the protection of a great water spirit became essential when crossing the *Kalunga* (MacGaffey, 1994).

The importance of the 'great waters', as well as the influence of their spirit inhabitants on the living in Central African cosmology, may have created a bridge with the medieval belief that linked Our Lady (especially of the Rosary) to the ocean waters (Kiddy, 2000, pp. 47–61). This phenomenon may have occurred in various regions, as suggested by the numerous representations of holy entities, saints and mermaids worshipped in the waters of the Atlantic, from coast to coast (Drewal, 2008). Loaded with many meanings and experiences, the transformation of the Lady of the Rosary into the Lady of *Kalunga* was not confined to the history of the brotherhoods. Confraternities of slaves, freedmen and free people of colour nevertheless played a fundamental role in the construction and propagation of devotions and the black experience in the Luso-African Atlantic.

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CHAPTER 24

AFRICAN NATIONS IN AFRO-BRAZILIAN RELIGIONS

Luis Nicolau Parés

African nations during the slave trade period

One of the debates that has traditionally polarized African American studies is the degree of continuity of African identities in the New World. A fertile domain in which to explore this theme is religious practices. Since the eighteenth century at least, there is evidence that in colonial Brazil Africans gathered around drumming-dancing celebrations according to their 'nation' or ethnic affiliation, and used particular ritual features, like the drums for instance, to mark their cultural differences (Soares, 2000, pp. 158–59). In 1808, in the Bahian town of Santo Amaro, Africans came down from the sugar plantations to celebrate Christmas, and gathered for their dances in different crowds, the Angolas in one place, the Jeje in another and the Nagô and Haussa in yet another.[1] Though the religious dimension of these events is uncertain, the ethnic gregarious dynamic promoted by ritual activity appears evident. On the other hand, the division of Africans by 'nations' was strategically encouraged by the authorities to avoid insurgency (Reis, 2003, p. 82).

1 Arquivo Público do Estado da Bahia, maços 417-21, Capitães Mores, Santo Amaro, 1807-1822, 'Correspondência do capitão José Roiz de Gomes para o capitão-mor Francisco Pires de Cavalho e Alburquerque, 20 de janeiro de 1809'.

These 'nations', however, did not always correspond to distinct African ethnic groups or to any territorial political unit comparable to European State-nations. They were categories used by slave traders and slave owners to classify their human property, and they usually referred to the slave port or region from which Africans had been shipped to Brazil. For instance, a person enslaved in the West Central African hinterland embarked in the ports of the Angola kingdom was likely to be branded as 'Angola nation', regardless of his or her real ethnic origin. Similarly, a captive embarked on the Mina Coast, as the Portuguese called the West African littoral extending from present-day Ghana to Nigeria, was identified as pertaining to the 'Mina nation'. And yet, in early nineteenth-century Bahia, 'Mina' could also designate a more specific group, namely those embarked in the port of Aneho or Little Popo in present-day Togo. Thus, the inclusiveness and semantic domain of these categories varied through time and space, underscoring the dynamism and historically constructed nature of this system of classification.

Another common process was for the ethnonym of a specific African group to acquire a growing comprehensiveness, to the point of including a variety of previously differentiated groups. For example, in the eighteenth century the Nagô were a small group located on the border of the ancient kingdoms of Oyo and Dahomey. In their slave raids, the Dahomeans began to call all the neighboring Yoruba-speaking people under the political influence of Oyo 'Nagô' (e.g., Sabe, Egba, Egbado, Ketu, Ijesha, Ijebu). This generic usage of the term was replicated by the Portuguese slave traders in the region, and subsequently in Brazil. In a similar period, the Gbe-speaking people under the dominion of Dahomey, located in today's Benin and Togo, began to be called Jeje in Bahia, a term of contested origins that does not correspond to any known political entity in West Africa at that time (Oliveira, 1995–96, pp. 175–93; Parés, 2013, pp. 3–7, 24–29).

Inasmuch as these external categories served the slavers to help administer and control their human merchandise, Gerhard Kubik (1979, p. 10) has called them 'trade marks'. Also, because they often encompassed individuals from various ethnic groups, they can be conceived as meta-ethnic labels (Parés, 2013, pp. 3–4). And yet, members of the same 'nation', favoured by their relative linguistic intelligibility, soon recognized shared cultural affinities and commonalities. Hence 'trade marks' were progressively appropriated by enslaved and freed Africans in colonial Brazil and used to forge new diasporic forms of belonging and collective identity, as suggested by the dances of Santo Amaro. So, one could say that most African nations in Brazil were the result of an Atlantic genesis.

By the mid-nineteenth century, at the dawn of the Brazilian Empire and at the end of the Atlantic slave trade, the identification of Africans by nation

slowly faded away from the official documents (e.g., wills and post-mortem inventories), and wider racially-coded categories such as 'African' or 'Black' (*preto*) became more common, contributing to the formation of a broad ethno-racial black identity. Nonetheless, the identification of Africans in terms of the 'nation' repertoire inherited from the Atlantic slave trade seems to have prevailed in the informal and less visible dynamic of black sociability, particularly within the Afro-Brazilian religious community. It is worth noting that it was at this time that Afro-Brazilian religions became progressively institutionalized.

African nations as markers of religious identities

As an echo or an embedded memory of the slave colonial past, many contemporary Afro-Brazilian religious congregations, particularly those proud of their alleged African roots, continue to resort to the idiom of nations to identify themselves. The expression 'religious congregation' is used here to refer to a group of devotees initiated in the same 'temple', and translates local terms such as *terreiro*, *candomblé*, *casa*, *ilê* – names which also designate the sacred space they occupy. On the other hand, the 'religious community' would be the wider network of congregations or *terreiros*. Anyhow, religious congregations identify as belonging to the Angola, Congo, Nagô, Jeje or other African nations. As noted by anthropologist Vivaldo da Costa Lima, the term 'nation' gradually 'lost its political connotation to become a concept almost exclusively theological. Thus, nation became the ideological and ritual model of the Bahian Candomblé *terreiros*'. In other words, the self-attribution of a nation ceased to mark ethnic ancestry and came to designate a 'ritual model', or an 'organizational form defined according to a religious basis' (Lima, 2003, p. 29).

A similar process is reproduced in other Atlantic contexts where ritual variation is expressed by the idiom of nations and African political entities. In Haiti, for instance, the Vodou temples (*hunfo*) are said to belong to the Pweto *nachon* (nation) or the Rada *nachon*, Rada being a phonetic evolution of Allada, the dominant African kingdom on the seventeenth-century Slave Coast. Similarly, Afro-Cuban religious practices are divided into different *reglas* (normative models) such as the *regla de Arará* (from Allada) and the *regla de Ocha* (from *orisha*), also referred to as *regla Lucumi*, the name given in Cuba to the Yoruba-speaking people, known as Nagô in Brazil. The *regla Conga* or *regla de Palo* (Palo Monte, Palo Mayombé etc.) is the one that allegedly has stronger West Central African or Bantu influences.

But to return to Brazil, while all religious congregations share basic features comprising divination, healing, sacrifice, initiation, spirit possession and public drumming-dancing festivities, the boundaries between 'religious nations' are defined by differences in pantheons, language, song repertoires, dance steps, drum rhythms and many other ritual protocols. Houses of the Nagô nation and its inner variants (Keto, Ijexá, Oyó) worship the *orixá* gods and use Yoruba terminology as a distinctive characteristic. The Jeje worship the *vodum* and use Gbe terminology, while the Congo-Angolas worship the *inquice* (*nkisi*) and use Bantu-derived language. This compartmentalization, however, should not obliterate the fact that any congregation can combine elements from any nation. Owing to the continuous interaction between different houses and the possibility of a priest being successively initiated in *terreiros* of different nations, ritual practices move easily across nation boundaries. Hence, it would be inaccurate to conceive of the liturgy ascribed to any nation as fixed, stable, or homogenous.

Already in 1937, journalist and ethnologist Edison Carneiro noted in Bahia the growing interpenetration of religious practices: 'today many *candomblés* are no longer dedicated to a single nation, as in the past, whether because the current leader is from a different nation than his predecessor and naturally dedicates himself to both', or because religious experts visit other houses and their hosts are obliged 'to pay homage to such people by drumming and dancing according to their respective nations. It is no longer rare to play after the manner of any nation in any *candomblé*' (Carneiro, 1985, pp. 44–46). Edison Carneiro was the first author to speak of Candomblé nations in terms of differences in ritual practice. Nina Rodrigues, founder of Afro-Brazilian studies, talks only of 'brotherhoods' (*confraria*) or 'schools' (*colégios*) distinguished by 'special precepts related to food, clothing, and religious duties unique to the cult of this or that saint or *orixá*' (Rodrigues, 1977, pp. 101, 234).

And yet, despite this general ritual interpenetration, overlapping and creative eclecticism, most houses insist in their public discourse on identifying as belonging to a single nation. Inasmuch as elements of ritual praxis remitting to a real or putative ethnic origin serve the members of a congregation to activate processes of collective identity, it can be said that the religious nation never lost its intrinsic political dimension. Moreover, as happens in any form of collective identity, these processes of religious affiliation respond to very fluid relational, situational and instrumental dynamics which result in continuous historical change and progressive redefinition of the nations' boundaries (Barth, 1969; Cohen, 1974).

The idiom of nations in regional variations of Afro-Brazilian religions

We shall now examine how the phenomenon manifests itself in some of the most well-known regional variations of Afro-Brazilian religions, bearing in mind that owing to a lack of space the Macumba of Rio de Janeiro, the Batuque of Pará and several others will not be treated here. In São Luis, capital of the northern State of Maranhão, Afro-Brazilian religion is known as Tambor de Mina (Mina Drum), an allusion to the above-mentioned Mina Coast. The two oldest existing houses there, both founded by Africans in the late 1840s, are the Casa das Minas (House of the Mina [women]) and the Casa de Nagô (House of the Nagô). While the former is famous for the worship of royal *voduns* from the Dahomey kingdom, and is often referred to as Mina-Jeje, the latter, inspired by the Yoruba traditions of *orixá* worship, became the major ritual model for the organization of Tambor de Mina as a distinct religious institution. The alignment of these two congregations with African 'nations' is explicit in their names, but in the majority of other houses – where the worship of non-African deities such as the *caboclo* is dominant and where the singing is mostly in Portuguese – the idiom of nations is less central. Yet houses that diverge from the Nagô or Mina-Jeje liturgical pattern are dismissed as *bêta* and sometimes referred to as houses of 'Tambor de Mata', 'Mina de Caboclo' or Pajelança (Amerindian healing tradition). In Tambor de Mina the house Fanti-Ashanti, founded in the 1950s, is also famous. However, the use of this 'nation' could be seen as a case of 'invention of tradition' which served its leader to establish a difference with the Nagô and Jeje main houses (Ferretti, 2001, pp. 75–94).

In Porto Alegre, capital of the southern State of Rio Grande do Sul, the local regional variation of Afro-Brazilian religion is known as Batuque (drum playing). There, religious congregations are associated with five main nations: Oyó, Ijexá, Nagô, Jeje and Cambíni or Cànbína (perhaps from Cabinda, in Angola). In the late 1950s most houses belonged to the Nagô nation, but today the dominant one is Ijexá, while the former has nearly disappeared. Each nation is considered a 'side' (*lado*) or 'branch' (*ramo*) of the African tradition, but their differences lie in such minor ritual features (singing order, drum rhythms, sacrificial protocols) that some say it is impossible to separate them. In fact the prevailing ritual modality in Rio Grande do Sul today is not Batuque, but the so-called Linha Cruzada (tangled thread) which emerged in the 1960s as a combination of both Batuque and Umbanda elements (Oro, 2002, pp. 354–55;

Correa 1992). Umbanda is a genuinely Brazilian religion which stemmed from the interpenetration of Afro-Brazilian religions, European Catholicism, Kardecist Spiritism, Amerindian healing traditions and others. The idiom of nations is rarely heard among Umbanda practitioners, signaling its distancing from an African identity.

In the northeastern States of Pernambuco, Paraiba, Alagoas and Sergipe, Afro-Brazilian religious practices are known as Xangô, the name of the Yoruba or Nagô thunder *orixá*, a first indication of the importance of this nation in its genesis. According to oral memory in the late nineteenth century, the oldest Xangô congregations in Recife claimed Nagô, Jeje, Angola and even Malê (Muslim) identities (Ribeiro, 1952, pp. 35, 75). Today Nagô is the dominant nation, though others such as Chamba and Congo are also recorded. Interestingly, here the idiom of nations is replicated by the Maracatu Nação, the secular drumming-dancing performance that emerged around the coronation of African kings and queens in colonial Catholic brotherhoods and today forms part of Recife's Carnival. Xangô ceremonies are usually contrasted with other local religious practices such as Catimbó and Jurema, devoted to the worship of Brazilian spiritual entities (*encantados* and *mestres*), with strong influence from Amerindian traditions and pejoratively perceived by Xangô practitioners and intellectuals as forms of 'low spiritualism'.

In no other place, however, is the symbolism of African nations used more widely than in Bahian Candomblé, particularly in the *terreiros* of the capital, Salvador, and its surrounding area of the Recôncavo. Not surprisingly, since the 1930s Bahia has been projected as the main national repository of African cultural heritage. When in 1937 Carneiro organized the *União das Seitas Afro-Brasileiras da Bahia* (Union of Afro-Brazilian Sects of Bahia) he ensured that there was a relative equilibrium between the houses that attracted West African nations (ten Keto, eight Jeje, four Ijexá) and those that appealed to West Central African nations (fifteen Angola, three Congo). He also registered fifteen 'Cabolco' houses, suggesting that ceremonies of Candomblé de Caboclo, typically (but not exclusively) involving the worship of Brazilian Indian spirits, had become a new 'Amerindian nation' (Carneiro, op. cit., pp. 44–45; Santos, 1995). On the other hand, it is worth noting that the Keto nation, an explicit allusion to the Ketu Yoruba kingdom, had become the main local variant of the Nagô liturgy in Salvador. Interestingly, the Keto nation is virtually non-existent in the Bahian slave trade records. However, the latest census of Salvador's *terreiros* shows that houses self-identified as Keto have experienced a significant growth, jumping from a discreet 15 per cent in 1937 to a majority of 58 per cent in 2007. At the

same time the proportion of Angola houses remained more or less the same, while the Jeje decreased. Within a universe of 1,164 congregations, the census registered a total of 48 names of 'nations' or self-identifications: Keto (58 per cent), Angola (24 per cent), Keto-Angola (3.3 per cent), Jeje (2.1 per cent), Umbanda (1.7 per cent), Ijexá (1.3 per cent), Keto-Jeje (1 per cent). The remaining 41 names (8 per cent) were, for the most part, permutations of the main ones (Santos, 2008, p. 22).

The prominence of the Nagô-Keto nation, prestige, and religious legitimation

The growing visibility of the Keto nation may be explained as the result of the politics of prestige operating within Candomblé. In religious circles and in Bahian society at large it is assumed that the Ilê Iyá Nassô (also known as Engenho Velho or Casa Branca) was the first Candomblé of the Nagô-Keto nation in Bahia. From this original house two others were born: the Gantois (Ilê Iyá Omin Axé Iyamassé) in the mid-nineteenth century and the Ilê Axé Opô Afonjá in 1910. A fourth one, the Alaketu (Ilê Maroiá Laji) is said to be as old as the Casa Branca and also claims a Keto origin for its founders. In the last three decades these four temples have been officially recognized by the Brazilian State as part of the national historical heritage, reinforcing and crystallizing an already existing hierarchy within Candomblé.

While the Jeje *vodum* practices seem to have been dominant in the early stages of Candomblé formation, by the end of the nineteenth century, in sync with the Yoruba ethnogenesis in West Africa, promoted across the Atlantic by an elite of African merchants, the Nagô visibility within Candomblé became paramount, attracting the attention of early scholars (Matory, 2005; Parés, 2005). The agency of religious leaders combined with the influence of intellectuals and the media (since the 1930s and more noticeably since the 1970s) led the most famous Nagô-Keto houses in Bahia to be regarded as the true guardians of African tradition and authenticity. Also, since the 1980s they were used as important icons of resistance, pride, and dignity in the political antiracist agenda of the black social movements. By these means the Nagô-Keto nation emerged as an emblem of prestige and religious authority, often opposed to the syncretism of the Angola nation. Because of this, and to legitimize their practices, many congregations of recent foundation with no affiliation to the 'traditional' Keto houses chose to self-identify as belonging to this nation and to follow its ritual model. This would explain the above-mentioned rise of the Keto houses in

Salvador (Dantas, 1988; Parés, 2005). Moreover, it is worth noting that the ideological opposition between the Nagô devotional 'religion', associated with ideas of ritual purity, and the Angola egotistic 'magic', associated with notions of mixture and witchcraft, finds a parallelism in Cuba's contrast between the Santeria (*reglas* de Arará and Ocha) and the Palo (Monte, Mayombé, Congo), and perhaps in Haiti, between the Rada *nachon* and the Pweto *nachon*.

In the nineteenth century, the affiliation of a house to a particular nation may have been determined by the ethnicity of its African founders, but subsequently it came to be based on initiation; that is, priests or priestesses, regardless of their biological ethnic ancestry, belonged to the nation or ritual model in which they had been initiated. When they eventually set up a new house, they would carry on the ritual technology and nation identity inherited by initiation. However, for various reasons, an individual can be partially or sequentially initiated by priests of different nations. This person can then declare to have 'changed nations' (*troca de nação*) or alternatively assert affiliation to entangled spiritual lineages or to multiple nations. If the one who endures new initiation is already the leader of a congregation and proper additional rituals are conducted, it is said that the house, rather than the individual, has changed nations. In exceptional cases when formal initiation is absent, a priest or priestess can claim the gods' gift, through personal inspiration or mediumship, to justify new esoteric knowledge and the adscription to a given nation. These possibilities can produce highly eclectic and idiosyncratic permutations leading a house to identify, for example, as 'Keto-Angola-Ijexá'.

Nevertheless, it is fair to note that the great majority of *terreiros* claim adscription to a single nation, be it Nagô, Angola or Jeje. But these main nations may be qualified by particular sub-nations. For instance, the Jeje *terreiros* in Bahia acknowledge the existence of Jeje-Marrim, Jeje-Daomé and Jeje-Savaru variants. All of them worship the *vodun* but they claim ritual specificity to mark their difference. While the first term of the expression, Jeje, as already mentioned, was forged in the context of the Atlantic slave trade, the second one (Marrim, Daomé and Savaru) corresponds to actual African political entities in the Gbe-speaking area (Mahi, Dahomey and Savalu). This suggests that behind the generic labels created by the slave trade, the idiom of nations encodes the memory of specific African ethnicities. Equally the Nagô *orixá* worship can be subdivided, or can sometimes give rise to distinct separate nations like the Keto, Ijexá or Oyó.

One of the aims of this overview is to underscore the flexible, transformative, and yet resilient nature of this system of religious classification, together with its rich regional variation. A first conclusive general remark is that whatever the region, the idiom of 'religious nations' connotes a distinctive mark of presumed

Africanness which serves to oppose, and contrast with, coexistent and concurrent religious institutions, often characterized as more syncretic and permeable to Catholicism, Kardecist Spiritism or Amerindian healing traditions. Thus, the Keto and Jeje Candomblé is opposed to the Candomblé de Caboclo (often associated with the Angola nation), and more broadly to Umbanda; the Xangô to the Jurema and Catimbó; the Batuque to the Linha Cruzada; the Tambor de Mina to the Tambor de Mata; and so on. And yet, what one finds on the ground is a highly creative and dynamic *religious continuum*, in which it is extremely difficult to establish clear boundaries, but which the discourse of practitioners and intellectuals insistently tries to separate and compartmentalize.

A second general remark is that houses of recent foundation, when they want to stress their ritual fidelity to an African nation, usually do so by establishing some direct or indirect link with the matrix houses founded by Africans in the pre-Abolition period. In so doing, the 'religious nation' does not immediately remit to an abstract, imagined community sharing the same beliefs and ritual knowledge, but rather, in the minds of practitioners and devotees, it is anchored in very concrete congregations they can somehow relate to. It is at this basic sociological level of the house (ilê), and by connecting with the most prestigious and oldest local congregations, that a sense of ritual sharing and collective participation is activated. The imagination of a translocal and inclusive 'religious nation' that interconnects many congregations, unifying them into a larger community of belonging (its broadest expression being a transnational Atlantic community such as the Yoruba *orisha* religion), is only achieved as a byproduct of the first level of the house identification. In other words, the nation is first and foremost imagined around local congregations, often the oldest and most prestigious houses.

Finally, it should have become clear by now that the group's identification with a particular nation is often an ideological discursive resource in which strategic solidarity with allied groups and antagonism with competitors is established in order to achieve social legitimization and religious authority. Inasmuch as the contours of the 'nations' in Afro-Brazilian religions are based on the promotion of a series of variable and interchangeable distinctive signs (pantheon, language drum rhythms, dance steps, initiation rituals etc.), religious identification shares the same dialogic dynamic inherent to processes of ethnic differentiation. The oppositional and relational nature of religious identity is homologous to that of ethnic identity, so that it is not surprising that the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century idiom of African nations operative during the slave trade period overlapped with processes of religious and ritual differentiation, and was partially fossilized and reshaped by those processes.

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CHAPTER 25

THE INVISIBLE LINGUISTIC TIES BETWEEN AFRICA AND THE OTHER SIDE

Alain Anselin

Introduction: it was 'never a question of the slaves'

By the time Anna Julia Cooper defended her thesis at the Sorbonne in 1925, the colonization of Africa had erased the continent's states from the map. America had become the name of a continent that had turned into the *Nunna daul Isunyi*, or 'trail of tears' of the Cherokee nation, as sung by jazz musicians and the Martinican trumpeter Jacques Coursil. In those days, the 'other side' did not exist; Anna Julia Cooper broke the silence of a story in which it was 'never a question of the slaves' (May, 2008, pp. 903–918).

And yet, slavery had allowed indecent prosperity to flourish on an entire continent. This was displayed all over Saint Domingue. In 1777: 'André, from Martinique, a runaway from the schooner *La Minerve* [...] wearing an iron collar and a smaller ring on each foot'. Wanted, for a reward. In 1789: 'Runaways: Zaïre and Lucile, both from the Congo, not branded, aged 10 and 11'. Wanted, for a reward.

In those days, the 'other side' was the other facet of the great western world. And seeking freedom was a crime that enslaved people were constantly committing. The walls of Saint Domingue were plastered all over with wanted posters for those of the enslaved who had run away. In 1767: 'Two Congolese Negroes, aged 26 [...] branded DM, ran away two months ago, plus two Creole Negroes, aged 25, named Antoine and Noël' (Le Glaunec and Robichaud, 2010, figure 1).

Africans would run away from the 'other side', in the company of those who had already been born there. Two centuries later, there was something derisory in the momentary refusal to stand together. Yet the fact of African maroons and maroons from the 'other side' taking their freedom into their own hands quite simply makes clear the full meaning of the conceptual approach now governing the production of Volume IX of the *General History of Africa*.

Where can Africa be found on the 'other side'?

The most evident answer to this question has often blended into the landscape. It was 'inscribed' in the very materiality of the crops produced or consumed – from the kola nuts of the Martinican *mornes* to African rice, *Oryza glaberrima*, which was transported in the same boats as were its farmers in order to feed Brazil and the United States of America. The voyage of the *Aurore,* in 1718, was a prime example of the plundering of human resources and forced technological transfer. Any cultural materiality involves sociality: Kola nuts were associated with cultic sacrifice, and rice drew upon inventive know-how and all its ceremonial aspects. This rarely went without the oldest invention in the world – language – and its great diversity in Africa attests to its applicability in this context (Blench, 2015).

Indeed, the posters from Saint Domingue also reflect another aspect of the world of plantations, that of the languages and social practices that governed employment. In 1777: 'Three new Negroes, from the Chateaudun habitation, named César, Lafleur and Mathieu, unable to speak any French, branded with the ship's stamp, LIM, on their right arms'. Wanted, for a reward.

However, enslaved people did not come to America dumb (nor did they arrive 'naked', as some of the literature would suggest). The visible ties binding the 'other side' to Africa go hand in hand with other ties that, although invisible, still echo on in the phytonymy of rural South America and the Caribbean region: gumbo, *gandu* peas, malanga (Del Castillo Mathieu, 1985). They also echo on in the words of 'oralitures', often sung in new languages.

Thus, in the same way that many Cuban songs alternate Efik and Spanish, Jamaican Kumina songs from the parish of St. Thomas still have Kikongo as their linguistic background, underneath their obvious creolization. They also reflect the practical situation of a point of no return:

> I am a Guinea bird-eh / wah me da go do / poor me Guinea bird-oh / wah me da go do / oh me wan go home-eh

The guinea fowl does not fly. It never will return to Guinea, the metaphor of Africa sung in Bantu words:

> Oy-eh, but what a Guinea mama / seh woy-oh, *kalunga* / woy-oh, Guinea bird-eh / oy-oh but what a Guinea yard-eh (Bilby and Fu-Kiau, 1983).

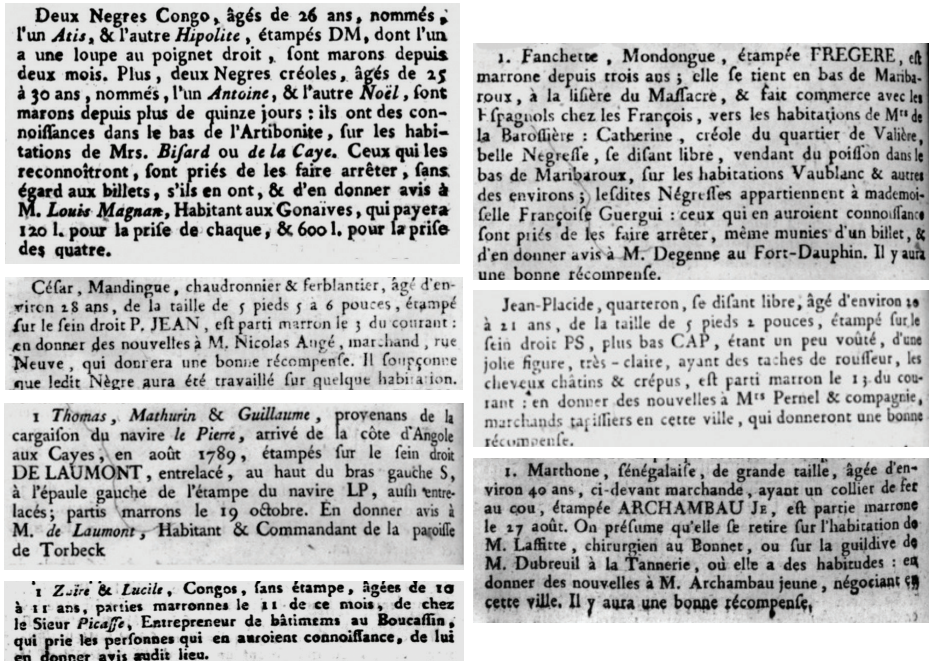
Such code-switching – in the sense that Yakpo understood it, as a place where communication strategies are structured[1] – is not a mere coincidence, but rather the mark of the adaptation of language to complex communication situations within the world of the plantations and, in this case, the key to the message. Thus, Brazilians using the word *malungos* to refer to the brothers of the men who made the fatal crossing owe this to the Angolan coast, which was, for a long time, the domain of the slave ships in the 'century of a thousand revolts' (Anselin, 2009). In Gipende, the *ka.lunga* is the ocean of the dead, the bridge between the dead and the living, *ma.lunga* is justice and *di.lunga* the fact of being equal. Behind a simple word in a half-forgotten song lies the key to a whole culture, from the management of death to justice for the living (Anselin, 1998).

Likewise, the words of Angola or the old Dã Xome did not appear in Haitian Creole out of nowhere. They would not have arrived without solidarity, without religious cults and their dances. They also involved new social spaces, where they took on life and meaning. Thus, Haitian *marassa* twins go hand in hand with their Pende counterparts, *mahasa* (Anselin, 1998).[2] *Dossou* are their younger brothers in the organizational framework of the Dahomey cult of voodoo spirits, which also gives us their elder counterparts, *gan* and *gangan* (Laroche, 1988).

Another question follows: can the African vocabulary of creole 'oralitures' be considered a clue that points to other, even less visible, ties? It is also found in the rapid emergence of new and original languages, which occurred at the heart of the dominant social space.

1 'Hence we use "code-switching" as a generic term transcending the occasionally perceived opposition between code-switching and code-mixing, while potentially subsuming all definitions, both grammatical and conversational, that code-switching and code-mixing have been given' (Yakpo, 2015).

2 Kikongo: *-pasa,* 'divide'; Ciluba: *di/mapasa,* 'twins'; Gipende: *di/mahasa*, 'twins'. African transphylic root - Ancient Egyptian: *psS,* 'divide'; Kunama (Sudan): *fase,* 'divide'; Wolof: *ne pacc*, 'halve'; Fulfulde: *feccugo,* 'divide', Mancagne: *pfaas,* 'divide', *bes,* 'twins' (Anselin, 1998, pp. 122–123).



Deux Negres Congo, âgés de 26 ans, nommés, l'un *Atis*, & l'autre *Hipolite*, étampés DM, dont l'un a une loupe au poignet droit, ſont marons depuis deux mois. Plus, deux Negres créoles, âgés de 25 à 30 ans, nommés, l'un *Antoine*, & l'autre *Noël*, ſont marons depuis plus de quinze jours : ils ont des connoiſſances dans le bas de l'Artibonite, ſur les habitations de Mrs. *Biſard* ou *de la Caye*. Ceux qui les reconnoîtront, ſont priés de les faire arrêter, ſans égard aux billets, s'ils en ont, & d'en donner avis à M. *Louis Magnan*, Habitant aux Gonaives, qui payera 120 l. pour la priſe de chaque, & 600 l. pour la priſe des quatre.

Céſar, Mandingue, chaudronnier & ferblantier, âgé d'environ 28 ans, de la taille de 5 pieds 5 à 6 pouces, étampé ſur le ſein droit P. JEAN, eſt parti marron le 3 du courant : en donner des nouvelles à M. Nicolas Augé, marchand, rue Neuve, qui donnera une bonne récompenſe. Il ſoupçonne que ledit Nègre aura été travaillé ſur quelque habitation.

1 *Thomas*, *Mathurin* & *Guillaume*, provenans de la cargaiſon du navire *le Pierre*, arrivé de la côte d'Angole aux Cayes, en août 1789, étampés ſur le ſein droit DE LAUMONT, entrelacé, au haut du bras gauche S, à l'épaule gauche de l'étampe du navire LP, auſſi entrelacés; partis marrons le 19 octobre. En donner avis à M. *de Laumont*, Habitant & Commandant de la paroiſſe de Torbeck

1 *Zaïre* & *Lucile*, Congos, ſans étampe, âgées de 10 à 11 ans, parties marronnes le 11 de ce mois, de chez le Sieur *Picaſſe*, Entrepreneur de bâtimens au Boucaſſin, qui prie les perſonnes qui en auroient connoiſſance, de lui en donner avis audit lieu.

1. Fanchette, Mondongue, étampée FREGERE, eſt marrone depuis trois ans ; elle ſe tient en bas de Maribaroux, à la liſière du Maſſacre, & fait commerce avec les Eſpagnols chez les François, vers les habitations de Mrs de la Baroſſière : Catherine, créole du quartier de Valière, belle Negreſſe, ſe diſant libre, vendant du poiſſon dans le bas de Maribaroux, ſur les habitations Vaublanc & autres des environs ; leſdites Négreſſes appartiennent à mademoiſelle Françoiſe Guergui : ceux qui en auroient connoiſſance ſont priés de les faire arrêter, même munies d'un billet, & d'en donner avis à M. Degenne au Fort-Dauphin. Il y aura une bonne récompenſe.

Jean-Placide, quarteron, ſe diſant libre, âgé d'environ 19 à 21 ans, de la taille de 5 pieds 2 pouces, étampé ſur le ſein droit PS, plus bas CAP, étant un peu voûté, d'une jolie figure, très-claire, ayant des taches de rouſſeur, les cheveux châtins & crépus, eſt parti marron le 13 du courant : en donner des nouvelles à Mrs Pernel & compagnie, marchands tapiſſiers en cette ville, qui donneront une bonne récompenſe.

1. Marthone, ſénégalaiſe, de grande taille, âgée d'environ 40 ans, ci-devant marchande, ayant un collier de fer au cou, étampée ARCHAMBAU JE, eſt partie marrone le 27 août. On préſume qu'elle ſe retire ſur l'habitation de M. Laffitte, chirurgien au Bonnet, ou ſur la guildive de M. Dubreuil à la Tannerie, où elle a des habitudes : en donner des nouvelles à M. Archambau jeune, négociant en cette ville. Il y aura une bonne récompenſe.

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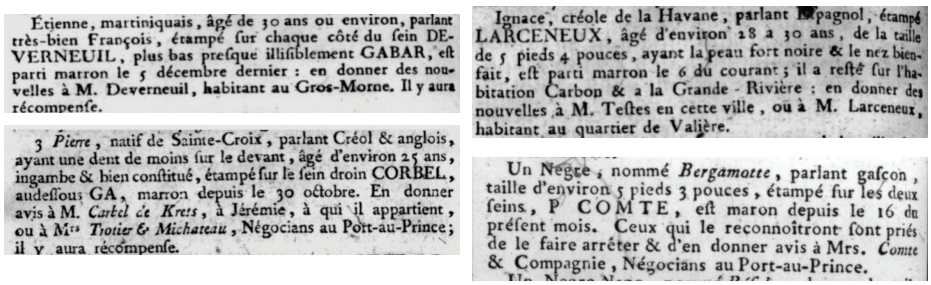
FIGURE 1. *Public announcements of runaways in Santo Domingo: Who ran away? Two African and two Caribbean runaways (1767); One female African and one female Caribbean (1789); One Mandingo (metal-worker) (1789); One quarteron (carpet-maker) (1789); A female Senegalese (1789); Three Congolese jumping from the boat (1789); Two Congolese girls (1789)*[3]

What do the languages of the invisible ties binding the 'other side' to Africa actually say?

The history of languages, their proximity, contact and rapport, should never be disassociated from that of their speakers. Africa definitely does not feature in the masters' posters, which do not mention its languages (Figure 2) and disassociate it from marronage. It is, however, found in the vocabulary used in slave ship survivors' places of worship.

3 *Source:* Le Glaunec, J.-P. and Robichaud, L. (dir.). *Le marronnage dans le monde atlantique : sources et trajectoires de vie*. http://www.marronnage.info.



Étienne, martiniquais, âgé de 30 ans ou environ, parlant très-bien François, étampé ſur chaque côté du ſein DEVERNEUIL, plus bas preſque illiſiblement GABAR, eſt parti marron le 5 décembre dernier : en donner des nouvelles à M. Deverneuil, habitant au Gros-Morne. Il y aura récompenſe.

3 *Pierre*, natif de Sainte-Croix, parlant Créol & anglois, ayant une dent de moins ſur le devant, âgé d'environ 25 ans, ingambe & bien conſtitué, étampé ſur le ſein droit CORBEL, audeſſous GA, marron depuis le 30 octobre. En donner avis à M. *Carbel & Krets*, à Jérémie, à qui il appartient, ou à Mrs *Trotier & Michateau*, Négocians au Port-au-Prince; il y aura récompenſe.

Ignace, créole de la Havane, parlant Eſpagnol, étampé LARCENEUX, âgé d'environ 28 à 30 ans, de la taille de 5 pieds 4 pouces, ayant la peau fort noire & le nez bien-fait, eſt parti marron le 6 du courant; il a reſté ſur l'habitation Carbon & à la Grande-Rivière : en donner des nouvelles à M. Teſtes en cette ville, ou à M. Larceneux, habitant au quartier de Valière.

Un Negre, nommé *Bergamotte*, parlant gaſcon, taille d'environ 5 pieds 3 pouces, étampé ſur les deux ſeins, P COMTE, eſt maron depuis le 16 du préſent mois. Ceux qui le reconnoîtront ſont priés de le faire arrêter & d'en donner avis à Mrs. *Comte* & Compagnie, Négocians au Port-au-Prince.

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FIGURE 2. *Announcements from Santo Domingo, 1789, with mention of languages ignored (French) or spoken (French, Creole, English, Spanish, Gascon) by the Maroons*[4]

Creoles have too often been described as simplified languages, yet they are as complex as their history and the underlying paths of the African languages that inhabit them. They are clothed in new vocabularies, recut phonetically in some places and rebuilt semantically in others. For a long time, the negation of African forms in creoles limited the appreciation of their role in the code-switching underpinning the formation of the language (more so than their extent, which, returning to the occasion, was sometimes exaggerated). This is true of both creoles with an English, French or Spanish lexical base and those with an African lexical base.

We too easily forget that Africa is home to three dozen creoles, the lexical bases of which can most frequently be traced back to Niger-Congo languages: 'The Gulf of Guinea creoles are considered prototypical, and they are among the oldest creoles on earth' (Klein, 2006). Sango and, most recently, Kituba, are often given as examples, whereas Tadaksahak raises questions in terms of code-mixing Songhay and Berber languages (Christiansen and Christiansen, 2002).

On the Atlantic coast of Africa, creoles with a European lexical base flourished for centuries with the contact between Africa and Europe. Pichi or Pichinglis, an African creole with an English lexical base spoken on the island of Bioko, part of Equatorial Guinea, has followed the speakers of its original form, Krio – workers 'recruited' in Sierra Leone by the British to further the colonial cultivation of palm oil. Contact between Krio and English, on the one hand, and Pichi, on the other, came to an end in the middle of the nineteenth century,

4 *Source:* Le Glaunec, J.-P. and Robichaud, L. (dir.). *Le marronnage dans le monde atlantique : sources et trajectoires de vie*. http://www.marronnage.info.

when Spanish replaced English as the dominant colonial language in Bioko and trade with Freetown ceased. Yakpo considers its formation from code-mixing to be unique, with two successively dominant lexifying languages (Yakpo, 2013).

Yakpo then draws upon the unique mirror offered by Pichi to better disentangle the role of linguistic contact vis-à-vis the 'other side', 'the family of Afro-Caribbean creoles with an English lexical base'.

What, then, do the languages of the American side of the Atlantic tell us about themselves through their relexification and the grammatical model transfer processes that shape them?

To illustrate his comparison of African languages and African and American creoles, Yakpo chooses the languages of Suriname. Here, enslaved people who had escaped in small groups formed maroon societies in the country's interior, a process that continued for as long as there were Africans enslaved in the country. Four creoles, with English as their lexical base, formed here: Sranan Ndyuka, Kwinti and Saramaccan. Dutch replaced English as the dominant colonial language in 1667, and later three languages of Asian origin, Sarnami, Javanese and Hakka, came into the mix.

Sranan and the other creoles of Suriname are remarkable for their use of postpositions in the expression of spatial relationships, which distinguishes them from other creoles, both African and American, with an English lexical base (Yakpo, 2015). The lexicon of these postpositions derives, for the most part, from names of body parts in the English language – which, specifically, does not draw on these for prepositions itself.[5]

The Sranan locative postpositions *ini* ('in') and *ondro* ('under') are lexical calques of English and Dutch prepositions. The words *tapu* ('on'), *fesi* ('opposite'), *baka* ('behind') and *na* are general locatives from Igbo associated with object nouns: *na doro*, 'outside' + 'door'.

Comparing two statements in Sranan with a statement in Fon is enough to demonstrate that Sranan draws its postpositional grammatical construction of the spatial relationship from the Gbe languages (Ewe, Aja and Fon):

5 On the topic of pre- and postpositions, see Heine, 1997 and Ameka, 2003; on the fertility of their cognitive approach, see Bardury, 2015 and Bernabé, 2015.

a buku de ***na*** *a tafra* ***ondro****.*
definite article-book-to be-[locative+definite article sg+table+under]: 'The book is under the table'
sinsi a komm ***na*** *hosso* ***inni****.*
since-3sg.-to come-[locative+ house+ in]: 'since he entered the house'
ǹ sɔ́ àkwé sín gbàví ɔ̀ **mè**.
1 sg -to take-money / (come) since / box-definite article-[in]. 'I took the money in the box'

Drawing from this, Yakpo proposes two theories, one descriptive and the other explanatory:

> The affinities of Sranan with these African language(s)/families can be traced in the semantics of individual locative elements. The strong parallels in the grammar of spatial relations between Sranan and Gbe in particular provide further support for the existence of a Transatlantic Sprachbund that unites the Surinamese creoles and the Gbe languages with respect to a substantial number of isoglosses (Yakpo, 2015).

The invisible ties of language thus come through not only in vocabularies, which are key to transculturation (Anselin, 1998), but also in the journey from code-switching to the principle of forming new languages of the 'other side' (Yakpo, 2015).

We will conclude with a final model transfer where one of the grammatical constructions makes the body the cognitive reference point for the subject.[6] Such constructions are, of course, shared by many language systems throughout the human world, grammaticalizing the names of body parts (Anselin, 2003, 2009) and the name of the body itself. The lexical source of the reflexive pronouns involved is, however, variable: the body, but also a part of the whole (the head, the heart). This is true of languages ranging from Igbo to Japanese, Chadic Podoko to Abkhaz or Basque, as well as the Amerindian languages (Weber, 1998).

On the 'other side', the presence of the model in Caribbean creoles with a French lexical base is nonetheless linked to the existence of similar constructions in African languages. Could the African model, which grammaticalizes the names of the body by integrating them into reflexive pronominal forms, be considered the invisible frame of a vehicle whose passengers are rephonetized French words, often resemanticized through social practices?

Alleyne says, first and foremost, that a reflexive tower built of 'body' + possessive pronoun is not uncommon in the languages of the world and that the body is used reflexively in many languages across Africa, along with 'head', 'heart' and 'soul'. This is true of Yoruba, on the western coast of the continent: '[*ara mi dá*,

6 Demonstrative, spatial and temporal orientation, numeration, self-designation.

body-1sg.- (to be) well], I am well' (Alleyne, 1996, pp. 157 et sq.). Dingemanse developed this example extensively in his thesis (2006), alongside a construction found in the north-east of Africa, this time in another African language spoken for over four millenniums, ancient Egyptian: *nṯr ḥᶜ.f,* 'god himself literally' *[*god+body-him*]* - *cf. ḥc.i, ḥc.k,* 'body, me, you, for myself, yourself'.[7]

Similarly, in the Caribbean and Indian Ocean regions, creole languages offer two main reflexive structures: a co-indexed pronoun with the nominal subject of the sentence and a nominal tower made up of the possessive pronoun + 'body' or 'head' (Alleyne, 1996).

Alleyne provides some examples: *l ap mennen kò-l isi*, 'she brings herself here' (Haiti); *kreyol se kaz natif natal a kò an nou*, 'Creole is our inner self' (Guadeloupe); *mo va touye mo-lekor*, 'I'm going to kill myself' (Mauritius); or the delightful *yo renmen kadav-yo*, 'they are in love' (Haiti). No language escapes its humanity; no humanity escapes its body - every*body* knows it.

For the most invisible links binding Africa and the 'other side' to reappear, it was thus enough to allow these languages to be spoken. They were no longer before our eyes but, quite simply, before our ears, like a fleeting blue note from an Ngoni heard on the banks of the Mississippi.

7 In Egyptian, the same body name is selected as a semantic classifier for body parts, , *ḥᶜ*, pl. *ḥᶜ.w*, an object class defined by its human, but also animal, corporeality. It therefore follows that certain prepositions will, as in other African languages, be formed from the names of the body parts of animals, such as the lion or ox (Heine, 1997, Anselin, 2003): *gm*H*t*, 'temple' (Chadic: *gam), *bɜḥ*, 'phallus', *ibḥ,* 'tooth', 'defence', *ḏnḥ,* 'wing', *sphṯ,* 'beef ribs'. A class of anatomical terms that can be spotted in Chadic languages: hausa *haure,* 'tooth', *ha-wure, dera: *wuro;* ancient Egyptian: *ls*, 'tongue', sokoto : *ha-les* ; and Cushitic : *sɜḥ*, 'toe', Somali : *sul,* Chadic : muturwa : *selek*, 'phalanx' (Anselin, 2009, pp. 11–32)

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CHAPTER 26

THE PRESENCE OF AFRICAN LANGUAGES IN LATIN AMERICA

Margarida Petter

Introduction

Latin America is a linguistic unit marked by two important aspects: (i) its official languages (Portuguese, Spanish and French) were transplanted from Europe in the context of colonization; and (ii) these languages came into intense contact with local Indigenous languages, languages of forced immigration[1] (the trafficking of slaves from Africa) and, later, languages of voluntary immigration (European and Asian).

The languages spoken by the deported Africans, along with the local Indigenous languages, played an important role in the formation of the varieties of Portuguese, Spanish and French that established themselves in the new lands. Demographic factors (a greater or lesser number of Africans), social factors (more or less integration between whites, blacks and Indigenous peoples) and economic factors (production more or less dependent on slavery) have had a decisive impact on the differences observed in the current linguistic situation of the Latin American countries. The diverse ethnic make-up of these countries stems from the interaction of these elements. There are predominantly black societies, such as those of some Caribbean countries, in particular Haiti and the

1 It is estimated that Spanish America received more than one and a half million Africans and Brazil around 5.5 million, according to data from the website http://www.slavevoyages.org/assessment/estimates.

Dominican Republic, and countries with a significant proportion of people of African descent such as Brazil, Cuba and Colombia; and there are nations with significant black minorities, such as Venezuela, Peru and Uruguay.

Brazil, Cuba and Colombia – countries with a significant proportion of people of African descent, where the abolition of slavery resulted from a process in which the slave trade had already lost power and economic dynamism before it actually ended – also share linguistic situations prototypical of the effects of contact with African languages in Latin America. These include the permanence of a lexicon of African origin and the formation of Creole languages, or restructured varieties of European languages.

The individuals who were deported to America came from sub-Saharan Africa, a vast area stretching from Upper Guinea, on the west coast, to the south-central region. An indication of the origin of these transplanted people appeared in documents through the designation of their ports of embarkation, as well as generic names or, more rarely, their actual ethnic groups. Information relating to their origins was not always properly declared or recognized by those who made the records. This explains why there are question marks over what certain names, such as 'Mina', 'Angola', 'Congo' or even 'Negro da Costa' (negro of the coast), actually mean. As pointed out by scholars, the latter could be a 'Benguela', resident or born in the south of Angola, Benguela, or from the Gold Coast region in the Gulf of Guinea (Brügger and Oliveira, 2009; Álvarez-López, 2015).

In Cuba, according to Bernal (2008, pp. 58–59), African slaves were classified by their metaethnonyms: *Gangá* (Bulom, Kono, Egrie, Gbandi, Gola, Kissi, Cross, Loma, Mani and Vaï), *Mandinga* (Bagá, Bambará, Dyola, Fulbé, Malinké, Serer, Sosso, Yolofe, Bram and others), *Mina* (Ashanti, Manti, Gwa, Mina, Bonna and Gan), *Ararás* (Fongbe, Ewe and Mahi), *Carabalí* (Baribá, Binni, Bolo, Chamba, Gbari, Hausa, Mosi, Nupe and Yoruba), *Lucumí* (Ekoi, Ibibio, Ijaw and Ibo), *Congo* (Gbanda, Boma, Bubi, Kamba, Kongo, Kuba, Marawi, Mbala, Mbamba, Mbundu, Ndamba, Ngangela, Nhanka-Humbi, Ovimbund, Rundi, Songe, Sundi, Teke and Yaka) and *Macua* (Macua and Malagasi).

In Uruguay, the slaves came from the coastal area extending from Sudan to Mozambique (except Cape Town). This can be determined based on the 'nations' that

> *[…] although not an accurate reference, since they sometimes corresponded to geographical expressions and not ethnic groups, confirmed the places of origin of the eastern blacks and, above all, the predominance of Bantus over Sudanese* (Pereda Valdés, 1965, p. 17).

The same author points out that many slaves arrived in Montevideo from Brazil and argues that the large number of black people brought directly from Brazil proves, in itself, the dual precedence of individuals of Bantu and Sudanese origin among black Uruguayans (Pereda Valdés, 1965, p. 16). This author also claims that slaves from Senegal, Guinea, Mozambique and Sierra Leone were brought to Uruguay from Buenos Aires.

Transplanted African languages

The areas where slaves were sourced are characterized by extensive multilingualism. The majority of languages spoken belong to the Niger-Congo trunk, one of the four linguistic trunks[2] among which the two thousand plus African languages are distributed. This trunk brings together languages of the West Africa area and southern area:[3]

(a) In the West Africa area, there is greater diversity, with different groups, such as *Atlantic*, which includes languages like Fula (Fulfulde), Wolof, Manjaco and Balanta; *Mande* (*Mandingo*), with the Bambara, Maninca and Dioula languages; *Kwa* (*Gbe* subgroup), with the Eve, Fon, Gen and Aja languages (referred to in Brazil by the term Jeje) and Benue-Congo, in which the *Defoide* group is found, which includes the Yoruba languages, referred to in Brazil by the term *Nagô-Queto* and in Cuba by the term *Anago/Lucumí*.

(b) In the southern area, the languages belong essentially to the *Bantu* subgroup – limited to the west coast (nowadays the Congo, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and Angola) and, in the case of Brazil, only later extended to the east coast (Mozambique). It is characterized by a smaller number of languages – typologically homogeneous, but spoken by the greatest number of captives. Among others, these include Quicongo, Quivíli, Iuoio (Fiote), Quiombe, Quimbundo, Chôcue, Umbundo, Luba and Macua.

Faced with such diversity, one topic of interest for scholars concerns the way in which African peoples and languages have interacted with the languages of the Indigenous populations, as well as those of the colonizers, in the Latin American continent, along with the impact of their languages on the language imposed by

2 According to the current genetic classification of the languages of Africa, in addition to Niger-Congo - which has the largest number of languages - there are three other linguistic trunks: Afroasiatic, Khoisan and Nilo-Saharan (Heine and Nurse, 2000).

3 The data on the African languages comes from Bonvini (2008, pp. 30–31) for Brazil, but can be extended to the other Latin American countries.

the colonizers. Beginning by considering the possibility of the transformation of African languages in America through the process of creolization, as it is usually understood by linguists, we are confronted with our first noteworthy fact. If we refer to the countries with Latin American languages as their official languages, leaving aside the Spanish-based Creole Papiamento (spoken in the Netherlands Antilles: Aruba, Curaçao and Bonaire), there are only two languages recognized as Creole languages in Latin America: Haitian Creole and Palenquero, spoken in San Basilio de Palenque in Colombia.

Palenquero is the only Spanish-based Creole spoken in South America, in San Basilio de Palenque, a city formed by runaway slaves of Bantu origin, located south-west of Cartagena.

Haitian Creole, which has the largest number of speakers of all the Caribbean Creole languages, is spoken by almost the entire population of Haiti (8.5 million). It is the result of contact between French and the languages of West Africa (Fon, Eve, Wolof). It recently became a language of literacy and has official spelling conventions.

It is disconcerting to note that certain regions, such as Cuba and Brazil, that received a greater number of black slaves, did not develop a Creole language, despite having a large African and Afrodescendent population, a necessary condition for triggering the creolization process.

Mufwene (2007) argues that Creole languages and pidgins developed in separate spaces, where Europeans and non-Europeans interacted differently: pidgins developed in trade colonies whereas Creoles evolved in settlement colonies. The majority of pidgins are concentrated on the Atlantic coast of Africa and the Pacific islands, whereas most Creole languages are found in the Atlantic, the islands of the Indian Ocean and the Atlantic coast of the Americas. According to this author, there are thus socio-economic reasons behind the emergence of a Creole language, rather than simply the presence of a large population of African origin.

In addition to these social reasons, local circumstances can also explain the absence of a Creole language. An example is in Cuba, where, according to Bernal (2008, pp. 66–68), several factors may have prevented the development of a Spanish-based Creole language. These include the great linguistic diversity of the slaves brought into the country, which prevented the use of an African tongue as a vehicular language. Another factor was the very high mortality rate among Africans, leading to a constant replacement of slaves, along with the intense migration of Spaniards, sometimes at a higher rate than the number of people entering the country from sub-Saharan Africa (and with a lower mortality rate).

Miscegenation also played a part, as well as the fact that the black population never surpassed whites, as occurred on other islands in the Caribbean area. The Africans and their descendants learned to pronounce and speak Spanish among Cubans and Spaniards. These 'teachers', whose pronunciation and language use they inherited, had a low level of literacy. That explains why it is said that the African influence on Cuban Spanish did not shape the development of Spanish in Cuba, but undeniably strengthened the internal evolution of this variant.

When attempting to explain the specificities of Brazilian Portuguese, scholars have made two main proposals. The first is based on the action of linguistic contact, with a more active participation of African and/or indigenous languages. The second argues that the linguistic changes that occurred in Brazilian Portuguese were already contained in the transplanted European language. The first formulation is associated with the hypothesis that Brazilian Portuguese underwent a period of creolization, some traces of which remain to this day (Baxter, 1992). This has been challenged by those who see the language spoken in Brazil as a continuation of the direction in which the European variety was evolving.

The fact is that, in both Cuba and Brazil, the social situation favoured the learning and use of Spanish or Portuguese. This was true for both the *Boçais,* Africans with little or no command of the language of the colonizers, and the *Ladinos*, Africans who arrived in the American colonies already speaking Spanish or Portuguese, since they had learned these languages prior to their arrival, often during the relatively long periods Africans from different ethnic groups were forced to remain in the slave warehouses while the ships were being loaded.

The debate that has developed on the interaction between African and European languages in Latin America has been based primarily on literary records and the reports of travellers, who often tended to caricature the way in which Africans tried to speak European languages. More recently, information has been sought in religious rites of African origin and in the study of the language of rural communities made up of Afrodescendants. Although there are many different sources, they all demonstrate, by varying degrees, the possible impact of interference from African languages. This is true both of lexical considerations (loans from African languages) and grammatical factors (above all, phonetic changes and agreement at odds with the cultural norms of Spanish and Portuguese).

Lexical loans

The lexicon is regarded as the most obvious testimony of the contact between languages, since it records its speakers' possible linguistic and cultural contact. We should not only take into consideration loans from the African language that we find in the Spanish and Portuguese spoken in Latin America today, but also endeavour to understand the relevance and vitality of African words that have stood the test of time for over four centuries. Even in countries with a smaller population of African descent, such as Argentina, terms of African origin have been identified that are still in current use, such as *candombe, marimba, tango, matungo, mandinga, mucama, mondongo, pachanga, malambo,* among others (Buffa and Bezerra, 2014, p. 179). In Uruguay, vocabularies and glossaries have been found (Pereda Valdés, 1965; Laguarda Trias, 1969) that record the presence of words of African origin in the lexicon of the local Spanish. In a recent study, Magdalena Coll published work on the lexicon of African origin found in the tales of José Monegal (1892–1968), depicting a rural world situated on the Uruguayan-Brazilian border in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, whose protagonists are popular human types, many of African descent. The author states that the words used by Monegal 'are not words taken from dictionaries, grammars or orthographies. They are words heard by someone who knows how to listen', such as *batuque, bombear, bunda, cachimba, cacunda, cafondó, candombe, capanga, catinga, mandinga, marimba, mulambos, muleque, quilombo, quitandera* and *yimbo* (Coll, 2015, p. 237). All these terms are of Bantu origin and all but the last are common to Brazilian Portuguese.

According to Bernal (2008, pp. 61–62), loan words of African origin in Cuban Spanish, from the Quicongo, Eve-Fon, Yoruba and Efique-Ibíbio languages, can be classified as 'socio-linguistically neutral' or 'having a strong cultural religious origin prevailing in popular and marginal Cuban Spanish'. The first group includes words such as *malanga*, the designation of a plant species, *quimbombó*, a type of plant and fruit, *ñame* 'yam', *bongo*, a type of drum and *conga*, a type of dance. The second is made up of terms such as *iriampo* 'head', *butuba* 'food', *bilongo* 'witchcraft' and *embó* 'religious sacrifice'. This author believes that the only linguistic level of Cuban Spanish influenced by African languages is its lexicon.

With regard to Brazil, the issue of the specificities of Brazilian Portuguese has traditionally been associated with words taken from a lexicon of African origin. This idea first came to the fore in the nineteenth century, in a debate no doubt stimulated by the social and political context that preceded and

followed the country's independence in 1822. Thus, in an 1826 text considered one of the first reflections on the nature of Brazilian Portuguese (Pinto, 1978, p. xv), Visconde de Pedra Branca highlighted the vocabulary field as one of the main differences between the Portuguese spoken in Brazil and the language of Portugal. Pedra Branca presents a list of 49 words used in Brazil and unknown in Portugal; 16 of these words are of African origin: *quindim, quitute, batuque, cochilar, xingar, muxingueiro, caçula, fuxicar, mocotó, mungangas, muxoxo, mulambo, mandinga, muxiba, quitanda* and *senzala.*

The latest inventory appears in the work of Yeda Pessoa de Castro (2001), who lists 3,517 terms of African origin found during a survey carried out in Bahia, which can generally be extended to Brazilian Portuguese as a whole. Most of these terms refer to the world of religion, followed by words related to food, music, dance, etc. This is a specialized lexicon, often of regional use. The vocabulary effectively employed in a general sense is less extensive, as found by Alkmim and Petter (2008) in a survey of words of African origin commonly used in Brazil today and belonging to the mainstream vocabulary (i.e. non-specialized use only). This analysis led them to identify 56 words common to the world of the respondents. The authors separated the terms into three categories:

Category 1, which includes words that can be used in any kind of social interaction (30 words): *abada, banzo, caçamba, cachaça, cachimbo, caçula, candango, canga, capanga, carimbo, caxumba, cochilar, corcunda, dengo, fubá, gibi, macaco, maconha, macumba, marimbondo, miçanga, molambo, moleque, moringa, quilombo, quitanda, quitute, senzala, tanga, xingar*;

Category 2, consisting of informal terms used colloquially that, depending on the situation, can be replaced by others (9 words): *bamba/bambambã, banguela, cafuné, catimba, catimbeiro, catinga, mandinga, muamba, muxoxo*;

Category 3, listing markedly informal words of restricted use (17 words): *angu* ("confusion"), *babaca, babau, biboca, bunda, cafofo, cafundó, cambada, cucuia, muquifo, muquirana, muvuca, muxiba, quizumba, sacana, ziquizira, zumbi.*

Grammatical interference

The incorporation of a lexicon of African origin is perceived as a positive aspect of the contact between languages, since it enriches the linguistic repertoire of the transplanted European languages, characterizing them as varieties that can be distinguished from the original colonial languages. In contrast, the interference of African languages in the pronunciation of certain

sounds, or the modification of grammatical structures, is regarded as harmful to the integrity of Portuguese or Spanish. Mastery of the colonizer's language was used to distinguish between two important categories of enslaved Africans, the *Ladinos*, who could already express themselves well in the languages of the colonizers, and the *Boçais*, who did not yet have a perfect command of their masters' languages and whose speech exhibited traces of their mother tongues.

The term *Boçal* first appeared in the Iberian Peninsula in the fifteenth century, with its earliest recorded use in Portugal. The first written records of the Spanish designation date back to the sixteenth century. Its use continued until the mid-eighteenth century, reaching its height during the Renaissance period, with plays and poems that mimicked the hesitant speech of Africans (Lipski, n.d., p. 9). In Latin America, reference was made to the Spanish word *Boçal* in poems and songs from the mid-seventeenth century, with similar linguistic characteristics to those identified in the Spanish texts. This word first appears in documentation from mining areas of Peru, Mexico, Colombia, Bolivia and Guatemala. There are few remaining documents to attest to Afro-Hispanic speech of the eighteenth century, and these are from Cuba and Mexico only. The geographical distribution of the existing texts reflects the profile of trafficking in Latin America. The nineteenth century texts come from three regions: Cuba (and Puerto Rico), the coast of Peru and the region of Buenos Aires/Montevideo (Lipski, n.d., p. 10).

In Brazil, knowledge (or lack of knowledge) of the 'Brazilian language' was a relevant factor in identifying illegalities in the introduction of blacks as slaves after the prohibition of trafficking, enacted by the Law of 7 November 1831, which penalized offenders with the release of all blacks who landed in the country after this date.

To curb fraud, the law was regulated by the Decree of 12 April 1832, which ordered the authorities to carry out an immediate linguistic examination to check 'whether [the recently arrived African] understands the Brazilian language' (Chalhoub, 2015, pp. 15–16). The use of the Portuguese language thus became a fundamental element in investigating clandestine trafficking.

Historical records of African languages

The fact that Creole languages did not form in the majority of Latin American countries does not mean that African languages were not spoken in Latin America, or that they have disappeared from use. They have remained in certain contexts, and there are records of their vitality in the past.

There are two works – one from the seventeenth and one from the eighteenth century – that can be taken as historical landmarks of the presence of African languages in Brazil.

The first text is the work entitled *Arte da lingua de Angola, oeferecida a virgem Senhora N. do Rosario, mãy e Senhora dos mesmos pretos*, by Pedro Dias of the Companhia de Jesu (as it appears on the title page). This work was published in Lisbon in 1697 by Miguel Deslandes, his Majesty's printmaker, but written in Brazil, in Salvador. Its author was of Portuguese origin but had lived in Brazil since his childhood. He was a Jesuit, lawyer and doctor. His 48-page text is a grammar of the Quimbundo language spoken in Salvador by enslaved Africans from Angola. It is believed that there were a great number of them – indeed, Father Vieira speaks of some 23,000 Africans catechized in the language of Angola in the 1660s. This text was intended to facilitate the work of the Jesuits tasked with handling these Africans, with the aim of helping them to learn the language, since there was still no grammar of Quimbundo. Pedro Dias finished his grammar in 1694 and instructed the Jesuit Miguel Cardoso, born in Angola and fluent in the language, to revise it before it was published in 1697 (Petter, 2006, p. 127).

The scientific importance of this work is immense – primarily to Africa, since it is the first systematic grammar of Quimbundo, and secondly to Brazil, for several reasons.[4] It bears witness to the use, at that time, of an African language, Quimbundo, by slaves from Angola, who may not have been native speakers of the language, but who used it in their interactions with other Africans. It was a fully African language, close to that spoken today in Angola, not to be confused with a pidgin or Creole language (Bonvini, 2008, p. 38). This document is also important because it reveals that, in seventeenth century Bahia, where the largest black population was concentrated at the time, at least one African language was being used by African slaves to such an extent as to attract the attention of the Jesuits, who wished to learn it in order to catechize its speakers.

The second document on African languages spoken in Brazil is entitled *Lingoa geral de Minna, traduzida ao nosso Igdioma, por Antonio da Costa Peixoto, Curiozo nesta Siencia, e graduado na mesma faculdade: E.º* – the heading that appears on the title page of the manuscript *Obra Nova da Língua Geral de Minna*, written in Ouro Preto by Antonio da Costa Peixoto and published in 1731, with a second edition in 1741. This document depicts a particular linguistic situation resulting from the concentration, in the mining quadrilateral of Vila Rica–Vila

4 Maria Carlota Rosa (2013) presents the facsimile of Pedro Dias' *Arte* and carefully analyses the work within the context in which it was written.

do Carmo–Sabará–Rio dos Montes, of 100,000 slaves – regularly renewed over a period of 40-50 years – originating from the coast of Benin (referred to as *Mina* and located roughly between Ghana and Nigeria). This situation gave rise to a vehicular variety typologically close to the African languages of this same coast. The languages currently spoken in the region of origin of the slaves are classified in the Gbe subgroup, the Kwa group of the Niger-Congo family. There are some 50 tongues in this subgroup, of which the best known are Eve, Fon, Gen, Aja, Gun and Mahi, which may have been present in the mining region at the time the *Língua Geral* was recorded.

This emergence of an African vehicular language can be explained by economy of communication and the need to overcome the disintegration of the various languages that were typologically very close to the African language spoken in the mines, in the eighteenth century. This text, only published in 1945, in Lisbon, is the most 'precious' document on African languages in Brazil, since it bears witness to the existence of an African vehicular language designated a *Língua Geral* (General Language), probably in reference to the general language of the Indigenous population (Bonvini and Taddoni Petter, 1998, pp. 75–76).

Antonio da Costa Peixoto's manuscript, written with the intention of facilitating the slaveholders' learning of the language used in the mines, also reveals a change in the African linguistic landscape in Brazil: in the eighteenth century, the languages of the Benin coast were in evidence, at least in the most economically active regions (bearing in mind the lack of documentation on the rest of the country).

From a linguistic point of view, this manuscript is presented as a list of words in African languages, translated into Portuguese, organized by semantic fields. It also provides some dialogues and phrases needed for the most urgent communication.

Castro published an ethno-linguistic critical essay on the Peixoto manuscript, considering it to be multifunctional in character, 'bringing together real elements of the history and sociology of Brazilian blacks in colonial times' (2002, p. 25). The author identifies the language as *Mina-Jeje*, with Fon as its fundamental lexical base. Bonvini (2008, p. 45) classifies the *Mina* language as a vehicular tongue based on Gbe (designation of a set of languages spoken in Togo and Benin) in a pidginization phase. What we can say with certainty is that this document reveals a unique linguistic fact: the presence of an African vehicular language, without any apparent mixing with Portuguese, whether in terms of lexicon, syntax or even phonology (Petter, 2006, p. 128). However, this 'language', or rather its vocabulary, did not remain in the Portuguese spoken in Brazil, not even in the mining region. Nevertheless, according to Castro (2002, p. 27),

'[...] these tongues [...] ended up laying the foundations of the conventual structure of religious communities of Mina-Jeje tradition in Brazil [...].'

Persistence of African languages in Latin America

The data currently being obtained through fieldwork among Afro-Hispanic and Afro-Brazilian-speaking communities is of great importance, since there is still information it can provide on contact from far-flung eras.

The African languages of the Afro-Brazilian cults have a liturgical function and their use is restricted to initiates and practitioners. In this context, the term 'language' must be understood as a symbolic vehicle of expression rather than an actual manifestation of linguistic competence (Castro, 2001, p. 80). These 'languages' consist mainly of a lexicon related to the religious world generically referred to as *candomblé* in Brazil as a whole (and in Bahia especially), *batuque* in Rio Grande do Sul, *xangô* in Pernambuco and *tambor de mina* in Maranhão.

In Cuba, the terms 'Afro-Cuban religions' or 'religions of black-African origin' involve a wide variety of religious manifestations originating from sub-Saharan Africa, syncretized with the Catholicism of the colonizers. This makes them too wide-ranging, as they encompass hundreds of manifestations. Several sub-Saharan languages have mingled with Spanish and have become an important element of the linguistic foundations of the four Afro-Cuban cults still in existence today (Bernal, 2008, pp. 60–61): *Regla de Palo Monte, Regla de Ocha e Ifá, Regla Arará* and *Sociedade Abakwa.*

Contemporary communities of Afro-Latin Americans

Beyond the religious sphere, African peoples have built another kind of space in which to live freely: rural black communities, or *quilombos,* as they are currently known in Brazil, *cumbes* in Venezuela, or *palenques* in Cuba and Colombia. The terms *cimarrón* and *cimarronage,* equivalents of *quilombola* in Brazil, have spread throughout Latin America and are used to denote resistance against oppression. Within these spaces, various African cultural codes have been reconstructed and transformed, taking the form of 'secret languages' in two documented communities in Brazil, as well as communities of speakers of Creole languages, such as Palenquero, in Colombia. Lipski (2015, p. 94) uses Afro-Hispanic linguistic data to make reference to communities in which 'diluted traces of what may have been

authentic restructured dialects' still persist. This can be extended to many Brazilian communities, today classified as *quilombos*.

In Brazil, the so-called 'secret languages' are spoken within communities of Afrodescendants in the states of São Paulo (Cafundó) and Minas Gerais (Tabatinga and Calunga). These are the only locations for which such records currently exist, documented, among others, in: Vogt and Fry (1996), on Cafundó; Queiroz (1998), on Tabatinga; and Byrd (2006), on Calunga.

Final considerations

Different social contexts reacted to contact in varying ways. Nevertheless, in all circumstances, African languages and cultures became, and have remained, a distinctive feature of Latin American identity, both in the Creole-speaking regions of Colombia and Haiti, and in the other countries. The most visible linguistic marks have been of a lexical nature, but we cannot exclude the contribution of African languages to the grammar of the local varieties of Spanish and Portuguese (Petter, 2011, p. 92).

In Cuba and Brazil, the influence and prestige of African cultures is evident in the arts (music, dance) and, above all, religion. In these contexts, African languages are a code functioning, above all, as a nomenclature that has become a symbol of African identity and sanctity.

It is difficult for today's linguists to recover data on the languages spoken by the African slaves. Nevertheless, lexical loans, along with the discovery of documents and information from historians, allow us to formulate hypotheses on the identity and use of African languages in the past, which can help clarify the current situation of these languages in Latin America. Most studies focus on investigating the contact between African languages and the vernaculars of regions where Creole languages are spoken (Palenquero in Colombia, Haitian Creole). Situations of contact that did not produce highly restructured varieties are nevertheless currently being studied in Brazil, as we have noted in the syntax studies developed by Negrão and Viotti (2008, 2011) and Avelar and Galves (2013, 2014).

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CHAPTER 27

AFRICAN ORAL TRADITIONS IN BRAZIL

Sônia Queiroz

Introduction

Studies of the prolonged cultural contacts between Africa and the Americas reveal the strong contribution of African languages and their poetic manifestations, such as singing and short stories, to the formation of different African-American cultures. We know that thousands of Africans, predominantly the Bantu-speaking and Yoruba-speaking peoples, were enslaved and transported to Brazil. Here, we focus on oral tales, in a comparative perspective, looking for relationships between texts, hypertextualities, or points of contact between oral narratives recorded in books, in Angola and in Brazil. A number of pioneer researchers in the collection of oral narratives (such as Héli Chatelain and Ladislau Batalha for short stories in the Kimbundu language in Angola, and Sílvio Romero, Alexina de Magalhães Pinto, Lindolfo Gomes and João da Silva Campos for short stories in Bantuized Portuguese in Brazil) have been prominent in establishing the presence of traces of Bantu languages and cultures. When compared, these tales reveal processes of transculturation and of dialogue between cultures and languages: Bantu and Latin peoples, African languages and Portuguese, oral and written. From an editorial point of view, since the first records were written in Europe there has been a tendency to treat oral tales as children's literature, publishing collections with a small number of short stories, an adapted plot, simplified vocabulary, and many

illustrations. This trend has been accentuated in Brazil in recent years with the growth of the production of children's books edited from oral narratives of African origin, especially after the introduction of Law 10.639 of 2003, which makes the teaching of Afro-Brazilian history and culture mandatory in Brazilian in schools.

First collections of oral narratives in Angola and Brazil

The European voyages of exploration in Africa, beginning with the great Portuguese navigations of the fifteenth century, intensified and expanded with the passage of time. The earliest written records of oral poetry among Africans were produced in the nineteenth century by Christian missionaries who went to Africa on religious indoctrination missions, one of the components of Portuguese colonization. Colonial government agents on administrative postings also kept written records of the songs that were danced to and the folk tales they heard from Africans. The ethnographic literature they produced during their travels is of great interest, especially for the studies being conducted in this early twenty-first century period, in which we recognize diversity and contact among different spheres, i.e., transculturation. Today we are able to read these books from the colonial period, written by agents of colonization, with critical eyes and ears, seeking sensitivity and rigour in their recording of vocality.

In Angola, Héli Chatelain (1859–1908) was the leading figure in ethnolinguistic and ethnopoetic research (although these terms were not yet used at the time), especially in the region occupied by the Ambundo people, speakers of the Kimbundu language. Chatelain was a Swiss missionary who dedicated his life to research and the teaching of languages and Christian doctrine in Angola. He was a pioneer in the publication of folk tales and linguistic studies of Kimbundu: as early as 1894 he published a Kimbundu-English bilingual edition of 50 folk tales collected and annotated during his time among the Ambundo, with a foreword and an introduction by the author (Chatelain, 1894). In this book, *Folk-Tales of Angola*, which became a classic, he recounts his experience of interethnic contact and presents a geopolitical, socioeconomic and ethnolinguistic description of Angola, then a Portuguese province. In the book's preface, he recounts how he learned Kimbundu during his early years there. By his third year, which he spent in Malanje, he 'had collected around three thousand words, discovering the principal rules of Kimbundu phonology, morphology, and syntax [...]' (Chatelain, 1964, pp. 63–64). In the year 1888, on his way home to his parents in Switzerland, Chatelain devoted his time to

writing and publishing the first results of his work as a linguist and Christian missionary in Angola: a booklet, a gospel and his first grammar of Kimbundu, *Kimbundu Grammar,*[1] written with a view to meeting the political, commercial and religious needs he identified during his first three years of work. In this grammar, Chatelain includes 'proverbs, riddles and *two little folk tales*', 'the earliest examples of Kimbundu folklore brought to the attention of the public' (Chatelain, 1964, p. 65, emphasis added), as he himself notes in the preface to his book *Folk-Tales of Angola*.

The first Portuguese translation of a narrative collected in Kimbundu was produced by the writer Ladislau Batalha (1856-1939). It is the story of a man who hears the voice of the fish king, a narrative present in Afro-Brazilian oral tradition, which we shall discuss later, and one of the two short stories recorded by Chatelain in an appendix to his *Kimbundu Grammar*. At the end of the book, *A língua de Angola,* published in Lisbon in 1897 (nine years after Chatelain's publication of the Kimbundu folk tale), Batalha includes three short stories from the Bantu oral tradition, 'collected from modern travellers to these territories' (Batalha, 1891, p. 19). One of these is also presented in Kimbundu, followed by Batalha's 'free translation' into Lusitanian Portuguese (Batalha, 1891, pp. 58–60). The Kimbundu version published by Batalha is almost identical to the version initially published by Chatelain in the appendix to his *Kimbundu Grammar* and reprinted in his *Folk-Tales of Angola*, published as a Kimbundu-English bilingual volume in 1894. The only differences we can observe between the two texts are in the spelling of certain words. Although he does not mention the Swiss researcher in his introductory text, the Portuguese writer makes several references to Héli Chatelain throughout his book, which would appear to reinforce the hypothesis that the Kimbundu folk tale was reproduced (and translated) from the initial record made by Chatelain. The translation of Chatelain's collection into Portuguese, for which he collaborated with the Brazilian author Camara Cascudo (1898–1986), was only published 70 years after his first edition. The book, entitled *Contos populares de Angola,* was published in Lisbon by Agência-Geral do Ultramar in 1964.

In Brazil, right from the time of the earliest collections of oral narratives, African traditions stand out as a strong component of the country's oral literature. Sílvio Romero (1851–1914), the great research pioneer and author

1 The first grammar of the Kimbundu language was actually written by the Jesuit Father Pedro Dias in Brazil, at the Colégio da Bahia, and first published in Lisbon in 1672 (more than 200 years before Chatelain's grammar).

of *História da literatura brasileira*, included manifestations of popular oral poetry in the very first edition of his book, in 1888. Even before that date, in 1882, the researcher had already published a volume of *Cantos populares do Brasil* (folk songs of Brazil), followed by a volume of folk tales in 1883.[2] In this collection, entitled *Contos populares do Brasil*, initially published in Lisbon with new editions being released in Brazil up to the present day, the researcher includes a section presenting sixteen 'folk tales of African and mestizo origin'. In the opening of the chapter on popular traditions from his *História da literatura brasileira*, the historian and literary critic notes:

> The Europeans and their descendants only improvised in the Portuguese language, seeing it as their own. In contrast, the blacks and Indians, who had been reduced to slavery, were bilingual, speaking their native language and Portuguese. [...] (Romero, 1943, p. 106).

> The bilingual blacks and Indians naturally knew the original songs of their race and could communicate them to their descendants in the adoptive language. This explains the phenomena of the juxtaposition of two languages in a single folk song, and the existence of certain scattered folk songs in our language with a clear Tupi or African character (Romero, 1943, p. 107).

The second Brazilian collection of oral folk tales was published in 1907. It was entitled *Contribuição do folk-lore brasileiro para a bibliotheca infantil* and compiled by Alexina de Magalhães Pinto (1870–1921), an educator born in the state of Minas Gerais. This author published thirteen folk tales that she collected herself from the state's hinterland, along with six others rewritten from Silvio Romero's records. One striking feature of this pioneering work is the presence of black narrators, as observed in the notes written by the researcher herself, as well as the strong presence of songs within the narrative, a trait highlighted by more than one scholar as characteristic of the African oral tradition.

The title of the collection alone hints at

> the intention to give traditional oral folk tales the status of written literature, appropriate for inclusion in Brazilian children's libraries. The book invests in the affirmation of the identity of the young Brazilian nation, seeking its own literature through setting down oral narratives in writing – a language close to the spoken word, free of the syntax imposed by European colonialism (Almeida and Queiroz, 2004, p. 39).

2 As attested to in 'Distribuição sistemática das obras de Sílvio Romero (feita por ele próprio)', front matter of Romero, 1943.

The narratives collected by De Magalhães Pinto were written in standard Portuguese. In contrast, she sets down almost all the sung verses in popular dialect, or Afro-Brazilian, an Africanized form of spoken Portuguese. An example of this is the tale *Beija-Flor* (hummingbird), the verses of which are reproduced in a language that appears to be a mixture of Portuguese and Kimbundu:

Ingerêam
Como gambê
Como na chácara
Não há.
Ingerê
Ingerê
Crá-crá. (De Magalhães Pinto, 1907, pp. 12–16)

Another example can be found in a dialogue of the folk tale *A história do sapo* (the frog story), a version of one of the most recurrent animal stories in Brazil, widely known as *Festa no céu* (party in heaven). In the version provided by de Magalhães Pinto, the person who helps the frog to get into the party is Father João, a character identified in the Afro-Brazilian oral tradition as an 'old black man' who plays the drums: '*Mas o pai João, com muito dó do sapo não vir ver à festa, insistiu: "Não tem nada, não. Ninguém te vê; ocê vai aqui dentro da minha tambõ; iô fura um buraquinho pr'ocê vê a festa. E di todo doce qui tivé, iô bota um pedacinho pr'ocê".'* (De Magalhães Pinto, op. cit., p. 30). In this short passage, we can already identify certain traces of the contact between Portuguese and the Bantu languages, for example in the opening of syllables, usually blocked by consonants in standard Portuguese speech, as in the verbal infinitive: *pr'ocê **vê** a festa*, in which ***ver*** becomes ***vê***. In a record published in Minas Gerais in the 1990s by the researcher Eugênia Gonçalves, the narrative presents more words from African languages, which appear to have been inserted by the narrator, a captain of the *Reinado de N. S. do Rosário* and speaker of the 'Benguela language'. This is a spoken tongue mixing Portuguese and the Bantu languages (Kimbundu and Umbundu) still remaining in some areas of Minas Gerais at the beginning of the twenty-first century. See the passage below:

> This is the story of the discovery of an orange tree in the middle of the forest, to the amazement of the animals. It arrives suddenly, already laden with flowers and fruit. King Kimba sends Tico-Tico Santantonho to the heavens. He flies to the last Olumbi to ask Nzambi the tree's name and whether its fruit is edible. The little bird travels through all the heavens until he comes to the last one, the 7th, *ocizê-oteke* (Dias, 1994, p. 5).

In 1918, researcher Lindolfo Gomes (1875–1953) published the collection *Contos populares*, bringing together narratives he collected from the oral tradition in the state of Minas Gerais. The collection was reissued in 1931 and 1948. The third edition included a number of folk tales which, according to the researcher, were current in several other regions of Brazil, hence the title change to *Contos populares brasileiros*. The fourth edition, in 1965, changed the classification of the folk tales, which were organized in cycles. This classification is especially interesting for the purposes of our study, since it distinguishes thematic groups related to the presence of Africans and their descendants in Brazil: the cycles *Do coelho e da onça*, *De Pai João,* and *Lendas sobre a formação das raças*. Before presenting the stories themselves to the reader, Lindolfo Gomes includes a chapter on *As histórias* (the stories), in which he sets out performance considerations. Some of these deal with common attitudes among storytellers, who make certain entreaties to their audiences before beginning their tales, sharpening public interest or silencing excited listeners.

Another collection of great relevance for our knowledge of the African contribution to the formation of the Brazilian oral tradition was published in 1928, in Rio de Janeiro, by Livraria Quaresma. The 75 *Contos e fábulas populares da Bahia* collected by João da Silva Campos (1880–1940) were released as the second part of a book entitled *O folclore no Brasil,* by the Brazilian researcher Basílio de Magalhães (1874–1957). According to de Magalhães' preface to the second edition, the first edition 'became outdated in the space of three months' and, since the tales were 'mostly from Afro-Brazilian sainetes', prompted 'a real productive flourishing in several different areas on the influence of the black element in our demo-psychology' (De Magalhães, 1939). The second edition was published in *Revista do Instituto Histórico e Geográfico Brasileiro* (volume 172, in 1939), by Imprensa Nacional. The third edition, edited by Aurelio Buarque de Hollanda (1910-1989), was also published in Rio de Janeiro, in 1960, by O Cruzeiro. Camara Cascudo dedicated an entry in his *Dicionário do Folclore Brasileiro* to João da Silva Campos, highlighting his qualities as a 'magnificent observer' who 'knew how to set down what he deemed worthy of record without deformation or reduction'. Cascudo reproduced nine narratives from da Silva Campos' collection in his books: five in *Contos tradicionais do Brasil*, three in *Literatura oral no Brasil* and one in *Antologia do folclore brasileiro.*

Yeda Pessoa de Castro, in *Contos populares da Bahia: aspectos da obra de João da Silva Campos*, observes that 'of the seventy-five folk tales collected by da Silva Campos, almost all of them have "Afro-Brazilian features" [...]' (Pessoa de Castro, 1978, p. 7). According to Pessoa de Castro, the African origins of these tales are

'evident in both their thematic-formal and linguistic aspects'. On the thematic-formal aspects, he observes that

> interspersing the spoken narrative with sung verses and strophes, with refrains of onomatopoeic effect, is a characteristic, although not exclusive, feature of the African oral tradition. This is a stylistic resource, but its purpose is to support the narrated theme and make the listener feel involved [...] (Pessoa de Castro, 1978, pp. 17, 19).

João da Silva Campos collected all these tales 'directly from the popular version; and almost all of them in a very restricted area of Bahia's Recôncavo.' He observes that, as far as possible, he 'faithfully reproduced the language of the people, often copying cacophonies, corruptions and solecisms'. This researcher left other scholars with the 'difficult task of classifying' the collection's stories 'by the criterion of origin' (De Magalhães, 1939, p. 177).

In an appendix, Yeda Pessoa de Castro reproduces seven folk tales from da Silva Campos' collection, the origins of which she identifies as one Yoruba and six Bantu, from the Kibungo cycle. From this same cycle, she also reproduces a folk tale collected by Basílio de Magalhães and two collected by Nina Rodrigues in Salvador, three collected by Souza Carneiro in the Recôncavo and in Salvador, and one from Lindolfo Gomes' collection from Minas Gerais. Through this comparative work, the researcher clearly brings out the strong contribution of the Bantu oral tradition to the formation of the Brazilian oral tradition.

Bahian researcher Nina Rodrigues (1862–1906) published seven oral narratives in her book *Os africanos no Brasil*, published posthumously in 1932, which went on to become a classic. Comparing the folk tales she collected in Salvador and others collected by Sílvio Romero in the state of Sergipe with narratives from the Alfred B. Ellis collection, published in 1894 in the book *The Yoruba-Speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast of West Africa*, Nina Rodrigues identifies a 'curious equivalence' between many tales from the African tradition and those of European origin (Rodrigues, 1935, p. 315). As was the case with Alexina de Magalhães Pinto's collection, some of the stories recorded by Nina Rodrigues include songs in an African language interlaced with the narrative, as well as a sprinkling of African words in the narrative text itself. At the beginning of the twentieth century, however, not even the storyteller was able to identify the language of the song. As the researcher explains, 'this resulted in a great deal of competition from Creole pronunciation changes' (Rodrigues, 1935, p. 303).

Repeating, but not all that much; transforming whenever necessary

What seems to have occurred through the contact of cultures in Brazil is a process of transculturation, in which elements of European and Catholic culture (perhaps more than in the case of the Amerindian cultures) were inserted into narratives of the Bantu tradition. This is true of the Afro-Brazilian folk tale *João Jiló*, in which the Brazilian oral tradition includes the prohibition of hunting on Good Friday, a holy day in the Catholic calendar on which the faithful do not eat meat (and in some cases, fast). Up until the mid-twentieth century, each and every pleasure was forbidden on Good Friday.

The prohibition of pleasure appears to play no part in Bantu culture, as some scholars of Afro-Brazilian religions have already observed, and as is evidenced in the tale *O Rei Kitamba Kia Xiba*, collected by Héli Chatelain in Angola among Kimbundu speakers:

> *O rei Kitamba Kia Xiba – chefe de Kasanji – construiu a sua aldeia e viveu feliz até a morte de sua mulher, a rainha Muhongo. Depois do enterro houve luto pesado. O rei Kitamba disse: Desde que minha mulher morreu só choro. De hoje para o futuro não quero que se faça mais nada na minha aldeia: nem que as crianças gritem, nem que as mulheres moam a farinha, nem que pessoa alguma fale. Os homens de mais categoria disseram: Senhor, a rainha está morta e por isso fazeis todas essas proibições. Nunca se viu um caso semelhante: não se comer, nem beber, nem falar* (Chatelain, op. cit., pp. 428–29).

In Brazil, the story takes place in the animal world, and it is the monkey who resolves the issue:

> *Aí o macaco falô assim:*
>
> *– Ah, Seu Leão… eu tô, ando muito triste mesmo… eu vivia triste… Intão um dia a finada leoa me apariceu e falô comigo, mandô um recado pro sinhor: que o sinhor acabasse com o luto na floresta; que os animais istavam muito tristes, a floresta tava muito triste, e que intão eu pricisava de… pricisava tê mais alegria; a floresta pricisava tê mais vida, né? Intão eu cumecei, né?, a cantá, a chamar os animais, né?, as aves, né?, e elas cumeçaro tamém me acumpanhano, né? E sabe o que ela mandô falá com o Sinhor, Majestade? Que o Sinhor arrumasse uma*

namorada; fizesse a barba, arrumasse a namorada e casasse. Arrumasse uma leoa bem bonita, bem novinha e casasse com ela.

Aí, o leão falô assim:

– Ah!, Seu Macaco, intão foi isso mesmo?…

– Foi! Mandô o Sinhô, é… né?, acabá co' o luto, e namorá, né?, dançá, e casá novamente.

Aí o leão, né?, o que é que ele fez? Ficô alegre, né? Fez a barba, tomô o banho, né? e começô a arrumá namorada, e com isso casô. Pronto…[3]

The narratives are distanced at times, at least at first glance, not so much by the transformation of the characters as by the insertion of the episodes; but if we listen more closely, they are brought back together. For example, a closer observation of the Bantu versions of the series of the woman who wanted fish – which I am considering here as the hypotext of the Brazilian João Jiló series – reveals the presence of a cultural prohibition of the consumption of fish by pregnant women: '*À mulher grávida está interditado comer peixes silurídeos* ngwingi *e* kakusu' (Coelho, 1991, p. 4). It is interesting to note that it is still possible to find rural communities in Brazil in which pregnant women are not allowed to eat fish classified as *remoso,* that is, without scales. 'There are several reasons for this prohibition', as the Angolan researcher Virgílio Coelho explains: 'Firstly, it is said that this prescription serves to avoid the birth of a disabled child and, above all, to prevent miscarriage. Guarding against death during childbirth is another frequently cited reason' (Coelho, 1991, p. 4). In the Bantu series of the woman who wanted fish, the protagonist's overwhelming desire, attended to by her husband, leads her to go against the prohibition. 'The effects of the transgression are very evident,' as Virgílio Coelho explains, 'in the myth's general epilogue, which shows just how this "spirit" pierces the woman's body, a fact that can be interpreted as the consequence of miscarriage' (Coelho, 1991, p. 4).

In other words, this prohibition, which in one of the versions collected among the Bantu is explicitly justified by the need for environmental preservation (the fish king complains that the aquatic population is being decimated by the woman's voracious appetite), is also connected to a custom of religious, mystic origin. This argument, as expressed in comments by Virgílio Coelho (1991, p. 4), also extends to some Brazilian versions of the João Jiló series. It seems to

3 UFMG. FALE. 'Quem Conta um Conto Aumenta um Ponto' project. 'Narrativas orais no Vale do Jequitinhonha' [Oral narratives in the Jequitinhona valley]: cassette and video tape collection catalogue; transcription collection. Belo Horizonte: Faculty of Arts, UFMG, 2004. Rogério Machado Caetano's transcription of the oral narrative told by Maria Terezinha Orsini Almeida, in Turmalina, 1995, recorded by Rômulo Monte Alto.

me, however, that what comes through most forcefully in these narratives (perhaps by virtue of its very frequency) is the fact that the couple do not deal well with desire, being unable to stop satisfying it. This is evidently a universal theme that has been the subject of study and work in areas such as psychoanalysis, and it is present in folk tales belonging to the European oral tradition, such as 'Rapunzel', in which the protagonist is shut in a tower by a witch whose property had been invaded by a man in search of turnips to satisfy the cravings of his pregnant wife.

In this regard, the narrative can be likened to another series, which includes a European version recorded by the Brothers Grimm in Germany, entitled 'The fisherman and his wife', as well as an African version recorded in Angola by Héli Chatelain, entitled *Na nzuá dia kimanaueze*. In this group of narratives, we can observe that it is always a spirit of nature, 'the fish king' or 'the bird king', that fulfils the desires and determines the punishments. Curiously, what allows us to identify these beings of an animal nature as spirits is their voice, manifested through the human functions of singing or speech. This can be seen, for example, in these extracts from a Brazilian version published by Alexina de Magalhães Pinto:

> *Um passarinho estava cantando muito numa árvore perto da casa de um caçador.*
>
> *O caçador ouviu e disse à mulher: — Mulher, eu vou caçar.*
>
> *[...] Mas primeiro eu vou matar aquele passarinho que está ali naquela árvore.*
>
> *A mulher, como quem o avisava, disse: — Olha, marido! Não mate aquele passarinho que ele está cantando muito.*
>
> *[...]*
>
> *Mas ele não se importou; foi comendo assim mesmo sozinho o passarinho todo. Quando ele acabou de almoçar, o passarinho cantou assim:*
>
> *Eu quero sair,*
>
> *João Jiló,*
>
> *É mentira, é embira,*
>
> *João Jiló.*
>
> *[...]*
>
> *O homem já zangado: — Pois saia pelo umbigo.*
>
> *Apenas o João Jiló foi acabando de dizer isso, a barriga dele deu um estouro — tún!... E o passarinho saiu inteirinho, voou e foi-se embora.*
>
> *— E o João Jiló?*
>
> *O João Jiló caiu pra trás e morreu.* (de Magalhães Pinto, 1907, pp. 39–44).

In the example above, as in other versions collected in Brazil, we note that it is the male protagonist – boy or man – who goes against the prohibition. In the five versions compared by Virgílio Coelho, all collected among Kimbundu speakers in Angola by Héli Chatelain (in 1894), Óscar Ribas (in 1961 and 1967) and Ladislau Batalha (in 1891), the narrative is built around a pregnant woman who wants to eat fish and defies the prohibition. The effect of the transgression is essentially the same: the piercing or bursting of the transgressor's belly by the fish (or bird) that was wrongfully eaten. In all these narratives, the animal asks to leave the transgressor's belly, in some of them through song.

Vissungos and quibungos

The presence of singing in oral cultures is extremely strong, and in several cultures rooted in African tradition, as is the case of Brazil, singing stands out as an essential element of a wide range of manifestations. In Minas Gerais, a Brazilian region populated through the exploration of gold and diamond mines in the eighteenth century, the so-called *vissungos*, songs sung on different occasions in the day-to-day lives of the black population in the diamond region (in the mines, on the journey to and from work, at burials) were still being recorded in the twentieth century. Songs also have a strong presence in folk tales, often acting as a fundamental element in problem solving.

A good example is a narrative from the *Girl and the pouch* series, which is very recurrent in Brazil (Da Silva Campos, 1939, pp. 283–86; Alcoforado and Suárez Albán, 2001, pp. 118–21; Trigueiro and Pimentel, 1996, pp. 82–84), recorded in a book in Minas Gerais, initially by Alexina de Magalhães Pinto in 1907 (pp. 51–59 and 63–66) and later by Nair Starling (1962, pp. 117–21). In the collection *Contos tradicionais do Brasil,* Camara Cascudo transcribes the folk tale *A menina dos brincos de ouro* ('The girl with the golden earrings'), which was published by Nina Rodrigues in the classic *Os africanos no Brasil*. Cascudo includes a note presenting three possible African hypotexts: a Yoruba folk tale published by A. B. Ellis in the book *Yoruba-Speaking Peoples of the Slave Coast of West Africa;* a Guinean tale published by Blaise Cendrars in his *Anthologie nègre*; and another published by René Basset in the book *Contes populaires d'Afrique*.

The version published by Nair Starling highlights the particularly interesting presence of *Candombe Serê*, one of the monsters of the Bantu oral tradition. The term *Candombe Serê* also appears in a cantiga with a similar story collected by Lindolfo Gomes in Minas Gerais. Here, however, the monster's name is *Bicho*

Pondê, and *Candombe Serê* is a refrain. Perhaps we could perceive these as two designations of the same monster. Interestingly, in one of the records made by Souza Carneiro, although the monster's name, *Quibungo*, is a word from the Kimbundu language, several Yoruba words also appear:

> *Ogun deu aos meninos um alabé chamado Quibungo, pai de uma raça de lobos que não deixou descendentes. O bicho era muito maior do que um elefante, fazia eru a todos os jagunços e tinha duas bocas: – uma para mastigar sem engulir e outra nas costas para engulir sem mastigar* (Carneiro, apud Pessoa de Castro, 1978, p. 39).

In the *Quibungo* story collected by João da Silva Campos in Bahia, the whole family is saved from the monster by the boy's song:

> *É quando eles viram aquele quibungo enorme, roncando e quebrando mato. Logo que foi chegando junto do primeiro da fila, foi estendendo as unhas para agarrá-lo. Aí, o menino cantou:*
>
> *— Esse é meu pai,*
>
> *xAuê,*
>
> *Gangaruê, tu cai,*
>
> *Não cai.*
>
> *O quibungo deu um urro – exe! – e encolheu a mão, dirigindo-se ao segundo da fila. [...]*
>
> *Assim, o quibungo passou por todos os parentes do menino, sem poder pegar nem um deles, porque, quando ia estendendo as unhas para agarrá-los, ele cantava daquele jeito.* (De Magalhães, op. cit., pp. 237–40; Pessoa de Castro, op. cit., pp. 34–36).

The *quibungo* has huge, hairy hands and big nails, which it uses to grab children to eat. It is an animal, and sometimes described as such. Certain descriptions portray the *quibungo* with a large mouth (or sack) on its back, through which it eats (and sometimes vomits) children or animals: '*Kibungo é um bicho meio homem, meio animal, tendo uma cabeça muito grande e também um grande buraco no meio das costas, que se abre quando ele abaixa a cabeça e fecha quando levanta*' (Rodrigues, 1935, pp. 300–02; Ramos, 1935, pp. 169–71; Pessoa de Castro, op. cit., pp. 36–37). In several stories in Angola and Brazil, the *quibungo* is distracted by singing, as is the case in the version collected by Carlos Estermann among Kikongo speakers in Angola, part of the series about a girl mistreated by her father's other woman (Estermann, 1983, pp. 269–70). In other versions collected in Angola and Brazil, singing is used to ask for help, and is directed at the mother or father, both of whom are absent. In Brazil, the story was first published by Sílvio Romero in *Contos populares do Brasil,* under the title *A madrasta* ('The stepmother'). Camara Cascudo, in his collection *Contos*

tradicionais do Brasil, includes the version *A menina enterrada viva* ('The girl buried alive'). In *Serões da mãe preta*, Juvenal Tavares records *As três maçãzinhas de ouro* ('The three golden apples'), collected in the State of Pará (Tavares, 1897, pp. 72–79). We have found five published versions from the Bantu tradition, two collected in Kikongo, by António Fonseca (1985, pp. 107–11; 1996, pp. 79–81), and three in Kimbundu – two by Óscar Ribas (1979, pp. 51–57; 1989, pp. 55–60) and one by Carlos Estermann (op. cit., pp. 269–70).

The strength of the little ones

Animal stories represent a significant proportion of the oral narratives of the Bantu tradition remaining in Brazil. A central theme for nearly all of them is the ability of an apparently weak character to overcome a great difficulty, most often in the face of a seemingly strong opponent. The strength of the little ones, as I have named this series, lies above all in cunning, and sometimes even in malice, and an opposition is established between physical and intellectual (or mental) strength.

The 'little' protagonist is a rabbit, a turtle (or tortoise), a frog or monkey. The most recurrent, in Angola and Brazil, is the rabbit. The turtle, very common in Angola, rarely appears in narratives recorded in Brazil, where the frog is a more frequent character. The monkey appears as a protagonist in the narratives recorded in both Angola and in Brazil. There is greater variation between the stories as told in Africa and Brazil when it comes to the 'big' characters: African narratives use leopards, hyenas and antelopes, which do not appear in the stories told in Brazil, where the 'big ones' (who will be defeated) are jaguars (also present in the real context of the Brazilian forests), and lions or elephants, of African provenance.

Oral folk tales and children's literature

In terms of publishing, from the very first written records of oral literature in Europe, a tendency to treat oral folk tales as children's literature can be observed: collections tend to comprise a small number of folk tales with a plot and vocabulary adapted to a child audience, and featuring illustrations. Thus, alongside scholarly editions, which almost always include critical paratexts and a reasonable number of folk tales, we have books for school-age children,

many of them single-narrative volumes. One of the many examples is the book *Histórias que o povo conta*, written for children by Ricardo Azevedo, in which we find a written version of the aforementioned *Beija-flor* (hummingbird) folk tale, taken from the oral tradition (Azevedo, 2002, pp. 32–38). In this context, the author has greater freedom in setting down the oral story in writing than that available to researchers of oral or ethnopoetic literature. The writer appropriates the literature of oral tradition, of collective authorship, and assumes individual authorship of the story in written form, just as the storytellers have ownership rights to their rendition of the tale in oral form. This trend has been increasing in Brazil in recent years, with the growth in the production of children's books edited from oral narratives of African origin (diversified), especially in the wake of Law 10.639 of 2003 which, as mentioned earlier, makes the teaching of Afro-Brazilian history and culture compulsory in schools. From the very outset, it is clear that Brazilian oral literature has been strongly marked, through contact, by the African contribution, especially that of Bantu oral tradition, and we can conclude that Brazilian children's literature written in the twenty-first century incorporates African narratives of diverse origins through a process in which Brazilian writers recreate oral stories that were written by European researchers and writers on the basis of collections made in Africa.

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CHAPTER 28

SLAVERY AND GENDER IN THE AMERICAS AND AFRICA

Mariana P. Candido

Introduction

The institution of slavery was already present across various African societies and in other parts of the world before its expansion in Europe in the fifteenth century. However, reports do not necessarily examine just how different the jobs performed by enslaved men, women, and children were, nor their different experiences of captivity. The nature of forced work varied according to time and place, and underwent transformations over time. Having visited the coast of Guinea and what are now the banks of the Gambia River along to the Geba River as a representative of the Portuguese Crown, Luís Cadamosto described the use of enslaved labour among the Mandingo and Jolof peoples, as well as the trade in human beings. According to Cadamosto,

> this [Jolof] King also lives off the theft of enslaved persons ordered by him both in his own country and in neighbouring countries for a number of different purposes, particularly the development of certain dependent territories that are delegated to him and the sale of such persons to the Azengues and Arab merchants, who exchange them for horses and other items [...] The King can keep as many women as he wishes, as it is for all men from these lands to have as many women as they can sustain; to which end, the King always has at least thirty (Cadamosto, 1944, p. 26; Da Costa e Silva, 2002; Stilwell, 2014).

This report reveals the coexistence of two markets for African slaves: the trans-Saharan market, which supplied the societies of Northern Africa and the Mediterranean with an enslaved sub-Saharan workforce, and the Atlantic market.

The roles of captive men, women, and children in production in Africa

Reports by Arab chroniclers in the sixteenth century reveal that males and enslaved females played a role in the former Songhai Empire and Borno, both in the domestic sphere and in the cultivation of agricultural products on the margins of the Niger River (Lovejoy, 2000, p. 32). During a visit to the Kingdom of Kongo, Englishman Andrew Battell described seeing *libambos*, or eight or nine enslaved Africans chained together (Ravenstein, 1901, p. 75). As societies in West and Southern Africa made use of enslaved labour, the consolidation and expansion of the transatlantic trade profoundly transformed both the societies that had lost individuals as well as those that had received enslaved Africans (Barry, 1998; Green, 2012). We know that the social division of work is historically constructed, as are perceptions of gender and of masculinity and femininity. The great difficulty for historians of the period prior to the Berlin Conference (1884–85) is to ascertain how forced labour for women differed from that demanded of men.

The consolidation and expansion of the forced migration of enslaved Africans came to transform the institution in various societies. The forced and systematic shipping of over twelve million Africans to the Americas led to a demographic imbalance in African societies, particularly those that lost many young men, as was the case in Senegambia (Voyages: The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database; Liberato et al. 2017, pp. 1–29). Despite the perception that the transatlantic slave trade consisted mainly of men, demographic data reveal that a high number of enslaved African females arrived in the Americas. In Southern Africa, the Bight of Biafra and the Bight of Benin, women represented some 49, 51 and 41 per cent respectively of all individuals deported in the last quarter of the seventeenth century. Despite significant variations in the eighteenth century, 30 to 40 per cent of the Africans sent to the Americas during the period were women, and the trend continued into the nineteenth century, when 51 per cent of enslaved persons sent from the Gold Coast and 26 per cent from Southern Africa between 1826 and 1850 were women (Liberato, op. cit., pp. 15–16). Such a high proportion of enslaved females had demographic and social

consequences for the regions that lost a large number of their young, fertile population of working age. It is important to highlight that a large number of enslaved children were also sent to the Americas, exacerbating the demographic imbalance (Diptee, 2012; Campbell et al. 2009; Spicksley, 2015, pp. 247–75; Liberato et al., op. cit., p. 17). The difference between the number of women and men exported was influenced by the opinions of transatlantic traffickers as well as by the demands of the internal markets on the African continent for enslaved women and children. While traders in the Americas believed that African men were stronger and more skilled than their female counterparts, there was a demand for women in African societies due to local patterns in the social division of labour in which women were seen as better suited to agricultural work, as they could also be incorporated into local societies as concubines and maids, working in the domestic sphere and serving a reproductive purpose (Walvin, 1992, p. 109; Kriger, 2017, pp. 106–09; Schultz, 2015, p. 434). By acquiring enslaved females, slave owners in Africa and the Americas were thus able to invest in the natural reproduction of the enslaved population.

The jobs performed by males and enslaved females in African societies included salt and gold mining, and textile production. In Cabo Verde, African enslaved males were responsible for introducing the technology for producing cloth in the sixteenth century, a task which was considered to be suited to women (Kriger, 2006, p. 131; Liberato, 2017, p. 58). In the seventeenth century, the Akan, Ga and Adanme groups that were employed mainly consisted of men working in the gold mines that existed in the region, which came to be known as the Gold Coast (Rucker, 2015; Austin, 2005). In the mid-nineteenth century, chief Soba Kiborongongo of the Southern African region of Catumbela employed enslaved persons in the salt mines, with salt traded for imported goods such as alcoholic beverages and textiles. Enslaved persons, both male and female, worked in the mines and played the role of carriers, connecting the production hubs with the market in Benguela (Douville, 1832, p. 17).[1] Upon seeing African women performing manual roles in mining and ploughing the fields, European travellers deemed African societies to be inferior, disorganized and degraded. Although female European peasants also cultivated the land, it was believed that manual labour was essentially male, with women of the elite restricted to occupying domestic spaces. Certain notions regarding work and gender led to the contextualization and classification of African, Indigenous American,

1 Arquivo Histórico Militar, Lisbon, 2-2-3, doc. 14, Francisco Xavier Lopes, Descrição da Catumbela (Usos e costumes dos seus indígenas e construção do reduto de São Pedro), 1847, fl. 4.

and Asian societies as barbaric, biologically distinct and therefore inferior, to be conquered and dominated. The notion according to which African women were independent, hard-working and productive led to their representation in European literature and etchings as lascivious, subject to bestial behaviour, and profoundly threatening to European order and social norms (Ugo Nwokeji, 2001, pp. 47–68; Morgan, 2011). The notion of gender was therefore fundamental to the definition of slavery in various societies. While in the Americas children inherited their mother's legal status, in Muslim African societies it was the father's status that defined a newborn's legal standing. Societies in the Americas under the slavery regime placed emphasis on the maternity of enslaved women, virtually ignoring paternity in the legal sense.

The social insertion of enslaved individuals varied according to the slavery system, with the conditions of captivity and prerequisites for obtaining freedom often influenced by the sex of the individual. Although enslaved persons also played administrative, military and commercial roles, as was the case in the enslaved societies in the Americas as well, such roles were normally reserved for men (Landers, 2006; Mattos, 2008; Kraay, 1997). In Muslim societies, for example fifteenth-century Egypt or the nineteenth-century Sokoto Caliphate in West Africa, the famous enslaved soldiers known as the Mamluks enjoyed prestige and access to the upper circles of power precisely because of their servile condition. The Mamluks formed an elite enslaved population which, although captive, enjoyed economic and social advantages: their perceived dissociation from local lineage and consequent exemption from political interests other than that of protecting their master were seen as a benefit (Powell, 2012; Stilwell, 2004). Enslaved males were also employed as soldiers by the Aro peoples in the Biafra region, in the Kingdom of Kongo and in Ndongo, as well as in the colonies of Angola and Benguela, while in East Africa, the famous enslaved soldiers known as the Chikunda ended up creating an ethnic identity in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (Heywood, 2009; Ugo Nwokeji, 2010; Thornton, 2006; Candido, 2011, pp. 213–22; Isaacman, 2004). Enslaved persons were also employed as commercial agents, both along the trans-Saharan routes and in markets in inland Southern Africa. Some were literate and enjoyed a certain freedom of movement, travelling between oases in the Sahara and commercial hubs in North Africa, sending letters to their masters (Daddi Addoun and Hall, 2013). Such agents also acted on behalf of their masters in States in inland Southern Africa, performing roles similar to those of the enslaved persons known as *escravos de ganho* who sold items to earn money in the streets of Salvador, Buenos Aires, Cartagena and Havana, also enjoying a certain autonomy in spite of their servile condition (Miller, 1988, p. 271; Karasch, 1987; Dantas, 2008; Wheat, 2016; Schultz, 2017). Despite the numerical predominance of enslaved females in

African societies, we know very little about the types of activities they performed apart from working in the fields or in households, in part because domestic work was not considered to be qualified.

Women's roles in production in Africa and the diaspora

Among the Balanta people in the Senegambia region, enslaved females weeded, planted, milled, cleaned and cooked cereals such as rice, which was essential to the local diet (Hawthorne, 2010, p. 137). They also collected and processed raw materials and worked as artisans and in retail (Kriger, 2017, p. 106). Among the Aros in the Biafra region, free women acquired enslaved females for assistance with domestic work and in the production of foodstuffs (Ugo Nwokeji, 2010, pp. 57–158). In São Jorge da Mina port (Elmina Castle) on the Gold Coast, enslaved females were in charge of cleaning and preparing foodstuffs, as well as laundering clothes and looking after European traders and workers, as well as Africans to be sold to slave ships (Shumway, 2014, pp. 91–92.). In inland Southern Africa, enslaved females worked in the cultivation and processing of cassava (Vansina, 1983, p. 108). In Angola, they were employed as farmers, seamstresses, cooks, laundresses and greengrocers (Freudenthal, 2011, pp. 197–229; Oliveira, 2014, pp. 265–67).[2] In the records of enslaved persons available for Caconda in the interior of Benguela, in 1854 only one enslaved female is listed with a recognized occupation, and that is Francisca, a young seamstress originally from Quilengues (Candido, 2011, pp. 213–22; Guedes and Pontes, 2013, pp. 153-80).[3] The majority of enslaved females worked in the cultivation of foodstuffs and in domestic tasks, enjoying fewer opportunities than men for participating in urban retail activities, with the exception of greengrocers, who spent their days selling fish, vegetables or premade foods in the streets, sharing these activities with free women (Pantoja, 2001, pp. 45–68; Oliveira, 2015, pp. 57–81). Although enslaved males would also have performed domestic tasks, ranging from cleaning homes and looking after children to working as nurses, these were normally delegated to enslaved females.

There are few references in African societies or in those of the Americas to the occupations of the female enslaved population, partly because domestic work was

2 Arquivo Nacional Angola (ANA), Codex. 3160, Benguela slave records, 1855; *Almanak statístico da Província de Angola e suas dependências*, Luanda, 1852, p. 54.

3 ANA, Codex 3159, Registro de escravos, Caconda, 1854.

seen as unskilled, although cleaning, cooking, and other such activities require specific knowledge. Africans and their descendants enslaved in the Americas performed various roles, such as laundress, domestic maid and greengrocer, among others. And just like enslaved males, women were subject to long transfers after disembarking. In the 1670s, an African woman identified by the names of Ysabel and Margarita in the city of Córdoba in modern-day Argentina had disembarked in Bahia, Brazil, and from there had been sold on and transported to Buenos Aires, where she had been resold to a Catholic priest, who had then traded her to a Spanish merchant, thus leading her to Córdoba. However, the final destination of this enslaved female from inland Angola was to be Potosí, Peru (Schultz, 2017, pp. 267–68). There was a demand for female Africans enslaved in the Americas, and as Ysabel/Margarita's case reveals, they could be sold various times after disembarking in the ports of the Americas and transported for long distances to regions lacking an enslaved labour force for production functions in the mines and plantations. In metropoles such as Rio de Janeiro, Mexico City and Puebla (modern-day Mexico), Havana (Cuba), Santo Domingo (modern-day Haiti), Cártago (modern-day Costa Rica), Omoa (Honduras), Panama City, Buenos Aires, Lima and Cartagena (Colombia), enslaved females worked as vendors or the carriers of water or other products for transport, as well as weavers, artisans and seamstresses, also offering specialist services as nurses and midwives. And finally, they helped produce foodstuffs and clean the streets (Farias, 2015; Karasch, op. cit., pp. 58, 189–92, 195–209; Soares, 2008, pp. 79–98; Velázquez Gutiérrez, 2006; Seija and Silva, 2016, pp. 307–33; Gómez, 2000; Wheat, 2016, pp. 142-80; Dantas, 2015, pp. 82–108; Libby and Paiva, 2000, pp. 96–127; Graubart, 2012, pp. 1–22). The only roles exclusively performed by enslaved females were those of midwife and wet nurse (Gaspar et al., 1996, p. 261). Of even greater significance were their roles as nurses and healers, which testified to a mastery of medical and pharmacological knowledge that was not available among the white and free population (Fett, 2002; Gómez, 2013, pp. 383–402; Gómez, 2017; Turner, 2017).

Violence against enslaved females

It is important to emphasize the sexual aspect of enslaved labour and the sexual violence to which females and children were exposed. Despite Claude Meillassoux's argument that if 'there was no a priori preference for one sex over the other, it was because slaves were sought as asexual agents of work' (Meillassoux, 1997, p. 58), it must be highlighted that absolute control over the enslaved body, and particularly the enslaved female body, was a constant. In Muslim societies,

females were part of the harem and were subjected to sexual abuse. Despite the silence from primary sources, historians have examined the sexual dimension of slavery in Muslim societies, analysing the role of eunuchs and concubines. By means of capture in conflicts or purchase, foreign women and children were incorporated into new societies in a subordinate position, generally as maids in the homes of aristocratic families or powerful merchants. Although they worked as farmers or domestic helpers, they were also employed as concubines, a social status which was recognized under Islamic law (Lovejoy, 1988, pp. 245–66). The concentration of concubines in the homes of local elites consolidated social and economic prestige, as these were families with a large numbers of dependents. The children born of these relations were free children, since they inherited their father's legal status as was the norm in Muslim societies. In societies in Southern Africa, local or Portuguese laws did not cover the rights of the enslaved population as was the case for sharia law. We do, however, know that African authorities also consolidated their political and social power by means of the accumulation of dependents, whether freed or enslaved. Travellers highlighted the fact that local authorities – known as *sobas* – accumulated thirty or forty wives, and even men with limited means kept four or five concubines (Miller, 1988, p. 163, footnote 48). At the end of the eighteenth century, colonial officials recognized the paternity of children born to different mothers (some of whom were enslaved persons) in wills or baptism records. Enslaved trader Antônio José de Barros recorded in his will that any child of his born to his slaves Feliciana, Rosaria, Mariana, Micaela or Joana after his death should be free (Candido, 2014, p. 278). Cases such as this one revealed that enslaved females also provided sexual services to their masters.

Various studies describe how enslaved females were sexually abused in societies under slavery regimes. In Jamaica, for example, farmer Thomas Thistlewood kept a daily diary with details of his everyday rape and abuse of his female slave (Burnard, 2004). Despite the image of cordial race relations in Brazil perpetuated by Gilberto Freire, evidence suggests that girls and women were sexually exploited over the course of years. In exceptional cases, such as that of Chica da Silva in Minas Gerais or Rousalie Poulard, enslaved in Santo Domingo and Louisiana, the women were able to gain their freedom and attain social mobility (Ferreira, 2009; Scott and Hébrard, 2012).[4] Once freed, some consolidated their status as vendors, selling fruit and vegetables in metropoles and becoming women with enslaved persons of their own. In most cases, however, abusive relations between masters

4 For research highlighting the sexual abuse of female slaves in Brazil, see Mott, 1993; Grinberg, 1994; Araújo, 2015, pp. 568–85.

and their female slaves were not recorded in historical documents, yet were still maintained over the course of years or decades. Records reveal the cruelty of the sexual abuse that masters of enslaved females perpetrated against their captives, whether in Lima or Havana, Spanish America, New England, Northern United States or even in the valley of the Paraíba River in Brazil, or Kingston, Jamaica (Barrantes, 2016, pp. 77–79; Warren, 2007, pp. 1031–49; Graham, 2002).

Enslaved females were the victims of constant physical maltreatment. In sixteenth-century Compyagua (modern-day Guatemala), Polônia Congo was flogged for five days and a wooden stick inserted into her vagina in order to force her to identify enslaved Africans planning an escape. She resisted, however, and was able to report the case to church authorities in 1572. And this was by no means an isolated incident: at the end of the eighteenth century in Lima, Isabel Angola revealed that her master constantly beat and threatened her, as evidenced by the bruises all over her body (Barrantes, op. cit., p. 75). Another example dates to 1822 when Mônica, enslaved in the southern Brazilian State of Rio Grande do Sul, reported that her master spanked and whipped her every time he drank, which was frequently (Araújo, op. cit., pp. 578–80). In the Southern United States in the nineteenth century, female slave owners flogged, burnt and terrorized their male slaves, recording such episodes of sadistic violence in personal letters and diaries (Glymph, 2008, pp. 47–50). Individual cases reveal that enslaved females suffered a vast range of physical violence at various historical moments of colonization. Their point in common was their status as enslaved females. Physical and psychological abuse was an intrinsic feature of enslavement.

In some cases, such women were able to defend themselves from abuse, while in others they resorted to committing infanticide in order to protect their children from a life in captivity. For example, in the mid-eighteenth century in Nova Granada, in the State of São Paulo, Filipa attempted to end her children's lives. Although her motive is not clear, enslaved families were sometimes separated, with mothers having witnessed their children's physical punishment and facing the anguish of imagining them suffering such hardships. While Filipa's son survived his injuries, her daughter Catarina, aged five, did not. Filipa attempted to take her own life, revealing the desperation enslaved individuals could experience. In the criminal proceedings following the crime, Filipa argued that she had acted through love for her children and the fear of seeing her family separated (Soulodre-La France, 2002, pp. 87–100).

Decades later, other episodes of infanticide in Barbacoa, Colombia, led to questions regarding the violence inherent in the slavery regime and how enslaved females could be so desperate as to kill their own children. In this respect,

infanticide may be understood as a means of resistance to the regime, putting paid to the idea of cordial, tolerant or less violent enslaved societies (Echeverri, 2009, pp. 403–26; Araújo, op. cit.). The possibility of manumission in Spanish America or in Brazil and the access enslaved females had to this institution did not erase the constant fear that gripped them. Although manumission was a possibility for some enslaved persons in the Spanish and Portuguese colonies, this depended on a master's goodwill and on the colonial laws.

Fighting for freedom

In African societies, whether under Islamic, customary or colonial law, family members could, as was the case in Angola or in Cape Town, pay for an enslaved person's freedom or offer someone else as a replacement. From the seventeenth to the nineteenth centuries, for example, the political leaders of the Maghreb and North Africa freed enslaved Muslims or negotiated their return in peace treaties. In the Sokoto Caliphate, freedom for Muslims was a State policy (El Hamel, 2013; Ojo, 2013, pp. 75–100; Schwarz, 2015, pp. 59–85; Lofkrantz, 2015).

The Portuguese colonies of Angola and Benguela featured mechanisms backed by Portuguese and local laws to rescue people from captivity. In 1765, for example, the major-captain of Quilengues purchased Juliana as his slave. A few days later, Juliana's family sent an ambassador for one of the Kilengues territories known as Xaucuri who offered up an enslaved adult to rescue the girl from enslavement (Candido, 2013, pp. 191–92).[5] In local chieftaincies, there were some local legislations such as the Mucanos, which investigated the conditions of capture and enslavement, providing opportunities for families to rescue their members. However, this was restricted to those with legal knowledge or property (Ferreira, 2011, pp. 111–31). In 1837, for example, Quitéria was kidnapped and sold as an enslaved person to the captain of a slave ship in Benguela. Quitéria had been free, and she belonged to the family of Maria de Barros. The latter went to the boarding site as soon as she learned of the kidnapping and sale. When she arrived, she found Quitéria chained and branded. De Barros entered into last-minute negotiations to restore Quitéria's freedom, offering one of her domestic enslaved males to take her place.[6] Such rescues were common in the Mediterranean and African societies, in contrast to the Americas.

5 Arquivo Nacionais da Torre do Tombo (ANTT), Conde Linhares, L. 90, vol. 1, fl. 142v.– 143v., 21 June 1765.

6 ANA, cod. 509, fl. 215v., 17 March 1837; and AHA, cod. 450, fl. 49v.-50, 20 February 1837.

Conclusion

Enslaved females fought against their condition on a daily basis by performing their work slowly or sabotaging domestic or agricultural production. In some cases they were even responsible for the murder of their masters or for slave revolts. Other mechanisms of resistance included escape and the subsequent formation of quilombola communities in the Americas and on the African continent. Men, women and children resisted capture and enslavement on a constant basis. One such example dates to the end of the seventeenth century, when Juana governed a community known as *cimarrón* from Matudere in Cartagena for a total of twenty years (Landers, 2013, pp. 7–23). There is also evidence dating from the nineteenth century of women participating in revolts, such as the case of Ana Rita, who was imprisoned for suspected participation in the Malê Revolt in Bahia in 1835 (Brito, 2016, pp. 167–68; Reis, 1993, pp. 56 and 171). Despite the fact that historiography discusses the flight to freedom as a possibility only for males, recent research has shown that women did not just participate in escapes, but actually played an important role in their organization, selecting routes and forming the communities known as *quilombos* or *palenques* whether in Angola, the colony of Brazil, the Southern United States, Nova Granada or Cartagena (modern-day Colombia), or the various Caribbean countries under the Caribbean slavery regime (Heintze, 1995; Freudenthal, 1997, pp. 109–34; Ferreira, 2014, pp. 65–90; Krauthamer, 2008, pp. 100–27; Glymph, 2008, pp. 107–08; Fuentes, 2016, pp. 16–21; Krug, 2018, chap. 5).

Understanding the link between gender and enslavement entails much more than inserting the female experience into analyses on enslaved societies. Ideas on femininity, sexuality and what being a woman means were central to the constitution of enslaved societies and the legalization of the institution of slavery. Enslaved females in the Americas and Africa performed roles that were considered to be socially off limits to honourable women, such as working in the fields, transporting items in urban areas, and working as midwives and healers. The social and historical definitions of the division of work between men and women were therefore fundamental to the roles performed by enslaved females. In captivity, enslaved females performed manual and domestic work and were the victims of both sexual and psychological abuse.

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CHAPTER 29

THE ORIGINS OF AFRICAN FOODWAYS IN THE AMERICAS

Judith A. Carney

Introduction

Many of the celebrated foodways of the Americas came from former plantation societies. Hoppin' John, gumbo and jambalaya are as emblematic of the Southern United States as are the bean fritters and palm-oil-flavoured dishes of Bahia, Brazil, the pepperpot stews of the Caribbean, and the salt fish and ackee of Jamaica. Each of these dishes is representative of a broader cooking tradition that combines foods of both the New and Old Worlds in syncretic culinary assemblages. But what gives these cuisines a distinctive signature is their African ingredients. The aromas of okra, blackeye peas, palm oil, ackee and bitter greens – all African foods – in soups and stews invites the question as to how these dietary staples took their place in American cuisines and came to define plantation foodways. To answer it, we must consider not only the commodities that enslaved Africans grew for market – sugar, cotton, indigo, rice and other cash crops – but also the foods that they planted for their own sustenance.

Much of the scholarship on slavery and the transatlantic slave trade is focused on the commodities that shaped the New World: enslaved Africans and the export crops that they produced. Far less attention is paid to the food regimes that supported this enveloping economic system. A new focus on subsistence casts light on the foods that provisioned slave ships and the dietary staples that enslaved

labourers grew for their own needs. Subsistence is a portal into the origins of African foods in New World plantation societies, the sites where they were first encountered and the role of Old World tropical food staples in Atlantic history.

African food crops in a global context

In popular discourse, the term 'Old World' is synonymous with Europe, while 'Old World tropics' typically evokes the jungles of South-East Asia. Oddly, these mental constructs recall geographical areas that exclude Africa, despite its interposition between both continents and its relevance as a mostly tropical landmass. The marginalization of Africa is also evident when one of humanity's signal achievements is discussed: plant and animal domestication. As in China, the Near East and the Americas, Africans actively participated in this revolutionary process, which simultaneously took place in different regions of the world some 10,000 years ago. Yet recognition of this accomplishment is not broadly acknowledged. Several factors contribute to the lack of awareness. Africa's domesticates are tropical staples and not widely known to Western consumers. Media images presenting Africa as a 'hungry continent' – one unable to feed itself – certainly do not convey its rich botanical legacy. Archaeobotanical research on the continent has lagged behind that on other world regions, and some African contributions to global food supplies (notably African rice) were not confirmed until the mid-twentieth century. The casual association of the Old World tropics with Asia means that several domesticates which are in fact African are instinctively thought of as being Asian. For example, we now know that a separate species of rice (*Oryza glaberrima*) was independently domesticated in West Africa (Wang et al. 2014, pp. 982–988). Other Old World tropical foods whose African heritage has now been recognized include: okra, tamarind, muskmelon, black sesame, bitter gourd (*Momordica charantia*), the African eggplant (*Solanum macrocarpon*), amaranth greens and the purportedly Asian long (or yard-long) bean (*Vigna unguiculata*), a subspecies of the African cowpea (also known as blackeye pea) (National Research Council, 1996–2008, vols. 1–3).

Millennia ago, Africans began domesticating plants that gave rise to the many crops that have transformed tropical land use and food systems. For instance, the African domesticates sorghum and pearl millet – the world's most drought-tolerant cereals – are important food staples in the semi-arid tropics. Elsewhere, the African oil palm provides the peoples of the humid tropics with a flavourful vegetable oil and, more recently, it has become an indispensable

ingredient of the processed food and biofuel industries. Africa's kola nut delivers a crucial component of the world's most popular soft drink, while coffee ranks globally as the most consumed beverage. Shea butter's moisturizing qualities and *Hoodia gordonii*'s effectiveness as an appetite suppressant have spurred modern global markets. Both are part of a long history of African exports to Europe that began during the Middle Ages with malagueta pepper and gum arabic. Sorghum and millet reached South Asia 4,000 years ago, having been cultivated in Africa millennia before (Rangan, Carney and Denham, 2012, pp. 311–342). Many domesticates of tropical Asia also came to Africa in prehistory through Indian Ocean trading networks. African farmers adapted taro, plantain, banana, the pigeon pea and sesame to humid tropical regions. Their efforts created new races of plantains and cooking bananas (*Musa* spp.). Because of such contributions, botanists now recognize Africa as a secondary centre of *Musa* domestication outside South-East Asia. Africa's botanical endowment also includes many forage grasses vital to raising livestock in the tropics, such as guinea grass (*Panicum maximum*), Para grass (*Brachiaria mutica*), molasses grass (*Melinis minutiflora*), Bermuda grass (*Cynodon dactylon*), and Jaragua grass (*Hyparrhenia rufa*) (De Langhe, 1995; Parsons, 1970, pp. 141–53).

Ancient African and Asian plant exchanges across the Indian Ocean had the long-term effect of improving subsistence security throughout the Old World tropics. African botanical contributions are a testament to the skills, knowledge systems and accomplishments of the continent's farmers and herders over the millennia before slave traders arrived along Africa's coasts. The accumulated evidence belies long-standing views of a land-mass and people peripheral to one of humanity's chief accomplishments and of little consequence for intercontinental species exchanges. A revised mental cartography of Africa is needed; one that relocates the continent from a position at the margins of the Indian and Atlantic worlds to one at the crossroads of two of the most extensive maritime networks in global history. The arrival of Iberian caravels in the fifteenth century would catapult Africa's peoples and crops into a new world where Old World tropical staples assumed a new purpose.

Plantation economies and the African presence

The Old World tropical staples that had defined the culture behind African food systems for thousands of years are evident from early on in New World plantation societies. They are manifest even when those who documented

them were unaware of their true provenance. These plants appear in tropical America as sugar-cane planters began to substitute Africans for their decimated Amerindian labour forces. Within a decade of Hispaniola's founding in 1493 as the first European settlement in the Americas, efforts were under way to plant sugar cane. The suitability of the island's tropical climate for hosting an immensely profitable commodity encouraged plantation development. Spanish colonists initially forced the native Taino population to work on their behalf, but slave labour and the diseases that the colonists introduced took a devastating toll on the Amerindian population. By 1510, a discernible shift was under way in the plantation workforce as colonists turned to Africa for labour. In 1518, Spain authorized the direct importation from Guinea of 4,000 Africans to Hispaniola, Cuba, Jamaica and Puerto Rico. More than 150,000 Africans had been brought to Spanish America by 1600 (Galloway, 1989; Sweet, 2003, p. 15). The ability to impose such a labour system proved decisive in metastasizing a production system based on African slavery – one that would define plantation agriculture in the colonial empires of the Americas for more than 300 years.

We can trace a similar dependence on African labour in early Portuguese Brazil. Martim Afonso de Sousa, credited with founding the first permanent Portuguese settlement there, petitioned the crown for the slave ships to bring the first Africans to the sugar plantation that he had established in 1533. The following year, King John III of Portugal divided the country into nine captaincies to maintain territorial control and facilitate the expansion of sugar cultivation. By the middle of the century, the plantation sector's labour force had become principally African. Meanwhile, England, France and Holland, realizing imperial ambitions in the Caribbean, used their mainland colonies in North and South America as springboards for developing sugar colonies on the islands in the early seventeenth century. Decades later, in the 1660s, Denmark and Norway – then one polity – took possession of Saint Thomas and the neighbouring islands (now known as the United States Virgin Islands) for the sole purpose of planting cane. The proliferation of plantation colonies in the New World tropics and the crash of Amerindian populations after European conquest repeated and expanded the Iberian pattern of dependency upon enslaved African labour. The temporal and spatial unfolding of plantation economies leads to two important considerations. First, Africans emerged the dominant plantation workforce (and the majority immigrant population of the Americas, which lasted until the early nineteenth century). Second, Africans present in the formative period of plantation development not only grew export crops for slaveholders, but were often made responsible for their own subsistence.

European accounts of the early colonial period attest to the appearance of several foods that arrived from Africa. Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo, a Spanish nobleman who participated in the colonization of Hispaniola and Panama, spent the years 1514-1523 in Hispaniola. An attentive observer of the plants and animals there, Fernández de Oviedo described Guinea yams as a recent introduction to Hispaniola that was 'chiefly grown and eaten by Negroes' (Parry, 1955, p. 1–20). A Catholic priest writing a few decades later claimed that the African guinea fowl arrived in Hispaniola with the first boatloads of enslaved Africans (Donkin, 1991, p. 97). In Brazil, the Jesuit missionary José de Anchieta (1534–1597), who lived in the colony from 1553 until his death, acknowledged the crops introduced from Africa, writing that 'from Guiné there are many squashes and beans, that are better than those from Portugal' (De Anchieta, 1933, p. 23). Bahian sugar-planter Gabriel Soares de Sousa, arriving in Brazil during the 1560s, mentioned yams, guinea corn (sorghum), rice and plantains among the crops that Africans were cultivating for food (Hoehne, 1937). Other records from the period indicate the presence of many African dietary staples in the colony: okra (*Abelmoschus esculentus*), pigeon peas (*Cajanus cajan*), blackeye peas (*Vigna unguiculata*), millet (*Pennisetum glaucum*), sorghum (*Sorghum bicolor*), yams (*Dioscorea cayenensis*), oil palm (*Elaeis guineensis*), hibiscus (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*), malagueta pepper (*Aframomum melegueta*) and tamarind (*Tamarindus indica*), as well as castor beans (*Ricinus communis*), which were used medicinally and as a source of lamp oil (Hall, Harrison and Winters Welker, 1987, pp. 228–230, 235 and 241).

Following a scientific expedition undertaken during the Dutch occupation of Northeast Brazil (1630-1654), it was claimed that a number of tropical plant and animal species had been introduced from Guinea: a round white eggplant (*Solanum macrocarpon*), guinea squash (*Solanum aethiopicum*), sesame (*Sesamum radiatum*), the lablab bean (*Lablab purpureus*), guinea fowl (*Numida meleagris*) and an African sheep bred for meat rather than wool (Marcgrave, 1942; Piso, 1957). African foods also make an early appearance in Caribbean plantation societies. English Puritans established a colony on Providence Island, a short-lived (1630–1641) settlement off the coast of Nicaragua. Enslaved Africans, who accounted for half of the island's population, grew plantains as the dietary staple (Kupperman, 1993, pp. 105-108). Writing of his residency on the island colony of Barbados in the 1640s, the Englishman Richard Ligon (1970, pp. 69, 70–82 and 99-100) counted plantains, bananas, lablab beans, watermelons, tamarind and possibly taro among the novel food crops that he had come across. Hans Sloane, founder of the British Museum who lived in Jamaica from 1687–

1689, described a bean brought from Africa (Sloane, 1707-1725, vol. I, p. 176) that was round, white and with a black eye – an early reference to the blackeye pea. Sloane also mentioned the cultivation of pearl millet and sorghum in some of the '*Negro's* Plantations' (Sloane, 1707–1725, vol. I, p. 105). In the Danish Caribbean, the eighteenth-century Moravian missionary C. G. A. Oldendorp noticed the callaloo greens (*Amaranthus* spp.) that enslaved Africans grew and added to their stews (Highfield and Barac, 1987, p. 660). Moravian missionaries in Dutch Guiana also left a record of crops planted by pacified maroons, and recent botanical research affirms that these crops are still being cultivated by their descendants in the twenty-first century. Among the seeds and cuttings of the crops that accompanied these fugitives from slavery were *glaberrima* rice, yams, bambara groundnut (*Vigna subterranea*), pigeon peas, lablab (hyacinth) beans, long beans (*Vigna unguiculata*), malagueta pepper, hibiscus, okra, musk okra (*Abelmoschus moschatus*), watermelons (*Citrullus lanatus*), kola nuts (*Cola acuminata*), African cabbage (*Cleome gynandra*) and castor beans (Price, 1991, pp. 107–127; Van Andel, Van der Velden and Reijers, 2015).

The Table below lists the Old World tropical crops reported growing as subsistence staples in slave food plots and in the maroons' crop fields in Suriname. These crops were planted along with important Amerindian dietary staples such as maize, sweet potato, manioc (cassava) and peanuts. The seeds of some of the less familiar African plants are depicted in a painting by William J. Titford, an English resident of Jamaica in the early nineteenth century (Figure 1). His illustration was used to accompany a compendium of the 'new and valuable plants' encountered on the island, to about a dozen of which he correctly attributes African origin. Titford's drawing depicts two with African vernacular names: the African domesticate *akee* and the New World peanut, *pindars*. The linguistic borrowing of African words to describe plants of distinct Old and New World tropical heritage was common. It reflects their surreptitious appearance and calls attention to Africans as sources of knowledge and the instigators of the crops' cultivation. The nomenclature for the peanut reveals prior African familiarity with some Amerindian staples. Introduced to Western Africa in the seventeenth century, the peanut acquired African names: *mpinda* in the Kongo language and *nguba* in Kimbundu. When peoples speaking these languages were brought to New World plantation societies, the peanut became known by the respective word derivations *pindar* and *goobers* (Sauer, 1993, p. 82–83; Pollitzer, 1999, p. 115).

Table 1. *African plants in the early plantation period*

Common name	*Species name*
Cereals	
Millet	*Pennisetum glaucum*
Sorghum	*Sorghum bicolor*
Rice/*malo*	*Oryza* spp.
Tubers	
Yams	*Dioscorea cayenensis*
Plantain/banana	*Musa* spp.
Taro/*eddo*	*Colocasia esculenta*
Legumes	
Blackeye pea/cowpea/calavance	*Vigna unguiculata*
Yard or "Asian" long bean	*Vigna unguiculata* ssp. *sesquipedalis*
Pigeon/Angola/Congo pea/*wando/guandul*	*Cajanus cajan*
Bambara groundnut/*voandzeia/gobogobo*	*Vigna subterranea*
Lablab/hyacinth/bonavist bean	*Lablab purpureus*
Oil plants and fruits	
Black sesame/*benne*	*Sesamum radiatum*
Castor bean	*Ricinus communis*
Oil palm/*dendê/abbay*	*Elaeis guineensis*
Watermelon	*Citrullus lanatus*
Muskmelon	*Cucumis melo*
Ackee	*Blighia sapida*
Beverages	
Tamarind	*Tamarindus indica*
Hibiscus/*bissap* (leaves: sorrel/*cuxá*)	*Hibiscus sabdariffa*
Kola nut	*Cola acuminata*
Velvet bean/coffee substitute	*Mucuna pruriens*
Vegetables and spices	
Okra/*oko/quiabo/quingombô*	*Abelmoschus esculentus*
African eggplant	*Solanum macrocarpon*
Musk okra	*Abelmoschus moschatus*
Vegetable amaranth/callaloo	*Amaranthus* spp.
Malagueta pepper	*Aframomum melegueta*
Egyptian spinach/jute mallow	*Corchorus olitorius*
Guinea pepper	*Xylopia aethiopica*
Guinea squash	*Solanum aethiopicum*
African cabbage	*Cleome gynandra*
Bitter gourd/*cerassee*	*Momordica charantia*

Source: Carney and Rosomoff, 2009.

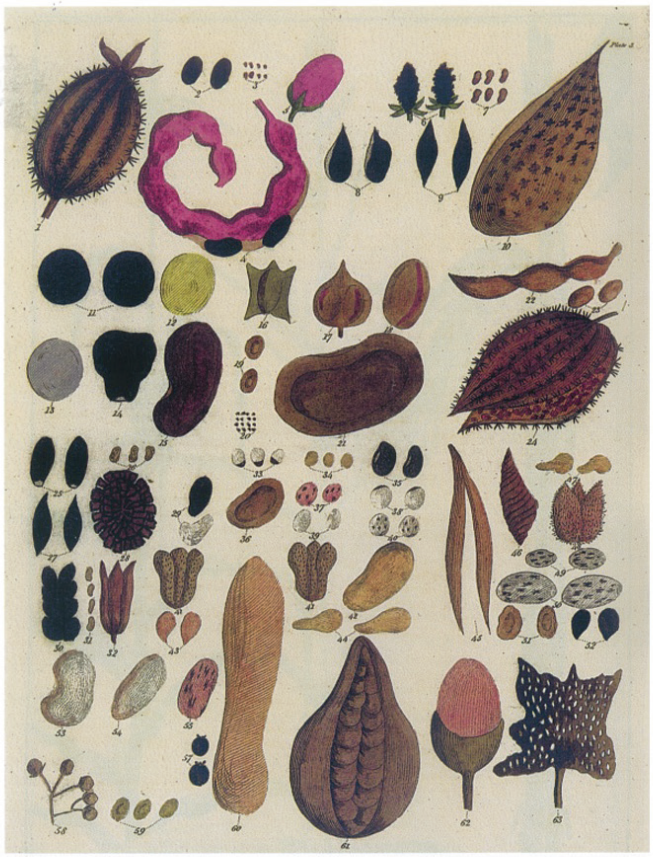

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Plate 21

"Seeds and pericarps, of their natural size and colour", W.J. Titford, 1811. Original key: 1, 2 Indian shot; 3 tobacco; 4 wild tamarind; 5 coffee; 6 four o'clock; 7 goat pepper; 8 star apple; 9 naseberry; 10 mammee sapota; 11 soap berry; 12 yellow nicker; 13 grey nicker; 14 akee; 15 cashew apple; 16 horseradish tree; 17 lignum vitae; 18 rose apple; 19 Barbadoes pride; 20 Mexican poppy; 21 coccoon antidote nut; 22, 23 gum Arabic; 24 arnotto; 25 sweet sop; 26 musk ochro; 27 sour sop; 28 bastard cedar; 29 nephritic tree; 30 chain cotton; 31, 32 oily pulse, or sesame; 33 wild liquorice; 34 pigeon pea; 35 black pea; 36 sand box; 37 speckled pea; 38 lady pea; 39 white pea; 40 speckled pea; 41 pindars; 42 chocolate nut; 43 orange; 44 shaddock; 45 wild vanilla; 46 screw tree; 47 forbidden fruit; 48, 49, 50 oil nut; 51 tomatos; 52 water melon; 53 lima bean; 54 sugar bean; 55 scarlet bean; 57 pimento; 58 Guinea corn; 59 cerasee; 60, 61 mahogany; 62 cunep [guinep]; 63 contraryerba. From W.J. Titford, *Sketches towards a Hortus Botanicus Americanus* (London: Sherwood, Neely and Jones, 1811), plate 3. Cambridge University Library.

FIGURE 1. *Seeds and pericarps in their natural size and colour, 1811.*

Source: W. J. Titford. *Sketches for an Hortus Botanicus Americanus*. London: prints for the author by C. Stower. Plate 3.

The intercontinental exchange of crops that occurred as a consequence of European maritime expansion from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries is known as the 'Columbian Exchange'. The concept underscores the significance of Amerindian domesticates such as maize, peanuts and manioc in African food systems. Its omission of African domesticates and the ancient exchange of Old World tropical staples across the Indian Ocean does little to dispel the lingering view of Africa as a bystander of domestication history – a continent dependent on the agricultural achievements of other civilizations. This unsupportable bias is corrected by shifting attention to the role of Africa-grown food in the transatlantic slave trade.

Slave ships and the introduction of African food

The forced migration of Africans to the New World occurred continually over a period of 350 years and more than 35,000 transatlantic slave voyages have been documented (Eltis et al., 2000). Slave ships landed more than 11 million Africans at the auction blocks of the Americas. A little-explored facet of the transatlantic trade in human cargo is the food system that sustained it. Food had to be in such quantity as to feed a ship's captives – often numbering in the hundreds – during lengthy Atlantic crossings, which could last several months. Slaving thus generated a constant demand for food at a scale unprecedented in global commerce. Some provisions were carried from Europe, notably salted meat and fish, biscuits, wheat flour and beer – intended mostly for the crew – and horse (fava) beans for the African captives. A further consideration was the trade's surprising dependence on food grown in Africa. Jean Barbot, a seventeenth-century trader who made several transatlantic slave voyages, offers an indication of the scale of the demand for food: 'A ship that takes in five hundred slaves, must provide above a hundred thousand yams'. The captain of a slave ship that left Sierra Leone in 1693 recorded buying five tons of rice for the voyage; another seventeenth-century slaver purchased eight tons of rice and a larder of blackeye peas to feed the ship's 250 captives. Provisions sold along the Upper Guinea Coast included sorghum and millet, along with Amerindian maize and peanuts. Farther south along Africa's Atlantic coast, tropical tubers such as yams and plantains, along with sweet potatoes and taro, were among the food supplies sold to slavers. One ship's logbook noted the purchase of 1,000 plantains for the ship's transatlantic crossing (Hair, Jones and Law, 1992, vol. II, pp. 699–700; Carney, 2001, p. 72; Carney and Rosomoff, 2009, p. 67).

It was slave ships' unparalleled demand for food that hastened the importation and adoption of Amerindian crops along the West African coast. African sorghum, which took six months to ripen, could be replaced by maize, which yielded a harvest in half that time. The peanut provided a versatile protein-rich food that could be consumed raw, boiled or roasted, making it an ideal slave-ship provision. As in previous eras of crop introductions, Africans quickly recognized the potential of the Amerindian staples and incorporated them into farming systems old and new. So quickly did the peanut infiltrate the commercial system that was unfolding in the Atlantic world that some naturalists in tropical America were unaware of its New World origin. Hans Sloane (1707–1725, vol. I, p. 194) wrote of the peanut's importance as provision on seventeenth-century slave ships bound for the English colony of Jamaica, even though it was not then known by that name: 'The Fruit, which are call'd by Seamen Earth-Nuts, are brought from *Guinea* in the *Negroes* Ships, to feed the *Negroes* withal in their Voyage from *Guinea* to *Jamaica*'. The Amerindian crops introduced to Africa served the burgeoning trade in human beings and were among the food crops planted in the agricultural fields flanking the European forts established along the Guinea coast (Figure 2). When the coffles arriving from the interior found no slave ships in port, the captives were at times put to work in these fields while awaiting deportation, thus cultivating the very crops that would feed them during the Middle Passage (Kea, 1982, p. 45). Slave-ship captains kept the demand for African dietary staples steady, as they

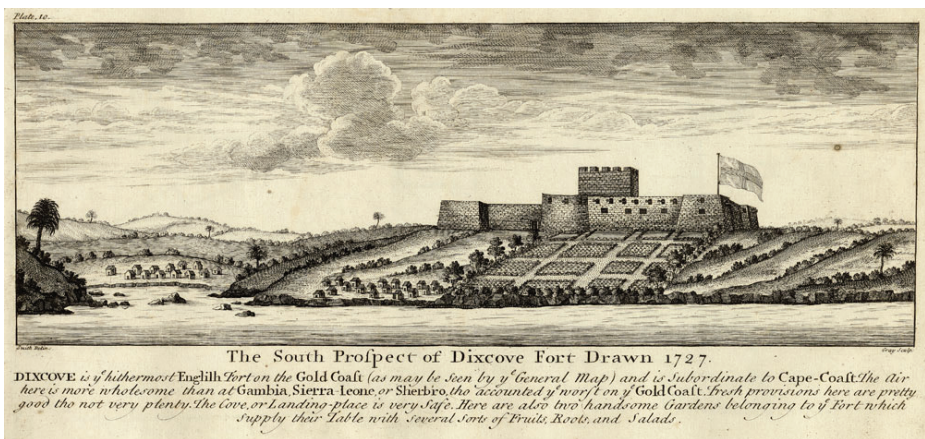

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FIGURE 2. *Dixcove Fort, Gold Coast, 1727.*

Source: William Smith, Thirty different drafts of Guinea (London, 1727), plate 10.

believed that if captives en route were fed foods to which they were accustomed, mortality rates would improve (Carney and Rosomoff, 2011, p. 68–69).

Other sources from New World plantation societies indirectly attest to the importance of African crops for the institution of Atlantic slavery. Peter Collinson (1766, pp. 278–80), writing about the early decades of the Carolina colony, attributed the introduction of rice there to a slave ship that arrived in the 1690s with leftover provisions: "About this time a *Portuguese* vessel arrived, with slaves from the east, with a considerable quantity of rice, being the ship's provision … This unexpected cargo was distributed". Sorghum and millet played a similar role in seventeenth-century Curaçao. When the people in the Dutch colony's slave depot faced starvation in 1687, ships were dispatched to Dutch trading forts on the Gold Coast to procure food. Soon thereafter, records show that sorghum and millet were being cultivated on the island. By 1725, 'guinea corn' had become Curaçao's chief staple food (Postma, 1990, pp. 33 and 43–44; Postma, 1973, pp. 65–73).

Although most slave ships arrived at New World destinations with little food remaining in their stores, on some occasions there were abundant leftovers. As Collinson reported, that was sometimes the case in the Carolina colony. Henry Barham, one of Sloane's correspondents in Jamaica, unintentionally reveals the significance of leftover provender for the cultivation of *pindalls* (peanuts) in the colony. In the late seventeenth century he observed: 'The first I ever saw of these growing was in a negro's plantation, who affirmed, that they grew in great plenty in their country; and they now grow very well in Jamaica' (Barham, 1794, pp. 145–146). Boarding an American slave ship that had stopped in Barbados, Dr George Pinckard saw a meal being prepared: captives were milling rice from the ship's stores in the African way, with a handheld pestle in a wooden mortar. As the grain's husks were red, this was undoubtedly African rice. These details are important since they show that not only did slave voyages occasionally end with leftover provisions, but also some of the cereals were purchased in the husk and needed milling on board the ship prior to cooking. Such unhusked grains could be used for seed if the conditions were favourable (Pinckard, quoted in Dow, 1927, pp. xxiii-xxiv).

African food staples thus arrived in plantation societies as seeds and tubers left over from some of the slave voyages. Slave ships proved to be the conveyor of Old World tropical staples to the New World tropics. These inadvertent seed transfers originated in the cold business calculus of slave trade logistics. Once the captains of slavers had sold their human cargoes, they showed little interest in the provisions that had fed their prisoners. However, these food staples held

a deeper significance for the now expatriated captives; preserved within the seeds and cuttings from ships' stores were familiar dietary staples – foods that recalled lives now lost.

The inadvertent introduction of these crops created opportunities for appropriation by the people for whom the seeds had meaning. A maroon legend about the beginning of rice cultivation is enlightening in this respect. The oral history, recounted in maroon communities across north-eastern South America, allegorizes the process by recalling an enslaved female who brought rice into the colony by tucking grains into her hair as she disembarked from the slave ship. The maroon account recognizes rice as an African crop, the slave ship as the vessel by which it arrived and a female forebear's conscious act as the driving force behind its cultivation by her people (Carney and Rosomoff, 2011, pp. 92–93).

The memory of Africa is also evoked by the lexicon of plant names that the New-World-born descendants of enslaved and fugitive Africans continued to use. The African legacy can be seen in our times through the names that the plants bear in New World colonial languages. Throughout tropical America, these plants still carry vernacular names from diverse African languages. Examples include: *quingombô* and *quiabo* (okra), ñame and *inhame* (yam), *dendê* (oil palm), *guandu* (pigeon pea), *bissy* (kola), *eddo* (taro), *cuxá* (sorrel) and *callelou* (*Amaranthus*), *gobogobo* or *voandzeia* (Bambara groundnut), *benne* (sesame) and even banana (see Table 1) (Schneider, 1991; Cassidy and Le Page, 2002). These were the novel plants that slaveholders and naturalists first encountered on the 'Negro plantations' – the fields where enslaved Africans grew their food.

Subsistence and slave food fields

In the early plantation period, Amerindians and Africans came into frequent contact with each other. They were bound together in plantation fields as enslaved labourers or lived in clandestine communities beyond white hegemony. They were skilled agriculturalists, and the products of their food heritage improved their overall prospects for survival. As native populations declined, enslaved Africans and their descendants inherited a second botanical legacy that encompassed foods from New and Old World tropical regions. As replacement populations for Amerindians, they hybridized both tropical food systems in the fields where they cultivated food staples.

In the fields allotted to them for food production, enslaved Africans forged a new subsistence system that included crops from the world's principal

tropical regions. However, their access to individual plots was often precarious. In the initial period of plantation development, enslaved people were for the most part put in charge of growing their own food, but a full day working the fields left little time or energy for doing so. During sugar harvests, when cane milling demanded round-the-clock labour, the food fields were forcibly vacated. Metropolitan decrees, such as the *Code Noir* (Black Code) issued by the French monarchy in 1685, sought to enforce minimum standards among sugar plantations by setting guidelines for food rations. The regulations often went unheeded. In Dutch Guiana, food insecurity was pervasive. George Warren, who spent three years in the colony, wrote that the enslaved growers worked 'till Saturday afternoon, when they are allowed to dress their own Gardens or Plantations, having nothing but what they can produce from thence to live upon' (Conrad, 1984, pp. 55–62; Warren, 1667, p. 19). Correspondence from the Danish West Indies in 1718 presents a similar scenario: 'The negroes were expected to raise all their own food, except for such low-grade fish or defective Irish beef as might be allotted to them when the food supply ran short' (Westergaard, 1917, pp. 158 and 164–165). A Saint Thomas sugar-planter added: 'slaves receive nothing from their master in the way of food or clothing, except only the small plot of land at the outermost extremity of his plantation land that he assigns to each slave' (Carstens, quoted in Highfield, 1997, p. 72).

Enslaved Africans confronted planters' indifference to their survival by fighting for the right to an individual plot and the time to cultivate it. These rights varied over time and across plantation colonies. Enslaved people were particularly vulnerable on sugar islands with flat topography, where food crops competed for space with lucrative cane. As sugar cane engulfed all arable land on several islands in the British West Indies, enslaved people lost the right to individual fields. Planters dealt with the shortage of food by importing supplies from mainland North America, which were rationed for each worker. On these islands, subsistence plots became restricted to the dooryard gardens around the enslaved people's dwellings and were the sole source of choice and variety in their food. When the wars of the American and French Revolutions profoundly disrupted the supply lines of this import system, starvation resulted (Berlin and Morgan, 1993, pp. 1–45; Higman, 1995, p. 204). The upheavals created an opening for enslaved people to restore the right to independent production that earlier generations had known. Independent plots not only granted them more autonomy in their food choices but, importantly, also provided leverage to demand some relief from plantation labour to cultivate their preferred food (Pulsipher, 1994, pp. 202–222).

Historical commentaries and imagery distinguish three types of plantation food fields. The plots slaveholders allocated for the cultivation of subsistence foods were known as provision or yam grounds. Those directly managed by the enslaved were generally referred to as slave food gardens. These were of two types. The enslaved planted fruit trees, food favorites, and medicinal plants in the small yards surrounding their dwellings. This image shows papaya and plantain trees near the hut, with the castor plant and pineapple next to the two standing figures to the right (Figure 3).* A drawing of a sugar plantation in the French West Indies illustrates the second type of slave food gardens. These were typically developed on soils unsuited to the commodity crop or on erosive hillslopes. In these distant sites the enslaved established food plots they entirely managed with crops of their choice that demanded little oversight to cultivate. The image shows the flat land of the plantation wholly devoted to cane cultivation, with a section reserved for cattle pasturage. Slave food gardens are identified in the distance on remote slopes, which required considerable time

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FIGURE 3. *Slave Houses, Brazil, 1830s.*

Source: Johann Moritz Rugendas, Voyage Pittoresque dans le Bresil. Translated from German (Paris, 1835; also published in same year in German). Reprinted in Viagem Pitoresca Através do Brasil (Rio de Janeiro, 1972; images shown on website), and in color from original watercolors, in Viagem Pitoresca Atravé do Brasil (Editora Itatiaia Limitada, Editora da Universidade de Sao Paulo, 1989) [NOTE: both 1835 French and German original editions were published in black and white].

to reach and farm (Figure 4, 13). The image incarnates the comments of sugar planter Johan Carstens on St. Thomas, who claimed food plots were located at the plantation's outermost extremities.

The enslaved rose to the challenge of growing food on distant, less desirable land by planting African dietary staples such as yams, plantain and taro. These were especially advantageous as they grew quickly and prolifically, required little labour to process for consumption and could be continuously harvested as needed. These crops were complemented with legumes, which restore soil fertility through nitrogen fixation while providing essential dietary protein. The African and Amerindian legumes that they planted for subsistence included Bambara groundnut, peanuts, sesame, blackeye and pigeon peas, lablab and Amerindian *Phaseolus* beans. Such an extraordinary range of food crops made these subsistence plots resemble, in the words of one eighteenth-century resident of Santo Domingo, *une petite Guinée* ('a little Guinea') (Tomich, 1993, pp. 221-242). In these small and fragmented sites of food cultivation, enslaved people realized an agricultural vision alternative to the dehumanizing practices of export commodity production. Here, they organized food production for their own purposes, selecting plants of different tropical heritage that improved their diet and healed their bodies. Imagined as informal experimental stations, these sites of food cultivation became, in effect, the botanical gardens of the Atlantic world's dispossessed.

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FIGURE 4. *View from a sugar plantation, French Antilles, 1762.*

Source: Denis Diderot, *Encyclopédie, ou, Dictionnaire Raisonné des Sciences, des Arts et des Metiers . . . Recueil de Planches, sur les Sciences . . .* (Paris, 1762), vol. 1, plate I. (Copy in Special Collections Department, University of Virginia Library).

Conclusion

Willem Piso was a seventeenth-century naturalist who, while studying plants in colonial Brazil, wrote: 'In the same way that Europeans brought to America plants and seeds that they judged beneficial, so too did the Africans' (Piso, 1957, p. 441). Hidden behind this plain assertion lies a subtle but powerful truth: during the formative plantation period in tropical America, there existed a shadow world of agriculture. This world took root within the interstices of the plantation landscape, on the small, humble plots of land where the enslaved grew their food. African seeds and rootstocks taken from slave ship leftovers gave these plots and dooryard gardens their distinctive character. Here, in what became sanctuaries of food production, Africans combined the botanical heritage of the Old and New World tropics to create new crop assemblages and reconstitute familiar foodways. In these 'Negro plantations', slaveholders and naturalists encountered the novel staples grown by the enslaved. A few, including Piso, acknowledged African agency for their introduction. Generations later, as the institution of slavery came to form an integral part of the burgeoning New World colonies, recognition of the African botanical contributions to plantation societies would all but disappear from historical commentaries.

The shadow world of African agriculture in tropical America eventually reached into plantation kitchens. Enslaved cooks quietly added new foods and culinary inventions to the dishes served at planters' tables, synthesizing new dishes and shaping the tastes of the white population. Today, these celebrated foodways are experienced by white and black people alike as regional cuisines, creolized signatures of the historical confluence of foods and peoples from three continents. Recognition of this shared food heritage – and its origins in the subsistence plots of enslaved Africans – offers new insights into African contributions to Atlantic history.

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CHAPTER 30

TECHNOLOGY, INHERITANCES AND REDEFINITIONS IN THE EXPERIENCE OF THE AFRICAN DIASPORA

Ceramics, Metallurgy and Quilombos

Luís Cláudio Pereira Symanski and Flávio dos Santos Gomes

Introduction

The experience of the African diaspora in the Americas has involved heritage, negotiation, appropriation, invention and redefinition. Research focused on material culture has broached the question of how Afro-American communities formed, mainly by considering the relations between the groups and the local societies. More recent attempts have sought to examine a transatlantic perspective, considering not only the particularities of the contexts in which the diasporic groups settled, but also the variety of ways in which African references may have been employed and redefined in this process shaping Afro-American identities. In this chapter, we will consider the issues and debates surrounding the dynamic of the material production of these populations in the Americas, focusing on three categories of evidence: the handmade ceramics found in slave houses (known as *senzalas*) and in other spaces occupied by Africans, iron metallurgy and the material structure of the settlements (known as *quilombos*). This evidence shall be approached based on archaeological and historiographical research. Although the debate will take into account the contexts of the United States of America and the Caribbean region, the main focus will be on Brazil, which was the main recipient of Africans under the transatlantic slave trade.

Ceramics and Africans in the United States of America and the Caribbean region

Locally produced handmade ceramics are a common feature of historic sites across the Americas and are normally referred to as 'colonoware' in the United States, 'Afro-Caribbean ceramics' in the Caribbean region and the 'neo-Brazilian tradition' in Brazil. Despite great regional diversity, such ceramics share technological characteristics including a predominance of cord-marked and moulded manufacturing techniques, an absence of surface application of enamel or glaze and firing at low temperatures. As vessels with such characteristics are common in sites linked to the African diaspora, debate has been generated on the question of African cultural heritage in their manufacture and use, and on the theoretical models appropriated in order to define the cultural dynamic of which the pieces are a product.

Such ceramics were first studied in the United States, in colonial sites in Virginia, in the early 1960s by Ivor Noël Hume, who classified them as 'colono-Indian ware'. According to Hume, their presence in plantations was due to a strand of Indigenous production designed for consumption by enslaved Afro-Americans. The question of the African influence was raised in the 1970s, owing to the similarity the pieces shared with the modern ceramics of Ghana and Nigeria in terms of manufacturing techniques, morphology and surface treatment (Ferguson, 1980). Considering such similarities, Ferguson proposed the term 'colonoware' as a means of emphasizing the impact of the colonial experience on the material, rather than on specific groups. Deetz (1977), in turn, identified a strong correlation between the chronological distribution of these ceramics and the African demographic pattern in Virginia and South Carolina at the beginning of the seventeenth century, with a peak in popularity between 1750 and 1800 and a significant decline at the turn of the nineteenth century. Such correlation supported the theory of African production.

Ferguson (1992) compared ceramic collections in the south-eastern United States of America, aiming to determine the extent to which colonoware was manufactured by Africans. By contrasting samples from Virginia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia and Florida, he was able to identify regional variations in the morphology, quantity, quality and decoration of the pieces according to the density of the African population in each state. The state with the largest collection was South Carolina, owing to its strong African presence. A feature that stood out to Ferguson (1992, pp. 113–114) was the etching

of crosses into vessels encountered in the rivers surrounding plantations in South Carolina, particularly on the underside of bowls, where these symbols could be found in the foot rings. The author associated these marks with the cosmogram used by the Bakongo, a population from the south of present-day Democratic Republic of the Congo and the north of Angola, historically linked to the kingdom of Kongo and its neighbouring territories. Most of the enslaved people in South Carolina came from this region. The cosmogram was a central element of Bakongo cosmology, formed as it was of a cross within a circle representing the four "moments" of the sun in its trajectory between the world of the living and the world of the dead, with a horizontal line representing the water separating the two worlds. These pieces were thus interpreted as part of a ritual practice linked to the cult of the spirits of the waters, serving as evidence of the upholding of the Bakongo belief system in the diaspora, which would have influenced later generations of enslaved people born in the region, as well as Africans from other ethnic groups. More recent studies have remarked upon the presence of similar symbols etched on vessels with other morphologies and in other contexts in South Carolina. Joseph (2011, pp. 149–151) suggests that when made on ceramic vessels without ritual purposes, such as vases and pots produced by Afro-Americans in stoneware factories in the district of Edgefield, such marks may have served as an emblem of Afro-American identity recognized by Africans who came to use these pieces in a variety of contexts.

Some archaeologists have, however, expressed their scepticism towards the identification of ceramics with such symbols. Steen (2011) alleges that the same mark was used by Indigenous groups in the south-eastern United States that may have been responsible for depositing the pieces in the rivers. Espendale (2007) also alleges that the use of crosses may be due to the Christian influence on populations of enslaved people.

Handmade ceramics have also been found in a variety of contexts in the Caribbean region, where they are normally referred to as Afro-Caribbean ceramics (Heath, 1999). There is, however, a lack of consensus over this term, given the wide diversity in Caribbean contexts, which produces marked differences in the technological features present (Hauser and DeCorse, 2003, p. 71). The theory of West and Central African heritage present in this technological tradition is supported by both documentary and archaeological evidence. In such scenarios, marked by the influence of a massive African population, the traditions of African ceramic production were amalgamated and generalized, with further influences added from European and Native American traditions (Heath, 1999, pp. 198–199).

One characteristic Afro-Caribbean ceramics share with colonoware is the scarcity of decorated pieces, accounting for no more than 5 per cent of the samples (Heath, 1999, p. 199; Meyers, 1999, p. 209). This scarcity contrasts with the frequent use of decoration in traditional African ceramic industries. According to Hill (1987, p. 137), this may be due to the different social and economic roles played by the ceramics. While in West Africa such items traditionally served as markers of ethnicity and status, in North America and the Caribbean region the contexts of production and use were highly controlled, leading to a homogenization of the ceramics in favour of simpler pieces, disassociated from the non-economic spheres.

In terms of decoration, some authors have sought to identify correlations with West African styles and patterns. In a collection of Afro-Jamaican ceramics from the seventeenth century, Meyers (1999) identifies decorative elements redolent of the ceramic traditions of Ghana, a region which supplied many of the enslaved people sent to Jamaica. The similarities are found mainly in the imprints, which do not correspond to previous Amerindian traditions. In his analysis of decorated pipes produced locally in plantations in the Chesapeake Bay area at the end of the seventeenth century, Emerson (1999) claims that the faceted forms and decorative techniques such as stippling, imprinting and filling with white clay reveal strong correlations with pipes from sixteenth-century West African contexts.

The identification of such correlations between ceramic styles and traditions on the two sides of the Atlantic has been met with scepticism by some archaeologists, who have argued that this tends to neglect the cultural diversity and shifts that occurred in the communities of West Africa during the Atlantic slave trade, where research has pointed to significant historical and regional variations in the ceramic artefacts related to local responses to political and economic pressures (Gijanto and Ogundiran, 2011, pp. 244–245). The situational character of identity must also be considered, given that such an approach tends to freeze identities which are, by nature, fluid and dynamic, meaning that they should be considered only in context (Hauser and DeCorse, 2003, p. 69). Such a scenario means that ceramics from different contexts of the colonial world are effectively categorized as 'African', ignoring the complexity of the social and historical contexts (Hauser and Armstrong, 1999, p. 66). A further problem is that of underestimating the Indigenous influence on the material (Steen, 2011).

This reluctance of a significant number of archaeologists to accept African influences in the material culture of Afro-American contexts is due to a variety of reasons. There is barely any correspondence between the material culture

of North American and Caribbean contexts and African contexts, pointing to rapid processes of material homogenization and cultural creolization. In this sense, much of the material repertoire in evidence is linked to the model of creolization put forward by Mintz and Price (1976). This model emphasizes multicultural interaction and exchange between a variety of groups, resulting in the establishment of new cultural forms. The authors claimed that the great heterogeneity of Africans in the Americas may have fed a process of rapid creolization, through which enslaved people adjusted to their new social environments and created new institutions and cultural forms as a reaction to the oppressive conditions of enslavement. In this sense, the idea of the existence of more culturally specific retentions for sources in certain regions of Africa is rejected, owing to its link to the outdated paradigm of acculturation and its essentialist notion of ethnic identities as sets of crystallized cultural traits, transmitted through generations and affected only by contact with other cultural groups (Cusick, 1998). In studies on the African diaspora, this concept is linked to ideas developed by Melville Herskovits (1941), who coined the term 'Africanism' to refer to the maintenance of practices and customs that originated on the African continent. Herskovits believed that West and Central Africa formed a large cultural area, resulting in a high level of cultural homogeneity among populations enslaved in the Americas. This would explain why African populations that maintained closer contacts with Euro-American culture tended to be less 'cultured', retaining a greater number of African cultural traits.

The question of an implied cultural homogeneity of the two African regions has been widely discredited, as has the vision of an identity underlying the paradigm of acculturation. More recent theories highlight the fluid, relational and contextual nature of identities, recognizing that they are formed in the local domain and are a product of the interactions between different groups, therefore serving as constructions based on multiple influences (Gosden, 2001). In emphasizing the interaction between groups over their fundamental cultural traits, theories of creolization are connected with this theoretical view of identities as constituted by relationships. North American colonoware and Afro-Caribbean ceramics may be easily slotted into this model, given that the sparse nature of the decoration and the limited morphological repertoire suggest the adaptation of Africans of distinct origins to a way of life in the senzalas that homogenized them and restructured their conditions according to the parameters imposed by colonial power.

In emphasizing the essentialism of the traditional notion of culture and its link with the ideology of the modern nation-States and the traditions

they established, this situational model of identity holds a strong appeal for academics who identify with post-modernist and post-colonialist approaches (Gosden, 2001). Such formulations do, however, tend to underestimate the dimension of historicity in the trajectories of groups and individuals. Values and world visions are instilled into individuals from the very first moment in the socialization process. These values determine their particular ways of relating to each other and attributing meaning to the world, therefore marking the formation of identities (Bourdieu, 1977). For the thousands of victims of the slave trade, the experience of crossing the Atlantic certainly did not erase the memory of their previous lives, practices, customs, traditions, languages and beliefs.

In a wide-ranging study on the process forming African ethnicities in the Americas, Midlo Hall (2005) challenges the idea of the extreme cultural fragmentation of enslaved Africans. Midlo Hall points out that demographic studies on the Atlantic slave trade have demonstrated the impact of specific African regions and ethnicities on particular places in the Americas. She also criticized theories of transformation for having rejected the notion of the existence of self-conscious groups among Africans on both sides of the Atlantic. According to the author, Africans were the only peoples subjected to a denial of this amplitude (Hall, 2005, p. 49). This perspective has also been defended by other authors (Thornton, 1998, pp. 195–205), who have sought to place Africans and their descendants at the centre of their own histories, thereby refocusing on the question of African heritage, examined, however, within more specific cultural matrices than those suggested by Herskovits.

Ceramics and Africans in Brazil

Brazil has much to contribute to the archaeological analysis of the African diaspora in the Americas, given that it was the main destination for enslaved Africans from the sixteenth to nineteenth centuries, receiving around 45 per cent of a population estimated at over 10 million individuals (Eltis, 2000). Enslaved Africans arrived in a constant stream up until 1850, with different regions receiving captives from specific regions of Africa. In this sense, the vast majority of enslaved people destined for the coffee plantations in the south-east of the country were from the Congo and Angola, while those working on the sugar plantations in Bahia and other north-eastern provinces were mainly from West Africa. The western areas received Africans from both regions.

The boundaries, names, and designations used do not imply official endorsement or recognition by UNESCO and are for illustrative purposes only.

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FIGURE 1. *Map of Brazil indicating the states mentioned in the text.*

Archaeological research conducted in spaces that are home to senzalas and quilombos in various Brazilian states has generated new knowledge on the material life of the African populations in the diaspora.[1] Locally produced ceramics existed in a variety of proportions and styles in many of these contexts, while remaining notably scarce or even absent in others. Such diversity is due to variables such as the differing degrees of agency within senzala communities and their possibilities for choice and domestic production. Among the factors are the masters' control over the captives' material life and diet, their access to different goods of local or regional production and the distance from centres receiving imported commodities.

1 An important context related to the African diaspora in Brazil is the Valongo Wharf in Rio de Janeiro, used for the disembarking of hundreds of thousands of enslaved Africans from 1811 to 1843. The wharf was built beside Brazil's largest slave market, which was in operation from 1779 to 1831. Archaeological excavations at the site have revealed an enormous wealth of cultural material used by the Africans who were imported and traded in the area, such as ceramic vessels, ornaments and items of a religious nature, such as quartz crystals and amulets. See Lima et al. (2014, pp. 103–136). For a historical and geographical perspective on the Atlantic slave trade through Valongo Wharf, see Soares (2016, pp. 150–161).

In the Paraíba Valley, a region located between Rio de Janeiro, Minas Gerais and São Paulo and occupied by large coffee farms in the nineteenth century, excavations in the senzalas on the farms of São Fernando (Lima et al. 1993), Santa Clara and Santa Teresa (Symanski and Dos Santos Gomes, 2016) revealed a remarkable material scarcity in comparison to the contents of senzalas in the states of Mato Grosso, Goiás and Pará, which were of much lesser economic significance. In the latter senzalas, there was a predominance of items related to the preparation and consumption of foodstuffs, including ceramics and animal remains, as was common in historical domestic units. This class of evidence was not found in the senzalas in the Paraíba Valley, as the captives in the farms of this region had few possibilities for preparing and consuming food in these spaces, owing to the fact that these farms maintained central kitchens for the captives. In Campos dos Goytacazes to the north of Rio de Janeiro, on the other hand, different sectors of the senzala on Colégio dos Jesuítas – a sugar plantation which had been founded in the seventeenth century and which had over 2,000 slaves in 1800 – were revealed to be home to handmade ceramics in various proportions, in contexts ranging from the beginning of the eighteenth century to the end of the nineteenth century (Symanski and Dos Santos Gomes, 2012). These ceramics make up 15 to 35 per cent of the ceramic inventory of each context.

Captives in the Colégio dos Jesuítas senzala were able to generate their own income, whether through performing specialized jobs such as bricklaying, tailoring and carpentry or through keeping their own farms, whose surpluses could be sold. They therefore had access to the consumer goods for sale in the region. Copper ornaments, pipes and necklace beads demonstrate the diversity of individual self-expression within the community. In the same vein, the decorative diversity of European crockery in different areas of the senzala demonstrates that the choice of these items was made according to different criteria, revealing a wealth of material self-expression within the community, likely linked to the categories of mixed-race skin colour: *crioulo*, *pardo* and *cabra*. In this context, keeping handmade ceramics therefore appears to be intentional among these groups, as these items could have been easily substituted by others purchased. With few variations from the beginning of the eighteenth century to the end of the nineteenth century, the similarities between the pieces point to a ceramic-making tradition maintained for at least 200 years. Such homogeneity contrasts with the diversity of European ceramics and personal ornaments, perhaps serving to highlight wider identification marks in the senzala space.

Mato Grosso (Symanski, 2006) and Goiás (De Souza, 2015), on the other hand, are located in regions in which imported commodities arrived after months-long journeys. In these senzalas, the handmade ceramics were highly expressive and make up 30 to 70 per cent of the material repertoire. As little crockery was imported and ceramic is completely absent, the roles of service, consumption, transport and storage usually associated with this category would have been performed by similar, locally made pieces.

Decoration was influenced by regional variations in geography and contexts. In eighteenth- and nineteenth-century contexts in Southern Brazil, São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, Goiás and Mato Grosso, the artistic decoration was more expressive, featuring a wide variety of incised motifs in single or parallel lines and a greater predominance of arches and zigzags, frequently combined with other decorative motifs and techniques such as engraving, stippling and imprinting with fingernails. Painting was less frequent. These patterns varied according to the region and were scant or absent in some contexts. Any explanation for such variations must take into account not only the cultural composition of each region, but also the question of domestic production compared to larger-scale production of pieces for sale. Similarities between ceramic vessels dating back to the eighteenth century and the first half of the nineteenth century do, however, suggest historical-cultural connections between the regions. Despite this, contemporary ceramic sets from Northern Brazil and the semi-arid Northeast region do not share these characteristics.

De Souza and Lima (2016, p. 33) highlight the historical connection between regions in which the ceramics have been found and the São Paulo component, given that groups of São Paulo *bandeirantes* explored the South and the Centre-West of Brazil in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in order to capture Indigenous peoples and search for precious minerals. There is therefore a strong correlation with the African component, in particular with groups in Central Africa, which tended to demographically predominate these regions. African presence had far less significance in the north, on the other hand, where Indigenous populations were predominant, and in the semi-arid north-east, where the demand for enslaved people was lower because of the absence of mining and the presence of an economy that relied more heavily on the farming industry.

Central Africans who arrived in Brazil were almost all speakers of Bantu languages. These languages originated in the region of the same name, which included four predominant regional cultures: Kongo (speakers of Kikongo), Mbundu (speakers of Kimbundu), Ovimbundu (speakers of Umbundu) and

Lunda-Chokwe (speakers of Chokwe) (Karash, 2000, p. 58). These cultures were interrelated and had sustained interaction with each other. They thus shared strong similarities, both linguistic and cultural, with grammar demonstrating shared parentage and centred on the concept of lineage and a religious world vision based on the paradox of fortunate misfortune (De Craemer et al., 1976; Thornton, 1998). This world vision considered the natural order of the universe to be essentially benevolent, with misfortune generated by the evil actions carried out by spirits or people through witchcraft. Although external rituals, beliefs and symbols may be added according to the circumstances, they must always fit this cultural complex (De Craemer et al., 1976; Karash, 2000). Slenes (1991–92, pp. 48–67) suggests that such affinities may have paved the way for a process of transculturation among Central Africans in the south-east, producing a new Bantu identity in the nineteenth century imposed on the original ethnic identities. In Brazil, these groups were divided - as were other Africans - into 'nations' alluding to regions or ports such as Benguela and Loango, or to wider geographical areas such as Angola and Congo, and specific ethnicities such as Ngangela.

Handmade ceramics from the sugar mills of Chapada dos Guimarães in Mato Grosso and dating from 1790 to 1890 varied according to the African cultural dynamic. Records list some 33 'nations' present in the region from 1790 to 1870, with around 50 per cent referring to Central Africa. The proportion of Africans decreased from 60 to 40 per cent from 1790 to 1870, falling to 20 per cent between 1870 and 1888, with Benguela, Mina, Kongo and Mozambique each listed as majority 'nations' in different periods. Records from the turn of the nineteenth century list some fourteen 'nations', with the decorated fragments found accounting for less than a quarter of the total. The peak in diversity occurred from 1830 to 1850, when 28 African 'nations' were recorded as present in the area. This statistic was directly related to the peak in ceramic quantity and decorative diversity, as was seen in around a third of the samples dating to that period. In the final third of the nineteenth century, the frequency of decorated ceramics fell considerably, accounting for only 10 per cent by the end of the century. In this period, mixed-race populations known as *crioulos* and *pardos* became the majority, accounting for around 80 per cent of the enslaved population. These correlations suggest that the decorated ceramics found in Chapada dos Guimarães were of greater cultural relevance to Africans than to Afro-Brazilians (De Souza and Symanski, 2009).

Dominant motifs at the turn of the nineteenth century were combinations of zigzags and diamonds, similar to those still applied in the mid-twentieth century to ceramics, ornaments and in body scarification by the Ovimbundu

from the Benguela plateau. During this period, the Benguela 'nation' was in the majority, accounting for a third of Africans. As of 1830, the Kongo 'nation' rose to dominance, along with other groups that spoke the Kikongo language, such as the Cabinda and Loango (Symanski, 2006). Although these populations maintained disparate ethnicities in Africa, they recognized a common ancestry (Hall, 2005, p. 153). From 1850 to 1870, the Kongo population came to represent 28 per cent of Africans; this figure rose to 39 per cent when the other 'nations' who also spoke Kikongo were taken into account. In terms of the ceramic sets dating to the period, wavy, arched motifs organized into sets of three and four cuts became common, as did sets of triple and quadruple short diagonal lines forming sequences. Such motifs were identical to the decorative patterns etched into ceramic vessels by populations from coastal, lower and central Zaire at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. These ceramic sets also featured vessels with a circular design containing an incision in the shape of a cross, which, in some cases, was also etched into the material. As previously discussed, this symbol has been interpreted as the Bakongo cosmogram in North American contexts. In the case of Chapada dos Guimarães, the correlation suggests that groups from this cultural subset were mainly responsible for the introduction of this symbol to the region.

Another standout feature among the decorative patterns is the presence of marks recalling the scarification practised by various African groups living in the Chapada dos Guimarães mills. The reproduction of these symbols on ceramic suggests the upholding of a cosmological notion common among the societies of sub-Saharan Africa – that of ceramic as an anthropomorphic concept. In many of these societies, vessels were decorated in the same way as were human bodies, including painting, brushing and marking with the signs of scarification (David et al., 1988). This concept is based on myths of origin according to which human beings were created from ceramic vessels. It is this cosmology that justifies ceramic-making as an exclusively female occupation, given a woman's role in the conception and raising of children (Gosselain, 1999, p. 214).

Variations in the Chapada dos Guimarães ceramics suggest that the process of creolization in the region was not linear, but, rather, segmented. Marked by the cultural influences of the groups that continued to arrive in the region up to 1850, the ceramics became more consistent only when an Afro-Brazilian generation came to dominate in demographic terms.

The presence of scarification symbols has also been observed in other regions of Brazil, in both ceramic vessels and pipes; de Souza and Agostini (2012) analysed collections featuring such marks from south-east, north-east

and centre-west regions. The focus fell on symbols associated with ethnicities that spoke Yoruba, grouped under the Mina 'nation', and the Makua, grouped under the Mozambique 'nation'. In the former, the similarities are found in the parallel, vertical and horizontal lines cut in threes or fours, present in contexts with a significant presence of Africans from the Mina 'nation' in Bahia, Goiás and Mato Grosso. In the latter, short, sinuous lines and concentric semicircles found in the contexts of São Paulo and Mato Grosso reflect the varied presence of the Mozambique 'nation'. For the authors, the reproduction of these marks on ceramic holders represents the creation of these diasporic identities based on pre-existing symbolic references involving appropriation, transformation and recontextualization.

A key aspect to be considered is the role played by the act of eating in the domain of cultural reproduction. Some authors have observed how clothing and ornaments played a key role in the building of individual identity by serving as a 'social skin' which allowed the individual to identify as a member of different groups (Lima et al., 2014). Although they can be transported, ceramic vessels, on the other hand, are not attached to the body and tended rather to be used in places for cooking and eating. Eating is a communal process that adds to and reinforces the bonds of union and solidarity within a group, while also emphasizing differences from other groups (Smith, 2006, p. 480). Haaland (2007) observes how the African culinary tradition was dominated by soups made in saucepans, the symbolism of which, although varied, developed as a basis for metaphorical associations on the existential questions and aspects of life, including solidarity and the dependence on divine forces. The author refers to this as 'saucepan syndrome'. The role of eating in the creation and reinforcement of bonds within groups supports the aforementioned metaphorical associations between saucepans and human bodies (Haaland, 2007, pp. 168–170). African communities formed in the diaspora maintained this cultural and ideological significance in the preparation and consumption of food, which was crucial to the sense of identity among these groups (Slenes, 2011, p. 196).

In light of the symbolic dimension of eating and the inextricable link between foods and the vessels in which they are prepared, we must consider the senzala contexts in which groups of slaves gathered around fires with ceramic saucepans decorated with marks and motifs reflecting symbols and memories from their societies of origin. Remembrance therefore formed as integral a part of a group's eating practices as biological survival, the two becoming indistinguishable. In this sense, memories, values and symbolisms were referenced on a daily basis

and updated in these communities, serving to feed concepts of identity that were quite different from those of the dominant Luso-Brazilian society.

De Souza (2015) shifted the focus from decoration to the morphology of the vessels and their potential to help us understand the enslaved people's material practices, analysing a morphological pattern common to ethnographic records from central and southern Angola and its relationship with vessels from eighteenth-century Goiás and Minas Gerais, which received a large contingent of Africans from the aforementioned Angolan regions. The vessels had a concave base, an inverted oval shape and a cylindrical neck and were used in Angola to cook corn, cassava and beans. In Brazil, bases were flat and the pieces featured two handles; these modifications were representative of the interaction between the groups in colonial society and the incorporation of European references. The adoption of flat bases served to make the vessels suitable for resting on the flat surfaces of colonial furniture, on tables in particular, unlike the concave bases found in Angola, designed for use in fireplaces where meals were cooked. The tables were linked to different rules of sociability, with a similar logic underpinning the addition of handles, which allowed the users greater control over the vessels when transporting and serving their contents. These vessels were therefore adapted to the colonial logic; similarly, the groups of Africans producing and using them had also adapted to the colonial logic. The shifts in the morphological pattern between Angola and Brazil represented the emergence of new practices in the diasporic contexts, including both continuities and transformations.

Another lesser-explored aspect is that of the contrast between the production of the pieces and their sale. Dias Jr (1988) characterized ceramics of the neo-Brazilian tradition as local products for family consumption. Morales (2001, p. 180) suggested that with economic intensification and urban development at the end of the seventeenth century, local production tended to exist alongside nuclei of production and sale, given the growing demand for these pieces in towns and cities. Zanettini and Moraes Wichers (2009) highlighted this issue by presenting the results of a compositional analysis of ceramic fragments from Capão in São Paulo: the provenance of the fragments from numerous sources indicated acquisition through retail.

Recent excavations in the Indigenous village of Pinheiros on the periphery of the colonial town of São Paulo revealed a strand of pottery production wherein handmade ceramics were designed for the town and its surrounding area. According to historical records, these ceramics were produced by Indigenous and mixed-race women (Zanettini Arqueologia, 2012, p. 333). A significant

proportion of the pieces found featured artistic decoration similar to that present in contexts of African occupation, which the authors attributed to an intensive transculturation process having occurred during the colonial period.

Agostini (2011) discussed the pottery nucleus of São Sebastião on the northern coast of São Paulo, which was characterized by poor freedwomen's domestic production of pieces designed to be sold and even exported to Rio de Janeiro. In the earliest decades of the nineteenth century, these ceramicists were mainly white and mixed-race, with only 8 per cent being black. They formed a mixed-race population on the south-south-east coast known as *caiçara*. Some themselves enslaved *crioulos* (mixed-race persons) and Africans of the Angola and Benguela 'nations'. As was the case in Pinheiros, many of the vessels they produced were decorated with a wide variety of incisions, and sometimes other techniques were also used in their decoration. Some referenced African styles and patterns, such as Makua scarification marks and short, sinuous lines and concentric semicircles, which Agostini linked to Africans from the Mozambique 'nation'. The documents used in this research do not, however, suggest that Africans from this 'nation' were involved in ceramic production. As the author notes, the main centre of consumption for these ceramics was the city of Rio de Janeiro, which is considered to have been the largest African city in the Americas during the period. In this sense, the production of ceramics with such motifs may have been aimed mainly at an Africanized market of consumers, which would include not only other groups of Africans, but also those of the Mozambique 'nation'. An additional aspect considered by the author is that the vessels may have served as a support for an aesthetic with African references reinterpreted in the diaspora, or even by other populations, such as the *caiçaras*.

By considering the network of producers and consumers of the pieces, Agostini expands the focus of his argument from the African heritage dimension to the relationship between ceramicists and their near and distant customers, and the entanglement of these individuals in a universe marked by African presence, thereby touching on the motivations linked to the production and consumption of these items. In the ceramicists' case, there may have been several motivations for producing vessels with these motifs, including cultural identification, aesthetic canons, economic interests and preconceptions about the spaces appropriate for use of the pieces. Consumers may have shared these ideas. In this sense, some may have been making direct comments on their identities by selecting 'scarified' ceramics. Others, meanwhile, may have considered such ceramics appropriate for marking, as one of the areas in which the activity of black female slaves was concentrated, both the kitchens in mansions and those

in the homes of the lower levels of the population, which were composed of freed, *crioulo* and mixed-race people, who would not have had the economic means to purchase the fine crockery that was commonly found in their masters' homes and reflected European values and tastes.

Regardless of the motives, contexts and identities – African, *crioulo*, mixed-race or even Indigenous – of the producers and consumers of the ceramics, their link with the historical context of slavery is indisputable. In the same vein, there seems to be a certain decline in decorated pieces as slavery entered its final years and the last generation of Africans was erased (Agostini, 2011; De Souza and Symanski, 2009). It is therefore interesting to note that eighteenth-century ceramics from the senzala in Colégio dos Jesuítas in Campos dos Goytacazes featured barely any artistic decoration. As the senzala was marked by a dynamic of internal creolization without the arrival of Africans as of the expulsion of the Jesuits in 1759, this seems to suggest, as was the case in Mato Grosso, that the decorative dimension of the vessels was less significant to enslaved people born in Brazil than it was to their African ancestors.

Another important sphere of material production among Africans in the diaspora was that of metallurgy. In Africa, the casting of iron dates back to the first millennium BCE, before its wide expansion throughout the continent. Africans brought this technological tradition and its accompanying set of beliefs with them to the Americas (Goucher, 2004). The origin myths for many Central African Bantu societies featured ironworkers as founding heroes. They were also considered to hold great spiritual power as a result of their ability to transform a natural product into a cultural product by controlling fire. All of their instruments were considered to be steeped in the power of spirits and their practice required a long period of apprenticeship, which included rituals linking them to the spiritual world (Childs, 1991, pp. 338–339).

As agricultural production and mineral extraction in Brazil were dependent on iron artefacts and most of those involved in the profession were enslaved Africans and Afrodescendants, a domestic metallurgy with an African influence emerged. The presence of ironworker stalls became common in mining towns and villages, as well as on the plantations. These stalls produced and repaired tools and featured items such as anvils, mallets, hammers, tongs, lathes, chisels, bellows and ovens (Guimarães et al., 2015, pp. 402–403). Ironworkers' stalls and ovens were also present in quilombos, as will be discussed later in this chapter.

Material culture in Brazil's quilombos

Various studies on communities of fugitive enslaved people in the Americas at the time of the transatlantic slave trade highlight only instances of rebellion or the upholding of an African culture alleged to be intact in the diaspora. In the case of Brazil, there are few analyses of quilombos and mocambos and their role in producing and redefining material culture. Despite the classic anthropological studies carried out on the maroon societies and their societal permanencies and reconstructions, particularly in Suriname, Jamaica and Colombia, little is known about the societies' own experience of identity, how they defined themselves and the microsocieties they created during the slavery regime and the struggle against it (Agorsah, 1994; Price, 1979). The nomenclature – both colonial and post-colonial – used in different areas suggests multifaceted ideas. A hemispheric phenomenon, the communities of fugitives were known under different names, such as *cumbes* in Venezuela and *palenques* in Colombia. In the English-speaking Caribbean region and southern United States, groups of fugitives were known as maroons. In various areas of the French-speaking Caribbean, the term used for the establishment of these communities was *marronage*, while in Cuba and Puerto Rico, it was *cimarronaje*. In Brazil, such settlements came to be known as mocambos and then quilombos, these terms being of African origin and referring to camps in many African languages and microsocieties. In both Kimbundu and Kikongo, the word *mukambu* may mean 'spinneret stick', a kind of vertical support resembling a pitchfork often used to build quilombos in camps.

Despite the lack of analyses, it is interesting to note that records on the construction technologies, material organization and intangible dimension of quilombos can be found among the sources of information on repression and complaints. Even so, little is known about the self-identification of the residents of the thousands of mocambos and quilombos which spread across Brazil. In the mid-seventeenth century, the earliest descriptions of the internal structure of the buildings in the large quilombo of Palmares (in the state of Alagoas) mention 'houses', including 'a church, four forges and a large council house'. In this large colonial mocambo, 'all sorts of artifices' were said to exist among its residents, suggesting interrelated construction techniques, material structures and internal organization. Built by various generations of Africans and their descendants, Palmares was certainly one of the finest examples of a community in the diaspora, uniting African cultural permanencies and transformations.

Descriptions also emerged of the clothes which were worn by the *palmaristas* (as the residents were known) and which were made 'almost entirely from tree bark'. They may thus have adapted techniques to the local natural landscape (trees, jungle, flora and fauna), as it was said that they also made 'their homes', 'beds' and 'fans for fanning the fire' from 'alleys of palm trees', by 'eating the insides of coconuts and fashioning them into pipes'.[2]

Across the Americas, there are few iconographic records or cartographic representations of these communities in the colonial and post-colonial contexts of slavery. In Brazil's case, however, maps and floor plans of colonial quilombos and mocambos in Minas Gerais and Bahia do exist. The manuscripts section of the national library contains the Ottoni collection of documents on colonial Minas Gerais, which features six floor plans of quilombos in Minas Gerais in 1769. These floor plans, along with a map (found in the Portuguese archives) of the mocambo of Buraco do Tatu, which was located in Bahia and destroyed in 1763, are almost the only such sources of information on these communities of fugitive slaves in the Americas.[3] Although the result of punitive colonial expeditions, they nonetheless constitute original representations of the social spaces, houses, homes, economy and defence systems of these enslaved communities. Occasionally neglected, evidence of the material culture of Brazil's mocambos and quilombos is suggested in descriptions of the defence systems they adopted. The Torre do Tombo national archive in Lisbon contains documents on the impact of the wars waged on Pernambuco's Palmares quilombo during the governorship of Pedro de Almeida, from 1675 to 1678. These documents describe the main part of the largest mocambo, indicating that it was fortified by a wooden fence and open trenches and that the outside part was surrounded by caltrops and ditches. The maps and floor plans of colonial mocambos in Minas Gerais and Bahia include many such descriptions. Buraco do Tatu featured a complex defence system at the rear, front and sides, with mazes of pointed stakes concealed in camouflaged caves. Such defences also featured secret exits and false trails in order to help the residents make a fast escape if necessary. The defences of the mocambos of Minas Gerais included ditches, channels, stakes, trenches and swamps. Many quilombos had *picadas*, which were false entryways

2 Travel diary written by Captain João Blaer (1645). Document translated from Dutch by Alfredo de Carvalho (extracted from an unpublished collection named *Brieven em Papieren uit Brasilien*) and published in the Revista do Instituto Arqueológico e Geográfico de Pernambuco, edition 55, 1902, pp. 87–96. For Palmares, see Dos Santos Gomes (2005*b*).

3 Annals of the Biblioteca Nacional, Volume 108 (1988), Rio de Janeiro, 1992, pp. 47–113. The floor plan of the Buraco do Tatu quilombo was published in Schwartz 1987, pp. 17–61.

through trenches, caves and stakes; these were also linked to African models and symbolism in the diaspora. In 1746, the residents of Campo Grande defended themselves with levers and a trench they had dug.[4] Upon attempting to ambush the quilombo of Pedra da Menina in 1768, troops encountered a fence, a false vallum and a multitude of stakes. In the 1980s, pioneering research conducted in Minas Gerais located 'channels' in the archaeological sites of the Ambrósio quilombo (Guimarães et al., 1990). The ruins of quilombos located in the Ubá region were also discovered in the early decades of the twentieth century; records mention 'trenches of considerable width and depth' (Dos Santos Gomes, 2005).

As the interiors were commonly divided into rooms, the social organization of the mocambos/quilombos may be speculated upon based on the representation of their layout. The specific representations of ironworkers' homes and the homes belonging to the 'council', of their roles and of their locations may be related to religious and ritual purposes reinvented in the diaspora. Ironworkers were predominant among various ethnic groups in regions of Central and West Africa, and many of the enslaved people sent to Brazil, in particular to Minas Gerais, over the course of the eighteenth century originated from these regions.

There is little evidence relating to the material dimension of the homes in the quilombos/mocambos. Generally speaking, the documents available refer only to the existence of 'ranches' (some sources mention only that they were made of straw, and little is known about their size, layout, interior divisions or the material used to build and cover them). Archaeological research on the site of the Ambrósio quilombo has shown that the homes were built from wattle and daub and clay. They were of various shapes and sizes. It has been argued that wattle-and-daub homes covered with leaves were common among black slaves, freedpersons and the poorer populations in the Minas Gerais slave society of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries (Guimarães et al., 1990). This construction technique may also have been a recreation of an African style. Descriptions of African homes in the kingdoms of Kongo, Matamba and Angola written by Capuchin missionary Cavazzi da Montecuccolo (Cavazzi de Montecuccolo, 1965; Balandier, 1968, p. 141) in the seventeenth century point to constructions of this type and mention houses which were 'interwoven with straw' and whose roofs were made of palm leaves or strong, thin cane. In 1766, a punitive expedition to the interior region of Mogi Guaçu in São Paulo located a large quilombo (which would be burnt down) which included two areas for

4 ANRJ, Codex 952, Cartas Régias, Provisões, Alvarás e Avisos (1725–1747), vol. 33, fl. 390.

iron forging and a 'ranch' with some 90 homes having two, three or four beds each. In Mato Grosso in 1730, the quilombo of Quariterê was described as using agriculture for supplies and cotton and having two ironworkers' stalls.[5]

A report for a punitive expedition in the mocambos in the state of Maranhão, and the quilombos of São Sebastião and Limoeiro in particular, at the end of the 1870s describes homes which were covered in straw and built with clay and which mostly had wooden doors and windows. These mocambos contained two so-called saints' houses, distinguished by the crosses adorning their front part.[6] More specific information on the Limoeiro mocambo referred to the existence of 'two houses of prayer known as saints' houses'. One contained 'images of saints' and the other, extravagant figures made of wood, gourds with rotten herbs and stones. Even provided was a description of the inhabitants' smoking and use of marijuana, always lit by means of 'a wick which was taken everywhere with them, formed of beeswax and rosin'.[7]

With the emergence of dozens of more quilombos in the nineteenth century, similar and more detailed descriptions appeared; reports from anti-mocambo expeditions described elements of the cultural material reinvented in the jungles. Evidence of quilombo culture became apparent, including: houses, covered in straw and clay, most of which had wooden windows and doors; two buildings known as saints' houses, which stood out because of the crosses they had out front; three buildings in which to prepare flour equipped with the necessary ovens; one building used for storage and wax; another building housing a clay alembic; and the residents' living quarters (Araújo, 1994, p. 78). Records also cited:

> dozens of houses in which three, four or five black men and their wives and children lived; two more houses used for prayer and known as saints' houses - one contained images of saints and the other had extravagant figures made of wood, gourds with rotten herbs and stone pieces which Indigenous people would have used as axes in ancient times (Araújo, 1998, p. 28).

5 Biblioteca Nacional, Manuscript section, Coleção Morgado de Matheus, Codex I - 30, 9, 42, document number 4, 04/06/1766 and Codex 22, 1, 27 – *Memórias Chronológicas da Capitania de Mato Grosso,* mainly from the Provedoria de Fazenda Real and Intendência do Ouro written by Felipe Joseph Nogueira Coelho, 1775.

6 Arquivo Público do Estado do Maranhão (hereinafter 'APEMA'), 'Report presented to Commander Dr Francisco Maria Correia de Sá e Benevides, President of the Province of Maranhão, by Mayor Honorato Cândido Ferreira Caldas, on 13 January 1877, on the results of the expedition designed to destroy the Quilombo do Turi'.

7 Report by João Manoel da Cunha on the first invasion of the Limoeiro quilombo, 24 January 1878, (transcribed in Araújo, 1994, p. 28).

Traces of metallurgical activity in Brazil's quilombos, reported in sources from the seventeenth, eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, may point to cultural, ritual and religious practices and reinvented African technologies, rather than to the socioeconomic expectations of the communities forged. The 1838 Manoel Congo slave revolt in Vassouras, Rio de Janeiro, was led by many ironworkers. The enslaved people fleeing were described as bearing 'the tool from the "ironworker's stall" and the "ironworker's goods", such as anvils, hammers and lathes, in order to carry out their work in the jungle';[8] this suggests that the spiritual power attributed to ironworkers was maintained in the diaspora. As the rebels themselves attributed supernatural powers to Manoel Congo, who was to be the king of the future quilombo they intended to found (Dos Santos Gomes, 2006), this reminds us of the Central African societies that placed the ironworker as their founding hero.

Research on and reports from enslaved people dating back to 1848 point to the existence of a quilombo between the states of Espírito Santo and Rio de Janeiro, on the banks of the Moquim River, featuring a 'large quantity of senzala constructions, homes, prayer spaces, a bell, cemetery and blacksmiths'.[9] Ironworkers, and particularly African ironworkers, therefore played an important role in many slave resistance movements in the Americas as a result of their strategic involvement in the production of tools and arms (Ringquist, 2008, p. 14–15). In Brazil, they were also involved in various uprisings and plans for revolt (Dos Santos Gomes, 2006).

It is important to mention that various African microsocieties from the Kongo regions in Central Africa viewed ironworkers as special figures, attributing to them spiritual powers. The origin myth for the kingdom of Ndongo linked its powers to those of ironwork. Some areas of West Africa also believed ironworkers to be figures holding special powers (Balandier, 1968, pp. 108–113, pp. 224–225).

Excavations in the senzala belonging to the Santa Clara farm in the Paraíba Valley revealed a concentration of iron slag in an area measuring around 2 metres by 0.5 metres; this was intentionally buried beside the front wall of the space (Symanski and dos Santos Gomes, 2016). This finding points to the use of Central African practices adopted in the Iron Age, a conclusion supported by excavations which Vitor Oliveira Jorge carried out in 1973 in a fortified village in the province

8 See the insurrection process transcribed in Pinaud, 1987, pp. fl. 42, 44, 49, 49 v and 54.

9 APERJ, Fundo SPP, Collection 166, document 12 A, Letter by Claudino do Couto sent to the deputy of Campos Police Force, 2 November 1848.

of Benguela in which slag was found in the bases of the cabins.[10] This practice was ethnographically observed among the Fipa people from Tanzania, who added slag fragments to their homes, believing that this would bring fertility and protection (Blakely, 2006, p. 121). In this case, the Santa Clara senzalas may have been filled with these items in order to invoke spiritual assistance for the protection of the space's occupants, thus reflecting the upholding of cosmologies of African origin related to iron and to the spiritual power of ironworkers.

The material culture of Brazil's quilombos/mocambos may be considered an extension of slave culture. Although senzalas were constant sources of cultural backgrounds for the residents, the opposite was also true. In some situations, the demographical impact of the slave trade also undoubtedly led to the creolization of those living in mocambos and senzalas; the forced isolation of some resident groups perhaps sparked different cultural interactions. Generally speaking, the quilombos were not entirely removed from the senzalas and other enslaved, freed and black populations. It is therefore possible to perceive Africa as historically reworked along the various edges of the Atlantic. It is important to consider the formation of Afro-Brazilian material culture not only from the perspective of African reminiscences, but also in the context of the slave and post-emancipation worlds. Various African influences on the material culture of the quilombos may have equally been informed by aspects of the culture of various Indigenous groups, including home structure, defence strategies and economic practices. Emphasizing the verbs 'reinvent', 'redevelop' and 'recreate' means stating the way in which Africans and their enslaved descendants in the Americas forged an original culture, whether in the mocambos or the plantations, improvising a new world in spite of oppression. The term 'improvisation' is in fact key to understanding the nature of Afro-American culture. Owing to the legacy of a culture of improvised skills, Africans were better equipped for fighting cultural imbalance than any other immigrants with their own strategies for cultural retention (among various perspectives: Mintz and Price, 1976).

Afro-American material cultures were invented in both the senzalas – for those in captivity – and the quilombos and mocambos. The extent of African cultural reinventions redeveloped historically on the various edges of the Atlantic suggests multifaceted processes. Location, designations and social roles may suggest political, military, religious and material forms of organization inside the mocambos. Such organizations may have originated from both African traditions and their reworkings in the diaspora.

10 Jorge Sá Pinto, personal report, September 2013.

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CHAPTER 31

AFRICANS IN THE DIASPORA AND THE EXPERIENCE OF NAVIGATION

Jaime Rodrigues

> *The history of African people has been so much influenced by perceptions stemming from the intercontinental slave trade that it is necessary to emphasize that Africans of their own volition migrated between continents as merchants, clerics, seamen, adventurers and so on. This early free black presence abroad is greatly in need of study to provide a more complete and realistic account of world civilization. It was, however, the intercontinental slave trade which, more than anything else, established a world black presence* (Harris, 2010, pp. 162–163).

An ancestral maritime experience

The compact nature of the African continent, the prolonged contact between the Maghreb and other Mediterranean regions, the trans-Saharan caravan trade, the system of Atlantic and Indian Ocean maritime currents moving from south to north and the proximity of these currents in terms of the coast, among other factors of a natural order, account for the low involvement of coastal African populations in long-term maritime expeditions prior to the fifteenth century (Diarra, 2010, p. 351). That said, the practices of nautical navigation and trade were part of the material life of populations living on sub-Saharan Africa's coastlines, as evidenced by their artistic output and fishing. One example of

the former is the tradition of polychrome wood sculpture, believed to reflect the transmission of knowledge among different peoples by means of the sea. Although it is not known for how long the tradition has existed, it spread over time throughout all of West Africa. In the fifteenth century, upon arrival at the coastline connecting Senegal to Angola, the Portuguese encountered numerous fishing populations that used vessels similar to theirs, fashioned by means of similar techniques (Vansina, 2010, pp. 635–636). Adapting fishing boats in order to target invaders was one means of imposing limits on European domination at the beginning of modern times; boats built in Central Africa were employed in combat in coastal waters and regions where the captains of European fishing vessels experienced operational difficulties. From 1445 to 1452, the peoples indigenous to the region won various naval victories against the Portuguese, leading the latter to then revise their domination strategies. Unable to triumph over the Africans in terms of military strength, the Europeans instead banked on diplomatic negotiations with local authorities, offering forms of stable and combined trade arranged in advance (Thornton, 2010, p. 148).

The very first Bubi from Bioko (formerly Fernando Póo), an Atlantic archipelago which is located around 50 kilometres off the coast of Africa and which has been inhabited for thousands of years, may have been fishermen.[1] Further south, in the Kingdom of Loango, the Vili were skilled at manufacturing and handling fishing boats for Africa's Atlantic trade network, which existed before European domination (Linebaugh and Rediker, 2008, pp. 141–143; Silva, 2001, pp. 61–65; Thornton, 2004, p. 259).

It was only from the time of the slave trade and of the diaspora, however, that an African presence in nautical navigation became more apparent. As the trade itself required a labour force specialized in docking, workers born locally or those who otherwise had a sound knowledge of the region were employed for their ability to steer long-range ships through ocean currents to the reefs and shallows of Africa's harbours. The same could be said of the need for *línguas*, interpreters who were especially useful in negotiations with foreign traders, sovereigns and local merchants. They also oversaw the loading of captives onto ships and subsequently assisted in the slave cellars.

1 The date of the Bubi's settlement on the island are disputed. Vansina (2010) believes that their migration movements must have begun before the year 1000, while Aymemi (1942) suggests that the process began between 3,000 and 5,000 years before the arrival of the first Europeans to the region in the fifteenth century.

Generally speaking, the Portuguese trained and employed Africans of various origins to carry out tasks involved with seafaring. The Kru people from what is now Liberia were among those who took on this ambiguous role in their interactions with the Portuguese and the English. Rather than trading enslaved people with the Europeans, they supplied the trade with local products and put forward sailors for the European vessels; they came to be known in the anglophone nautical world as Kroomen (Person, 2010, pp. 760–763). Kru Pidgin English, the result of the fusion between Kru and English, remained the language of sailors and migrants from British colonies in West Africa (McGowan, 1990, p. 9; Martin, 1985, pp. 401–423; Breitborde, 1991, pp. 186–201).

An autobiographical text written in the mid-nineteenth century by Canot, a European slave trader, bears witness to the people's skills as sailors. One of his reports tells of an overnight storm in which the crew of a slave ship rowed to land in skiffs. One of the crew members was able to steer the canoe in spite of the danger; they crossed the reefs by means of an opening, thereby winning Canot's approval. 'This is the skill and the daring of the *kroomen*', he writes. Canot worked in a tent set up on a beach open to the ocean, in an area where docking was dangerous even when the sea was calm: 'In actual fact, disembarking in New Sestros [as he referred to the area] would have been inviable if it hadn't been for these *kroomen*, whose canoes break through and conquer the waves [...]'. The Kru dominated the coast for miles and, as sailors, were a vital component of slave ship operations. Ships flying various flags would await their human cargo in docks far from the beach; the Kru, using their own canoes carved from a single trunk of wood, would transport the cargo to them (Mayer and Canot, 2007, pp. 125–126, pp. 345–346).

The Ghanaian Fante also became renowned for their seafaring experience and involvement with English slave ships (Rediker, 2011, p. 237) and the same phenomenon occurred with the various *cabinda* and *muxiluanda* fishermen who worked in the cabotage industry in eighteenth-century Angola (Rodrigues, 2007, p. 49–61). The Bijagós from what is today Guinea-Bissau were also recognized as skilled sailors (Priore and Venâncio, 2004, p. 103, p. 107). Men from the Benguela area were trained to become sailors (Candido, 2010, p. 399), as similar activities emerged on the east coast. African sailors were involved in cabotage for journeys between Africa and Asia, in the Muslim establishments of Arabia and India (Devisse and Labib, 2010, p. 745) and in the slave and merchandise trades between the Indian coast, the United States of America and the kingdom.

Africans on Portuguese merchant ships

According to Table 1, which presents a sample of about 1,000 men born in Africa and engaged as sailors on Lusitanian merchant ships in the second half of the eighteenth century, the distribution among the different regions of the continent is uneven.

The data in Table 1 show unequal proportions of individuals from three major African regions. The data do not reflect the chronological age of the contacts between Portuguese and Africans; nor do they serve as reliable indicators of the commercial relevance of the West Atlantic, Central Atlantic and East India regions during that period. The sampling clearly indicates the persistence of the tradition of hiring West African men as sailors on Portuguese vessels. The small number of men from the Indian coast certainly does not demonstrate the increased commercial importance of the region in the colonial context, at the beginning of the nineteenth century in particular. Nor does it indicate how long the people born in this region had been involved in trade in the Indian Ocean or the length of their stopovers in East Africa, where crew from Portugal or Goa inevitably replaced them, as the long journey left the men burdened by death, illness and a wide range of adversities faced during the crossing of the Cape of Good Hope. The stories contained in the *História Trágico-Marítima*, meaning 'tragic maritime history' and covering the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, are convincing in this context (Peres, 1942–1943, vol. 1, p. 20, p.146, vol. 2, p. 69, vol. 3, pp. 48–49, p. 89, vol. 4, p. 38, vol. 5, pp. 34–48, pp. 133–134).

Although the majority of the sample were sailors or enslaved young men, this was not the case of all of the African crew members. Dozens of those in the sample were free or freed and worked as barbers, caulkers, chaplains,[2] carpenters, captains,[3] foremen and cooks.

In any case, previous seafaring experience was an attribute prized by the captains of European vessels; the sailing skills the Africans possessed made them the target of Europeans on routes where Africa was a stopover or the final destination. A witness account given by a Portuguese artillery captain based in Luanda exemplifies this: he 'took on a black man familiar with the coast' to guide him on a reconnaissance expedition in Quitungo, Ambriz, the mouth of the Congo River, Cabinda, Molembo and the Kingdom of Loango,[4] which were all places inaccessible without assistance from those familiar with the coastline.

2 For example, Manuel Coelho Rodrigues and Simião Antônio das Mercês, black men born on the island of Príncipe.

3 For example, Manuel de Amaral, a white man born in Cabo Verde.

4 Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino, Conselho Ultramarino, Angola, Box 62 (1779), doc. 72 (June 1779); Box 62, doc. 73 and book 6 of Angola, fls. 26 and ss.

Table 1. *Origins of African sailors in Luso-Brazilian merchant ships (1767–1850)**

Locality or "nation"	***Number***
West Africa	*447, including:*
Bissau	20
Cape Verde	55
Cacheu	25
Calabar	11
Costa da Mina (or Mina)	265
Fasso	1
Hausa	11
Mazagan (now El Jadida) /Morocco	3
Gabon	1
Dahomey (Jeje)	10
Guinea	8
Gorée Island	1
São Tomé Island	18
Príncipe Island	7
Yoruba	10
Sierra Leone	1
Central Africa	*385, including:*
Congo	9
Angola	261
Benguela	73
Cabinda	25
Cameroon	6
Baixa de Cassanje	3
Ngangela	1
Kingdom of Loango	1
Kakongo	2
Monjolo	1
Rebolo	3
Indian East Africa	*86, including:*
East coast	1
Inhambane	2
Mozambique	75
Quelimane	7
Sena (captain)	1
Unspecified locations	*4*
Unspecified or illegible origins	*6*

Table 1 by Jaime Rodrigues.

Source: National Archives/Torre do Tombo (Lisbon), "LIVRO 1. MATRÍCULA DE EQUIPAGENS DE NAVIOS", Junta do Comércio, liv. 1, PT/TT/JC/A-D/6/1, Imagem cedida pelo ANTT.

Yet compulsory or voluntary engagement of Africans in long-range sailing was not a rule without exceptions. Although they did have some nautical experience, the Bubi of Fernando Póo neither were employed as sailors, nor did they assist European slave traders while the island was under Portuguese rule, which ended in the third quarter of the eighteenth century (Brilhante, 2009, p. 71). After the transfer of sovereignty to the Spanish in 1777, contact between the two was limited and somewhat cold as a result of the Bubi's refusal to trade with the new invaders (Sundiata, 1973, pp. 794–804; Vansina, 2010). Although the list is far from exhaustive, a final reference must be made to the Cabo Verdeans – known as *lançados* or *tangomãos* by the Portuguese – who, since the sixteenth century, had been regularly navigating the coasts of the Gulf of Guinea. Employed as pioneers in the teaching of the local languages, these men also assisted in the creation of opportunities for communication and trade in West Africa, for both the Portuguese and the populations living on the African coast (Nafafé, 2007, p. 133). In Cabo Verde and at the mouth of the Gambia River, Europeans recruited both *lançados* and captains to steer their African trade ships (Law and Mann, 1999, p. 334).

Creating and maintaining trade networks meant employing men who were skilled in handling ships; the roles they took on required knowledge of water depth, wind systems, tides, rains and other climatic factors that would interfere with the cabotage trade, even if they managed to elude the various adversities of long-distance crossings. Although sailing skills did not necessarily equip them to deal with long-range or large vessels, they were nonetheless part of the experience of various peoples from the African continent, and part of a process that underwent transformation over time.

Meanings of diaspora engagements

This experience continued in the diaspora. Countless Africans became involved in maritime labour and many of those enslaved used the sea as a means of escape. Transit and coexistence marked the experience of the peoples living on the edges of the Atlantic and of the sailors who were black, African or born in the diaspora, whether as enslaved or free men, present in the world of Atlantic maritime labour and serving on various European and American merchant and military ships (Rediker 1989, p. 156). They could be found in a range of situations: in maritime cabotage in different regions of the colonial world (Scott 2018, pp. 105–106; Da Silva Jr. 2011, pp. 85–87; Bezerra 2010, pp. 124–133); in the merchant navy (Thornton, p. 181–182; Lapa 1968, pp. 112–

115; Linebaugh and Rediker 2008); in the naval branches of the armed forces during the conflicts over political independence for countries in Portuguese and Spanish America; in the conflicts between European and American nations, having operated ships and arms in conflicts such as those in the Platine region or the Seven Years' War (Jeha, 2011, pp. 165 et seq.; Aladrén, 2009, p. 442); in apprentice schools and in republican fleets up to the present day (Nalty, 1986, p. 189; Pereira do Nascimento, 2008; Silva, 2002; De Oliveira Aguiar, 2017).

The Atlantic dispersion of the African people throughout Africa itself and the United States of America had repercussions on not only the language and operations of nautical navigation, but also the musicality and creation of a culture of resistance in the Caribbean. According to Scott, European and African seafarers of different linguistic backgrounds formed a 'visible segment of the Caribbean underground' at the end of the eighteenth century; the behaviour of this 'segment' was difficult to regulate and the reason for constant complaints from colonial administrators (Scott, 1986, pp. 60–63; Burns, 2009; Montes Pizarro, 2010). Many of these peoples and their descendants continued to be involved in the merchant navies of western countries and played a significant role in raising awareness of the black world, as they did in the Haitian Revolution, in Cuba and in the United States of America (Harris, 2003, pp. 333–356).

Even once they were part of the trade's networks, not all Africans found themselves destined for slavery in the plantations, mines and domestic spheres on the other edges of the Atlantic. Many instead became sailors on merchant ships, or even slave ships.

Candido estimates that from 1767 to 1832, less than 3 per cent of the crews in the Luso-Brazilian merchant navy consisted of enslaved people, with such a low figure being due to the very limited number of slaves and freedmen in Portugal during that period. The author highlights the low percentage in comparison to the data which Herbert Klein and I provide on black sailors from 1795 and the first half of the nineteenth century (from 14 to 24 per cent) (Candido, 2010, p. 399). By revising the same sources – in other words, the crew records collected by the Portuguese Chamber of Commerce and Industry, in Lisbon – I arrived at a different total: enslaved people represented around 4 per cent of the total registered on the Portuguese merchant ships for the period. Grouping them with those who had been freed, who also had an experience of slavery, produces a total of 6 per cent (Rodrigues, 2015, p. 131). Enslaved people made up 17 per cent, however, of the crews of slave ships leaving Brazil under the slavery regime over a longer period (Rodrigues, 2005, pp. 186–187).

Enslaved or freed individuals with seafaring skills may be named and described as part of efforts to recognize the contribution of common men to the task of building empires; historians frequently mention only captains, soldiers and governmental authorities. One such individual was Antonio Franco Gervense, a 'captive black man' who was very young when he made his first maritime crossing. Born in Mozambique, Gervense became enslaved as a child and was sent to work on deep-sea vessels when he was as young as 9. By the time he set sail on the galley known as *São Pedro* in 1768, at the age of 15, he was already an experienced seaman, having had over six years of experience employed as a servant on ships under the orders of his master, captain Bernardo Franco. In late 1772, while still enslaved by the same master, Gervense found himself working on a ship named *Santa Ana e São Francisco Xavier*, travelling from Lisbon to Belém in Grão Pará in the south of Brazil. It is not known whether his career working on ships was a long one, but information left on Gervense allows us to confirm that he was a cosmopolitan man who had travelled to West Africa, Portugal, Cabo Verde, Bissau, São Luís and Belém and was fluent in at least two languages, his native tongue and Portuguese, although he was unable to speak the latter and as a crew member he signed his name with a cross.

Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua and Olaudah Equiano are examples of Africans from the diaspora who left behind autobiographies of note and for whom sailing was an experience relevant to the shaping of liberty. Equiano, for example, became familiarized with sailing equipment in the slave ship that transported him to Barbados, despite the terror instilled in him by the voyage. By observing a sailor who was using a quadrant, he deduced how the instrument – which seemed to possess magic powers – worked. After working in the Caribbean and in the state of Virginia, Equiano was taken to Great Britain, from where, still enslaved, he would set sail for the waters of Northern Europe and the Mediterranean, learning sailing and artillery techniques (Silva, p. 88, p. 95). Deep-sea sailing remained ubiquitous among Africans and people of African descent, whether enslaved or freed people, over time and in different regions covered by the slave trade. It displayed traces of African traditions surrounding fishing, trade, the sexual division of labour and geographical mobility. Enforcers of and participants in the practices of nautical navigation, Africans and their descendants experienced the transformations implemented in these same practices. The experience of men such as those mentioned above had much in common with those of thousands of other African sailors in the diaspora (Bolster, 1990, 1997).

This experience may be traced more accurately by consulting ships' crew records, the keeping of which was initiated in a systematic fashion in Portugal in the second half of the eighteenth century. As mentioned above, the crews of merchant ships also included freed and enslaved people with specialized skills; Portuguese sources provide information on the roles most frequently performed by the men. This is because Portuguese merchant fleets included a higher number of African sailors than English or French ships (Knight, Talib and Curtin, 2010, p. 887).

There is one profession that does not appear in the records but that is known to have been practiced by Africans; it is that of the *língua*, an exclusive role played by people who knew the different languages spoken on Africa's coasts. In this, and in other occupations, enslaved or freed Africans and their descendants did not, however, find a means of social or professional mobility. Projecting the intention to achieve social mobility may be anachronistic, however, as the societies in which these men lived were characterized by forms of social mobility that were highly limited. However, autonomy, mobility and movement, which gave rise to possibilities for escape or for a new life away from their master's gaze (in the case of enslaved people) or from the people they had interacted with while enslaved (in the case of freed people) were all attainable through involvement in seafaring. Schwartz reflected on this while studying mobility by means of imperial and colonial borders as a form of escaping religious persecution in the times of the Inquisition (2009); involvement in maritime labour offered strong possibilities for exercising autonomy or liberty, in the case of enslaved and freed people of African origin.

Some occupations were more frequently performed by enslaved people, while certain posts, such as that of a general, were normally reserved for free men and would rarely be occupied by enslaved people. The vast majority performed manual work that was low in the hierarchy of maritime labour, such as that of cabin boys, apprentices and servants (or sailors, as they became known from the beginning of the nineteenth century). Some were caulkers and cooks, with the role of the latter remaining common among black men into the twentieth century (Nalty, 1986, p. 84). A large number of slaves and freedmen worked on merchant ships with no mention made of the roles they carried out, making it seem as though skin colour, ethnic origin and social condition were sufficient to determine the work they did on board. Even when they were freed and had built up years of seafaring experience, none of these men became captains or officials. This was evidently due to the opinion held by their masters that it would be dangerous to allow black men access to the technical knowledge behind sailing.

Enslaved people were of a similar opinion, as Equiano clearly states: nautical occupations and the resultant mobility allowed for greater equality with their masters (Equiano, 1837; Scott, 2018, p. 59).

José Gonçalves Rosa, for example, was a formerly enslaved man from the Costa da Mina who knew how to sign his own name and worked as a cook at the exclusive service of the captain of the *São José Rei de Portugal*, which travelled between Lisbon and Recife in the 1760s. Records are inexact as to his age and experience: in 1767 he was recorded to be over 40, with over 25 years of seafaring experience, while in 1768, the same type of record placed him at around the age of 30, with over 15 years of experience in the profession.[5] Alexandre Ferreira, a servant on the *Santa Ana e São Francisco Xavier*, was said to have been born in Mozambique, a 'black slave' to surgeon Antonio de Souza Ferreira, and was aged around 30, having lived on board for the previous two years.[6] The cook Pedro Pereira, a freed "black man" from Cabo Verde, worked on the same voyage. His condition as a freedman was confirmed by a letter he carried with him signed two years prior, when he was around the age of 50.

The age of recruitment

The professional experience of enslaved and freed sailors was varied. Given that many were on their first voyage, they did not necessarily have years of experience in working at sea. Duarte José, for example, was a Cabo Verdean cook and a captive of the captain of the *N. S. do Monte do Carmo e Senhor da Canaverde* on a 1768 voyage from Lisbon to Rio de Janeiro. It is known that his experience with ships began when 'he was a child', that he was 36 years old and that he did not know how to write his own name.[7] Duarte's case might have been the exception, as data for men of his condition indicate that most of those enslaved tolerated the gruelling nature of the seafaring trade for two to eight consecutive years.

All indications suggest that both enslaved and freed men had entered the world of seafaring at a young age. Most were aged between 10 and 14, although

5 Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Junta do Comércio (ANTT/JC), *Livro 1 – Matrículas de Equipagens de Navios* (1767-1768), fl. 31; *Livro 5 das Matrículas das Equipagens dos Navios* (1767-1769).

6 ANTT/JC, *Relações de equipagens de navios e passageiros*, Packet 1, Box 3, 'Relação dos oficiais e mais pessoas da equipagem do navio *Santa Ana e São Francisco Xavier* que faz viagem para Lisboa' (Pará, 1 March 1771).

7 ANTT/JC, *Livro 4 – Matrícula de equipagens de navios* (1767-1769).

many joined the profession up to the age of 30. It must not be forgotten that many freedmen had joined the trade when they were still enslaved and had bought their freedom using savings they had built up or through negotiating with their masters.

Young people up to the age of 25 were the most coveted by the recruiters for ships covering long distances. After this age, the number of freed and enslaved men recruited for the first time would begin to decline, in view of the drop in the muscular strength required to perform jobs on board.

Francisco Ferreira began working on ships in 1768, when he was only around 7 to 10 years old. If his father's surname is anything to go by, his master, José Ferreira de Azevedo, was probably also the master of his parents, Manoel Ferreira and Tereza de Oliveira. Born in Cabo Verde, Ferreira was a 'tall man, with a shock of hair, a high forehead, childlike features and black eyebrows'. He was able to write his name and performed the roles of servant and steward.[8]

Although beginning work at a young age was common among freed and enslaved men, beginning at an older age was not unheard of, as freedmen often sought a new life and profession somewhere new, far away from their place of captivity. There are reports of men of an age advanced for the life expectancy at that time, particularly for the life expectancy of those in captivity. Francisco Pedro from the Brazilian state of Paraíba, for example, spent 60 of his 81 years of life as an on-board servant.[9] Other older men performed younger men's jobs: Felix Rodrigues da Costa was a freedman who 'seemed' to be around 60 years old and made his second voyage, from Lisbon to Bahia, in 1767; Antonio de Sá, a freedman from the Bight of Benin, was around the same age and had over seven years of experience.[10]

The involvement of enslaved people in the seafaring world from such a young age was not a decision made by the individuals themselves, but rather by their masters. For freedmen, entry into the world of maritime labour could have taken place while they were enslaved and still unable to freely choose their own destiny; if it had taken place once they had been freed, this entry could have stemmed from a desire to leave behind the site of their enslavement and to escape the gaze of their former masters.

8 ANTT/JC, *Livro 4 – Matrícula de equipagens de navios* (1767-1769), *N. S. do Cabo*, Lisboa-Grão Pará, 1 June 1768 and *N. S. da Glória, Santa Clara e Santo Antônio*, Lisboa-Pernambuco, 8 August 1768; Packet 1, Box 3 - *Relações de equipagens de navios e passageiros*, "Relação dos oficiais e mais pessoas da equipagem do navio *Santa Ana e São Francisco Xavier* que faz viagem para Lisboa". Pará-Lisboa, 1 March 1771.

9 ANTT/JC, *Relações de equipagens de navios e passageiros*, Packet 1, Box 8, 'Relação dos oficiais, e mais equipagem da nau *Princesa do Brasil,* que segue viagem para a cidade de Lisboa' (Rio de Janeiro, 29 November 1776).

10 ANTT/JC, *Livro 1 – Matrículas de Equipagens de Navios* (1767–1768), fls. 132 and 219.

Final remarks

Sailors in modern times have shared many experiences, performing a wide range of roles and building their own professional culture. As a rule, most of these men have been white and free; only a few have been slaves or freedmen. Despite the relatively low numbers of slaves and freedmen who worked on ships, however, we need to understand the specific nature of their involvement in seafaring and how it related to their skin colour, social conditions and ethnicities. The presence of Africans and their descendants, whether enslaved or freed, has played a significant role in the shaping of maritime culture. This is particularly true with regard to language and the development, among the enslaved, of yearnings for – and strategies for achieving – freedom.

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CHAPTER 32

RETURNEE AFRICANS OF THE INDIAN OCEAN

The Bombay Africans

Clifford J. Pereira

Introduction

This chapter outlines the story of a group of people known as 'Bombasees' (Burton, 1855, pp. 644–646), 'Bombayans' or most commonly 'Bombay Africans' (Harris, 1977, p. 52). This community had a unique nineteenth-century experience of capture and bondage in Africa, liberation at sea by the British Royal Navy, reuniting as an African community in British India and subsequently returning freely to Africa, where its members led numerous social and political reforms. These events distinguish the Bombay Africans from the much older and more firmly established Afro-Asian 'Sidi', 'Sheedi' or 'Seedi' communities which remained on the Indian subcontinent (Burton, 2006, pp. 253–257).

Formation of the diasporic communities known as the Bombay Africans

The ethnic origins of the people that became known as the Bombay Africans covered a wide area of eastern Africa, from southern Ethiopia southwards to Zimbabwe, Malawi and Mozambique. Speakers of Bantu languages appear to make up the majority, with origins recorded among the Banyoro, Wazaramo, Makua,

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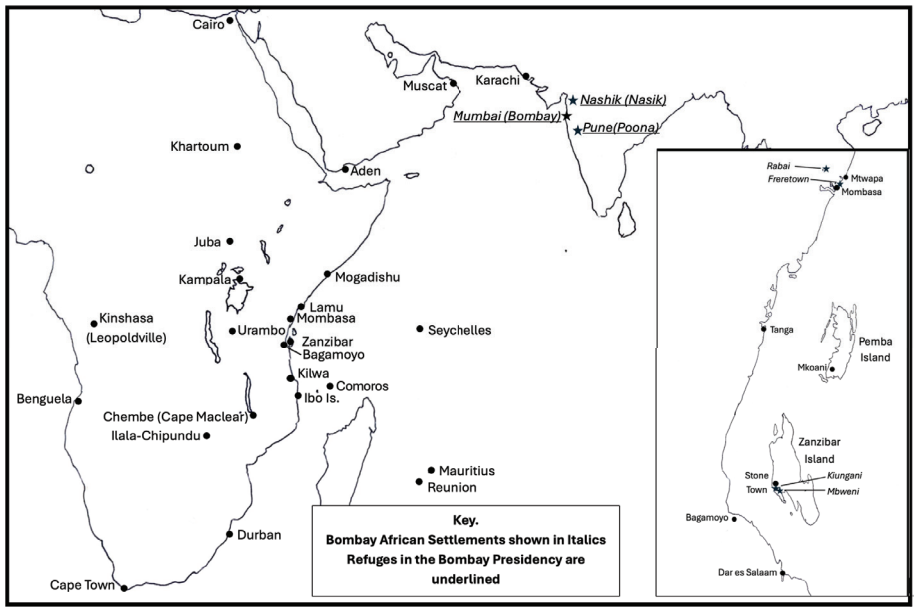

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FIGURE 1. *The History of Bombay Africans*

Nyanja and particularly the Yao. Many women were from the Cushitic-speaking Oromo people of the Horn of Africa (Harris, 1977, p. 52), known in India as 'Ḥabshī', after the country of Abyssinia (Burton, 1855, p. 644).

As early as the 1830s, enslaved Africans liberated by the British Royal Navy from slave-trading dhows in the Indian Ocean were taken to British India (Figure 1). In 1835, 200 liberated African children were taken to Karachi, which was then part of Bombay Presidency in British India. These children were forwarded to the police commissioner in Bombay (Mumbai) and placed in the care of local families, local businesses and charitable institutions (Harris, 1977, p. 18). There are further references to 'Abyssinians' arriving in Bombay in the 1840s after liberation by a French vessel off the island of Mauritius (Pereira, 2006, p. 235). By the second half of the nineteenth century, half of the liberated Africans in the Indian Ocean were given a temporary sanctuary on the decks of British ships and then delivered to the Seychelles, Aden or Bombay (Colomb, 1968, p. 24). According to the memoirs of Captain G.L. Sullivan of HMS *Daphne*, a total of 322 Africans were liberated from 15 dhows and placed ashore in the Seychelles, where they were placed in quarantine following a smallpox outbreak. These Africans were subsequently taken to Bombay (Sullivan, 1967, p. 170).

One particular group of enslaved Africans was to become an important constituent of the Bombay Africans. In 1860, a dhow left Kilwa with as many as 300 enslaved Africans, but many of the young people and children who were ill were thrown overboard before the dhow arrived at Zanzibar (Harris, 1977, pp. 22–23). The dhow sailed on to Mogadishu where some enslaved Oromo were taken on board. When HMS *Thetis* intercepted the dhow, the 200 surviving enslaved Africans were liberated and taken to Bombay.

In 1853, the liberated African children were taken in by a refuge in Bombay (Clifford, 2006, p. 238). In 1848, the Reverend W. Price founded a village for Indian Christians near Nasik, about 187 kilometres north-east of Bombay (Pereira, 2006, p. 235). By 1853, liberated African children were housed at an asylum in Bombay (Pereira, 2006, p. 238); however, Nasik soon became the primary asylum for liberated African children and young adults. Funding for the project came from fines imposed on convicted slave traders in British India (Harris, 1977, p. 19). The arrival of the 200 Africans liberated by HMS *Thetis* in 1860 boosted the asylum and led to the creation of a community of African people of diverse ethnic origins. Between 1860 and 1874, a further 200 young Africans were received at Nasik (Colomb, 1968, pp. 101–102). These people were all thought to read and write in English, and trained in various skills including carpentry, blacksmithing and embalming. Many also learned Hindi and all were instructed in the catechism and in basic Christian teaching. Upon their baptism, some took on new names; for example Chingwembe became Mathew Wellington (1847–1935) (Pereira, 2006, p. 233). Among these children was a Yao boy who was baptized as Jacob Wainright (Simpson, 1975, p. 198). Among the liberated Africans in Bombay were two boys, James Chuma (*c.* 1850–1882) and Wekotani (born circa 1852) (Harris, 1977, p. 17) and seven adult Africans who had been part of the Zambezi expedition of David Livingstone (Livingstone and Livingstone, 2001, p. 458). In 1863, the two boys were placed in education with the Free Church of Scotland's Mission in Bombay (Jeal, 1974, p. 296). Other refuges for liberated Africans in India included the Roman Catholic orphanage of Bandra and the American mission in Siroor (Poona) (Harris, 1977, p. 18). There was concern among the British in India that the liberated African children placed in the care of Indian families would be influenced by Hinduism and Islam (Sullivan, 1967, p. 264); this explains the increase in the number of liberated Africans being delivered to the Seychelles after 1865 (Sullivan, 1967, p. 431). By 1869, the majority of liberated Africans were being landed in the Seychelles, with smaller numbers being delivered to the Universities' Mission to Central Africa at Mbweni, Zanzibar (Al-Maamiry, 1985,

p. 84). The period of conveyance of freed African children to Bombay Presidency therefore ended in around 1870.

In 1867, Sir Bartle Frere, 1st Baronet, was appointed governor of Bombay Presidency. He proposed to use the Bombay Africans in the European exploration of Africa as well as in the Christian evangelization of eastern Africa. The free Africans who eventually returned to Africa from their period of refuge in India can be divided into three overlapping groups, the first of which is a group composed African crewmen involved in the British anti-slavery campaign. The second is that of the Bombay Africans of Rabai and Freretown who form the basis of the African Christian evangelical and emancipation movement. The third is a group composed of Bombay African men and their women followers who were involved in the European expeditions in Africa.

The Royal Navy spearheaded the campaign for abolition of the Indian Ocean slave trade from its base at Bombay (Pereira, 2006, p. 236) where young liberated African men were deposited. As they were too old to be placed in orphanages, with local families or sent to Nasik, they were employed as stevedores. Many were subsequently taken on board British merchant and Royal Navy ships (Harris, 1977, p. 17). The Royal Navy enlisted so many of these liberated Africans that by the 1850s the government observed that the majority of Bombay-recruited seamen were Africans (Harris, 1977, p. 18). The Royal Navy referred to these Africans as 'Seedies' or 'Sidis', following the popular use of these terms to describe Africans in South Asia. Their memory of African languages and wish to remain free made these crewmen indispensable in the abolition campaign, where there was a lack of British interpreters in Kiswahili and other African languages to distinguish dhows carrying legitimate passengers from those carrying enslaved Africans. These crewmen were dispersed throughout coastal eastern Africa and perhaps around the Indian Ocean. Little is known of their lives, but many eventually settled and merged with the cosmopolitan communities of eastern African port cities, including Cape Town and Durban (Pereira, 2007, p. 5).

The return to Africa

The first Bombay Africans to return to Africa appear to be William Jones, who died in 1904, and Ishmael Semler, along with their Oromo wives. They were sent by the Church Missionary Society (CMS) Nasik orphanage in India to the Rabai mission established in 1846 by Johann Krapf and Johannes Rebmann on the trade route about 25 kilometres inland of Mombasa (Harris,

1977, p. 20). These two couples were joined by another Nasik African, David George, who worked as a catechist for the CMS and was the leader of the settlement after Rebmann returned to Germany. Jacob Wainright worked as a teacher in Rabai in 1875 (Simpson, 1975, p. 137). Jones worked in Kisulitini and at the Universities' Mission at Zanzibar and, in 1871, returned to Nasik to recruit more settlers (Harris, 1977, p. 21).

In 1872, Sir Bartle Frere, 1st Baronet, governor of Bombay Presidency, visited Rabai and was very impressed by the work of the Bombay Africans. Upon his return to India he decided that the evangelization of Africa should be carried out by Africans. He urged the CMS to set up a mission near Mombasa as a refuge for freed people, much like Freetown in West Africa. In 1874, the Reverend W. Price arrived from Nasik to set up the Freretown settlement on the mainland north of the island of Mombasa. The Bombay Africans of Rabai became invaluable in this scheme and they were joined by Mathew Wellington from Nasik. In 1875, when the orphanage in Nasik was broken up, over 150 former inmates sailed to Mombasa on the HMS *Thetis* and settled at Freretown. William Jones was to make several more recruitment trips to India between 1878 and 1881, in addition to a final one in 1893 (Harris, 1977, p. 21). In 1887, James Jones, the son of Reverend William Jones, set up a printing press at Freretown; this was the first independent African press in eastern Africa (RGS link).

As formerly enslaved people themselves, the Bombay Africans were keen to free as many enslaved Africans as they could. Rabai and Freretown initially received runaway enslaved people from along the coast, including from the island of Mombasa. This created tension in 1880 between Freretown and the slave owners of Mombasa, which led to the manufacturing of sandbags, defences and rockets in Freretown. The British consul was called to intervene. A commission found that 1,421 enslaved Africans had been given asylum at the missions; 933 of them were at Rabai. To appease the slave owners, the British consul agreed on a compensation of 25 dollars per head to be paid to the local slave owners. Each enslaved African at Rabai was granted a certificate of freedom on New Year's Day in 1889. William Jones was the leading figure in these events and the prime abolitionist in the coastal area in the 1880s, much to the concern of British authorities. His view was that Christianity and emancipation had to be synonymous, and he acted beyond the confines of the law in the Sultan of Zanzibar's dominion, the subsequent Imperial British East Africa Company (IBEAC) and indeed the hierarchy of the Anglican church (Harris, 1977, pp. 36–40). These actions paved the way for the abolition of slavery in the East African Protectorate in 1907. The first mission school

in Kenya was established by Johann Krapf at Rabai in 1846. The Africans liberated in Kenya by the Bombay Africans joined the community, and the Bombay Africans married with these formerly enslaved people, who were of diverse ethnic origin but from within the region between modern-day Kenya and Malawi. The Bombay African communities, despite becoming central to notions of freedom, do not appear to have considered themselves as an elite group. This was perhaps as a result of their own experience and empowering leadership. In fact, they encouraged new recruits and eagerly married them, on the provision that they were baptized. Led by the original Bombay Africans, the resultant community focused on education in Kiswahili and on Christianity. As a result, Christianity was taken to new areas by people like Abi Sidi, a formerly enslaved person from Giriama who was baptized at Rabai and established a mission at Fulladoyo which held between 300 and 400 Africans (Harris, 1977, p. 37). There was no Western education institution in the hinterland of East Africa before the completion of the Uganda railway.

Parallel to the employment of the African seamen in India and the development of the Bombay African settlements was a series of nineteenth-century European expeditions in Central and East Africa. One of the first references to a Bombay African comes in the form of Sidi Mubarak Bombay (*circa* 1820 to 1885), who was known as 'Seedi Bombay'. Seedi Bombay was of Yao origin and was chosen to accompany, as a gun bearer, John H. Speke and Sir Richard F. Burton on their quest for the source of the Nile River between 1856 and 1860 (Burton, 1855, p. 103). Seedi Bombay proved to be more than just a gun bearer; he served as a translator, a guide, a diplomat and a leader. He was with Speke when the explorer sighted Lake Victoria Nyanza at Speke Gulf, and accompanied Speke and James A. Grant to Uganda. These experiences and his qualities earned him a silver medal from the Royal Geographical Society (Simpson, 1975, p. 38). This remarkable man was leader of the expedition to find Livingstone in 1871. In his lifetime, Seedi Bombay travelled the entire length of the Nile from Uganda to Cairo (1860–1863), crossed Africa from Zanzibar to Benguela (1873–1875), and travelled by sea the entire length of the east coast from Suez to Cape Town. If we include his travels to India and back to Africa, Seedi Bombay stands out as one of the most well-travelled Africans of his time; the distances he covered easily exceed those covered by any European explorer within Africa.

The two boys, Wekotani and James Chuma, the adults Abdullah Susi[1] and Amoda,[2] who had both been working at the Bombay docks (Jeal, 1974, p. 296), and several other Bombay Africans were to accompany Livingstone on his expedition from 1866 to 1869. James Chuma joined Joseph Thomson on his expedition from 1879 to 1880 to the central lakes, and Abdulla Susi joined Henry M. Stanley on his 1881 expedition to the Congo region. Abdulla Susi was the leader of a group who reconnoitred the region of Kintamo on the lower Congo River in order to find a suitable location for a camp. The chosen site became 'Station Four' on 1 December 1881. Susi was in charge of supervising the construction of the settlement. In the following April, Stanley named the settlement Léopoldville; it is known today as Kinshasa (Democratic Republic of the Congo) (Simpson, 1975, p. 158). The Bombay Africans were responsible for collecting, collating and delivering much of the geographical data collected by Livingstone on his final expedition. Two of them, James Chuma and Abdulla Susi, were also responsible for helping the Royal Geographical Society complete the biography on the explorer. Alongside Seedi Bombay, they were recognized in the nineteenth century for their role in the advancement of African geography.

A few Bombay Africans, including Wekotani, who accompanied Livingstone from 1866 to 1869, actually returned to their homeland (Harris, 1977, p. 19). Wekotani assisted E. D. Young as an interpreter and guide in 1875 to the country around Lake Malawi, even helping to ensure provision of supplies. In October 1875, Wekotani was also at the founding of a settlement, at Chembe on the lakeshore, which would be the original Livingstonia Mission (Simpson, 1975, p. 136). The mission was moved to Bandawe (Malawi) in 1882 and became one of the most influential educational institutions in southern Africa.

Jacob Wainright[3] left Nasik in February 1872 with four other Bombay Africans. They returned to Africa and were sent to look for David Livingstone, whom they found in August 1872 in Unyanyembe, in Tanzania. Wainright was present at the death of Livingstone at Ilala in Zambia; he accompanied his body to the coast and to London in 1874 (Jeal, 1974, pp. 354–369). Wainright returned to Africa and arrived in the kingdom of Buganda (Uganda) in March 1880 with the CMS and was quickly recognized for his skills in diplomacy and Kiswahili-English interpretation, which led to his employment as court scribe by Kabaka Mutesa in 1881 (Simpson, 1975, p. 140). A decade later, Wainright

1 Died in 1891.

2 Died in 1876.

3 Died in 1892.

was at the London Missionary Society's mission at Urambo (Tanzania), where he remained until his death in 1892. In East Africa in 1885, William Jones and Ishmael Semler became the first Africans to be ordained into the Anglican church. The connection between school and church was strengthened and the terms 'Christian' and 'educated' became interchangeable (Raju, 1973, p. 2).

The influence of Bombay Africans and their descendants on Eastern Africa

The Freretown settlement quickly developed small industries, such as brick- and tile-making, making palm leaf products (such as mats, screens, brushes and brooms) and woodworking. In Africa, many of the children of the Bombay Africans were initially sent to India for their education. A hospital was established at Freretown with a European doctor, but with Bombay African nurses and midwives. The Rabai and Freretown settlements developed their own systems of local government, which incorporated African elements, such as a council of elders. All of the elders were English-speaking and formed an executive council with written by-laws. Policing was under the authority of the executive council, though Nubian and Indian police were employed on loan from the IBEAC, to which the settlements acknowledged overall authority (Harris, 1977, pp. 44–45). The ideals fostered by the Bombay Africans were transferred to other Africans at Rabai and Freretown. Many of these were the children of formerly enslaved people and had been raised under a Bombay African philosophy of unity, equality, Christianity and a strong awareness of a pan-African identity.

The trade routes sought out and taken by the Bombay Africans as explorers formed the blueprint for the major modern transport networks in East Africa, including the vital Uganda railway. As a result of the replacement of the IBEAC by colonial rule in 1896, the completion of the Uganda railway in 1901 and the move of the colonial capital from Mombasa to Nairobi in 1907, the descendants of the Bombay Africans and the Africans under their tutelage were dispersed throughout East Africa, as engineers, teachers, clergy, clerks and medics (Simpson, 1975, p. 198). They became, in effect, the first African middle class and civil servants. A working relationship with the Asians fostered the involvement of these educated Africans in developing trade union movements. At the same time, other Africans who benefitted from the mission schools established and run by people in Freretown and in

Rabai entered politics and became involved with groups such as the Coast African Association and the Mombasa African Democratic Union (MADU), founded by Francis Khamisi of Rabai. MADU was the main political force for Africans in coastal Kenya and provided the groundwork for other Kenyan political parties (Harris, 1977, pp. 52–53).

Freretown rapidly became the centre for the study of Kiswahili in Latin script; in 1928, 16 students of Kiswahili arrived from the newly formed CMS Elgon diocese and six arrived from the education department of Makerere College, which would later become part of the University of East Africa. Freretown therefore encouraged the spread of standardized Kiswahili throughout eastern Africa (Harris, 1977, p. 49).

William 'Willie' Jones, the son of William Jones, was a pioneer in education on the East African coast (Harris, 1977, pp. 32–37); James 'Jimmy' Jones, another of his sons, became Kenya's first printer and produced most of the religious and educational material for missions throughout eastern Africa in English and Kiswahili (Harris, 1977, p. 42). The Rabaians and Freretownians provided editors for the first English and Kiswahili publications, including the *Coast Express*, *Sauti ya Madu*, *Hodi*, *Sauti ya Pwani*, *Baraza* and *Mwalimu* (Harris, 1977, p. 53). Jimmy Jones and other Bombay Africans of Freretown connected with Jomo Kenyatta and Mbiyu Koinange (Harris, 1977, p. 66), who were champions of Kenyan independence. In 1944, the colonial government formed the Kenya African Study Union (KASU), an organization of which the aim was to represent the developing educated Africans. Among its founding members were Harry Thuku (1895–1970), as president, and Freretownian Francis Khamisi, who was the editor of *Mwalimu,* as secretary (Khamisi, 2014, pp. 29–30). KASU soon changed its name to the Kenya African Union (KAU) (Okoth, 2006, p. 74). Harry Thuku was also a close friend of Freretownians Jimmy Jones (Thuku, 1970, p. 23) and Tom Mbotela. The latter was originally assistant editor of the newspaper *Sauti ya Mwafrika* from 1946 to 1947. The newspaper served as a voice for the KAU, and Mbotela was made its trustee in 1948. In 1949, he was appointed as vice-president of the leading legal mouthpiece of Kenyan independence (Corfield, 1960, p. 55). Tom Mbotela was regarded by colonials and Africans alike as a moderating influence in the difficult period of the rise of the Mau Mau. Unable to stem the direction of the Mau Mau, he resigned from the KAU and was appointed to Nairobi City Council. He was assassinated in September 1952 in Nairobi (Elkins, 2005, p. 38), where an estate has been named after him.

In September 1958, a group of African nationalists under the leadership of Julius Nyerere (1922–1999) of the Tanganyika African National Union (TANU) met at Mwanza (Tanzania) and formed the Pan-African Freedom Movement of East and Central Africa (PAFMECA). The movement was a collective effort working towards ending imperial rule, settler domination and apartheid in the region. A caretaker committee and fund were established under the chairmanship of Francis Khamisi (Khamisi, 2014, pp. 29–30). Tanzanian nationalist John Mwakangele and Kanyama Chiume (1929–2007) of Malawi were also present, and it would appear that they shared Khamisi's sentiments of pan-Africanism. Khamisi continued to be involved with PAFMECA and was involved in its invitation to Nelson Mandela to speak at their conference in Addis Ababa in 1962, thereby extending the activities of PAFMECA to cover southern Africa.

Conclusion

The enslaved African children of diverse ethnicities forged relationships with their peers on their march to the coast, as well as on board the slave-trading dhows. These relationships were strengthened upon liberation by other liberated African crewmen, who certainly served as positive role models. But it was in India, linked by an African origin and shared experiences, that these young people developed a sense of community and a vision of being free Africans without ethnic barriers. The role of Bombay Africans as crewmen and expedition leaders is a testament to their self-empowerment, expressions of leadership and desire to remain free. The majority became Christians, including all of those who went through the Nasik and other Indian orphanages. The story of the return to Freretown of literate, skilled, adult Africans from Bombay Presidency between 1868 and 1885 is similar to that of the Sierra Leone Creoles (or Krio) of Freetown between 1787 and 1885. The relatively short period spent in India, which amounted to about two decades for the original Bombay Africans, in addition to their relatively small numbers, adoption of Kiswahili, eagerness to intermarry with other formerly enslaved people under their tutelage and rapid dispersal in Africa were all factors that aided their assimilation into mainstream colonial eastern Africa. This is what sets them apart from the Sierra Leone Creoles or the Americo-Liberians of Liberia, who remain politically, economically and culturally separate. Despite the small size of the community, their pan-African vision and influence in the social and political development

of Kenya extended beyond the Freretown and Rabai settlements in Kenya, and beyond the realms of church and education, to cover much of eastern Africa.

The Bombay Africans as returnee Africans have long passed away; their descendants married the enslaved people they freed or local Africans as they became dispersed throughout Africa. The memory of the Bombay Africans is nonetheless very much alive among the people of Rabai and Freretown, who continue to regard themselves with pride as Kenyan African communities with a unique history.

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CHAPTER 33

AFRICAN DIASPORA, SIERRA LEONE AND PROTESTANT CHRISTIANITY, *CIRCA* 1780–1860

Suzanne Schwarz

The African diaspora and Freetown, Sierra Leone

The British colony of Sierra Leone emerged as an important site in the global diaspora of Africans uprooted and displaced as a result of the Atlantic slave trade in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. This small area of territory on the Sierra Leone peninsula became the focus for inward streams of coerced, semi-voluntary and voluntary migrations of people of African origin and descent from across West Africa and the Atlantic world (Lovejoy and Schwarz, 2015, pp. 4–9, p. 24). Abolitionist intervention on the peninsula from 1787 onwards set in motion overlapping phases of migration of peoples with differing experiences of slavery and freedom in North America, the Caribbean region, Europe and West Africa. The formation of the 'Province of Freedom' in 1787, through the combined initiative of the 'Black Poor' in Britain and the abolitionist Granville Sharp, was intended to establish a society free from slavery in which people of African descent would handle their own affairs. The Sierra Leone Company, a chartered trading company that assumed responsibility for the settlement in 1791 following the collapse of the 'Province of Freedom', rejected the idea of a self-governing black community and placed emphasis instead on attacking the slave trade through policies combining 'commerce, civilization and Christianity' (Braidwood, 1994, pp. 225–277; Fyfe, 1962, pp. 25–37; Peterson, 1969, pp. 17–32;

Fyle, 2011, pp. 45–46; Schwarz, 2007; Schwarz, 2017). Following the transfer of the settlement to British Crown control in 1808, the multi-ethnic composition of the settlement was increased markedly through the forced relocation to Sierra Leone of tens of thousands of Africans released from slave ships on the West African coast by British Royal Navy patrols (Schwarz, 2012; Da Silva et al., 2014; Schwarz, 2020). During this period, Sierra Leone developed as an early and important site of experimentation in Protestant missions and was associated with some of the earliest European interventions of the Evangelical revival. Although earlier historical writing has placed emphasis on European missionaries, an outstanding characteristic of the activity in Sierra Leone was the extensive and independent roles of people of African origin and descent. As Hair points out, the 'missions from Freetown […] were largely manned by Africans; the initiative in most cases came largely from African sources; and the direction of many of them was largely in African hands' (1964, pp. 13–14).

The influx of migrants to Sierra Leone between the late 1780s and early 1860s introduced new African and Afrodescendent peoples, languages, cultures and religious beliefs into an area that had hitherto demonstrated considerable continuity as regards the make-up of the population. As Fyfe points out,

> 1787 brought dramatic discontinuity. A totally different population was introduced. During the succeeding twenty years three successive settler communities of African descent arrived – the 1787 settlers (the so-called "Black Poor") from England, in 1792 the settlers from Nova Scotia, and in 1800 the Jamaica Maroons (Fyfe, 1987, pp. 411–414; Fyfe, 1962, pp. 13–104).

The scale of migration increased at a rapid rate following British abolition of the slave trade in 1807, and the coerced inward movement of Africans released from slave ships led to far-reaching changes in the composition of the colonial population. Between 1808 and 1861, an estimated 100,000 men, women and children were released at Freetown from across different regions of West Africa stretching from Senegambia to western Central Africa (Liberated Africans digital humanities project). The individuals disembarked at Freetown also included some from East Africa (Fyfe, 1987, p. 412). By the early 1850s, the missionary linguist Sigismund Wilhelm Koelle had collected testimonies from 179 formerly enslaved people in Sierra Leone. As Hair points out, the origins of these individuals present 'a miniature of the slave trade within Western tropical Africa in the early nineteenth century' (1965, p. 201; Da Silva et al., 2014, pp. 365–366). In the colony village of Waterloo in the 1840s, this diversity is reflected in how the main national groups were formed into an

organization called the 'Seventeen Nations' to resolve disputes. From the 1830s, the complexity of migration was increased still further by an outward diaspora of Africans from Sierra Leone returning to their homelands, and these Saros,[1] or returnees, contributed directly to the transmission of Christianity from the colony (Fyfe, 1962, pp. 227–228, pp. 233–234; Ayandele, 1966, pp. 7–16).

Christian influences shaped the identity of the colony's principal settlement at Freetown in a variety of ways. The London-based directors of the Sierra Leone Company considered that Protestant Christianity was vital to efforts to undermine the Atlantic slave trade and to reform African society, culture and economy. As Freetown was established in a wider region of slave supply in West Africa, the company directors argued that policies based on commerce, civilization and Christianity could be used to stem the outward flow of Africans to the Americas. In the period between the mid-sixteenth and early nineteenth centuries, slave trading based around the Sierra Leone River supplied an estimated 148,000 Africans for export; most of these individuals were transported between 1750 and 1807 (Lovejoy and Schwarz, 2015, p. 5, p. 13, p. 24). The company's plans to undermine the Atlantic slave trade by promoting alternative forms of trade in the natural resources of Africa were overly ambitious and based on a very limited understanding of African societies and economies. Lacking any significant military resources, the company attempted unsuccessfully to use methods of persuasion and example to encourage African merchants to turn away from the export of enslaved Africans. Moreover, the leading abolitionist Thomas Clarkson argued that reforming trading systems also provided a mechanism through which Christianity could be spread across West Africa. In a report to company directors in 1791, he expressed confidence that through trade 'a road would be opened to the Christian missionary to lay before unenlightened nations the gospel of reconciliation and peace' (Schwarz, 2007, pp. 265–266; Law, Schwarz and Strickrodt, 2013, pp. 1–6).

Religious diversity in Freetown

A major source of influence on the development of Christianity in Freetown in this early phase was the resettlement of migrants of African origin and descent from British territory in Nova Scotia. By the time the British flag was raised at Freetown on 1 January 1808, the multi-ethnic population of the

1 An abbreviation of Sierra Leone.

colony included a significant proportion of migrants who regarded themselves as Christian. Evangelical forms of Protestantism were particularly strong among the more than 1,100 Black Loyalists who had migrated to Sierra Leone from Nova Scotia in 1792. These descendants of Africans transported to North America had secured their freedom by fighting for the British in the United States War of Independence but, after a period of resettlement in Nova Scotia, their representative Thomas Peters petitioned the directors of the Sierra Leone Company for permission to resettle in Sierra Leone. The 'Nova Scotians' came to West Africa organized in Baptist, Wesleyan Methodist and Huntingdonian Methodist congregations, which had been shaped in the context of the Great Awakening in North America. Their chapels provided a focus for political resistance to company decisions on religious and secular matters, which prevented them from making 'our Children free and happy after us' (Fyfe, 1991, pp. 1–19, pp. 36–40; Walls, 1996, pp. 86–87).

Freetown's identity as a Christian city in West Africa was deliberately constructed by the directors of the Sierra Leone Company during their seventeen-year period of administration (1791–1807), and the governance of the settlement was largely in the control of English and Scottish Protestants of an evangelical turn of mind. Freetown schools were based on Christian systems of education, and the scriptures were used to teach reading and writing to the children of settlers as well as to African children from neighbouring areas (Schwarz, 2007; Keefer, 2019). However, the settlement was not uniformly Christian despite the emphasis placed on commerce, civilization and Christianity by company administrators. While the spread of Protestant Christianity was an important factor in the cultural evolution of the colony, this has had the effect of obscuring considerable religious diversity within the make-up of Freetown's population. A significant Muslim presence in Freetown and its immediate hinterland can be traced in the earliest phases of the settlement's development. In 1794, the village of Dalamodiya was constructed adjacent to Freetown and was led by Alimaamy Dalu Mohammedu Dumbuya, a Muslim trader who provided a direct link between Freetown and inland Muslim supply routes (Mouser, 2013, pp. 334-341). The arrival in 1800 of 550 Jamaican Maroons, runaway enslaved people who had established independent communities in Jamaica, introduced a new migrant group retaining strong elements of African traditional practice in religion. While Maroon children attended schools run by Christian missionaries, potentially for the secular benefits offered, adults refused to acquiesce to the company's insistence that they accept Christian regulation of marriage (Fyfe, 1962, pp. 85–88).

Some of the earliest examples of missions to the Temne and Bullom communities can be traced to men and women among the Nova Scotians in the early 1790s. Boston King, a Methodist, hoped that by resettling in Africa he could preach the gospel to neighbouring Africans. Although King was unable to claim any African converts, his preaching and teaching on the Bullom shore appear to have had more of an impact than the feeble efforts of the Reverend Melville Horne, a missionary from England based in Freetown between 1792 and 1793 (Schwarz, 2003). Recognition of the role Africans could play in missions was central to attempts to educate 20 or more children of settlers and African leaders at a school in Clapham near London between 1799 and 1806. As Bruce Mouser's analysis of this school has demonstrated, the intention was that these children would return to Africa and use their newly acquired education to spread the gospel (King, 1798; Mouser, 2004).

The arrival of thousands of men, women and children released from slave ships led to a rapid expansion in the ethnic and cultural diversity of Freetown's population. A breakdown of the origins of 638 children in schools in Sierra Leone highlights the presence, by the early 1820s, of a significant number of people of Igbo and Efik origin with a smaller proportion of 'Accoo' or Yoruba. The number of Yoruba arriving as 'recaptives' or 'liberated Africans' in Sierra Leone increased rapidly from the 1820s as a result of jihad and the collapse of the state of Oyo (Jones, 1990, pp. 50–52; Lovejoy, 2016, pp. 83–85, p. 136, p. 147; Lovejoy, 2012, pp. 140–143; Fyle, 2011, pp. 48–54). The number of enslaved Muslims was significant among those who were forcibly relocated to Sierra Leone, including Ali Eisami Gazirmabe, who originated from Gazir in Borno, in what is now Northeastern Nigeria. In the narrative dictated to Koelle in Sierra Leone, Ali Eisami, who became a Christian and adopted the name of William Harding, indicated that his father was a *mallam,* or Islamic cleric. While the Christian identity of the colony has typically been given most emphasis in historical literature, the work of Gibril Cole and David Skinner emphasizes the importance of Muslim influence in late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Sierra Leone (Curtin, 1967, p. 7, p. 193, pp. 199–216; Cole, 2013, pp. 1–7; Skinner, 2009).

Fyfe has argued that men, women and children uprooted from their areas of origin were attracted to a Christian message which encouraged them 'to strive for heavenly and earthly prizes' (Fyfe, 1961, pp. 77–78). However, the type of Christian influences encountered by these Africans varied depending on a range of factors, including the date of their arrival and their age and gender. Individuals, classified as 'recaptives' and 'liberated Africans' in contemporary accounts, were not given their freedom on arrival but entered into lengthy

periods of apprenticeship with settlers and colonial officials whilst others were enlisted involuntarily in the Royal Navy and the Royal African Corps. Many of those allocated as apprentices to Nova Scotian settlers would have developed a familiarity with Christian beliefs. However, this transition to Christianity can be overstated as not all of the Nova Scotian settlers were Christians, and many of those released were allocated to Jamaican Maroons in the early phases of suppression policy. Of the 14 men, boys and girls released from the *São Joaquim* and *São Domingos* in 1809, nine were apprenticed to Jamaican Maroons. For example, Macautaw, a four-foot-tall girl aged eight years and listed as number 74 in the register of liberated Africans held in the Sierra Leone Public Archives, was apprenticed to 'Catherine Jarrett, also a Maroon' (Schwarz, 2012, pp. 191–192; Schwarz, 2020).

The Church Missionary Society

From 1804, European missionaries were sent to Sierra Leone by the Church Missionary Society (CMS); their efforts were focused initially on preaching outside the colony (Fyfe, 1962, pp. 94–95; Peterson, 1969, pp. 63–80; Keefer, 2019, pp. 45–70, pp. 97–129). Between 1816 and 1824, the CMS assumed formal responsibility for the secular and ecclesiastical management of colony villages where many of the Africans who had disembarked from slave ships were located. In Governor Charles MacCarthy's management plan for the "liberated Africans", the 'Colony was divided into parishes, each to be superintended by a clergyman provided by the CMS, paid by government. The CMS undertook to provide and pay teachers, government to build churches, schools and parsonages' (Fyfe, 1962, pp. 127–131). Unsurprisingly, Christian instruction underpinned every aspect of the curriculum. In needlework lessons, as Silke Strickrodt has demonstrated, African girls embroidered Christian messages into samplers. A sampler embroidered by Charlotte Turner in the village of Bathurst in 1831 included the verse:

> *Lord teach a little child to pray, / My heart with love inflame, / That ev'ry night and ev'ry day / I may adore thy name.*

As the design for the embroidery was under the direction of a CMS teacher and was intended as a form of missionary propaganda, it is unclear whether the content reflected Charlotte Turner's own views (Strickrodt, 2010, pp. 214–218).

The most well-known example of Christian conversion among the Africans released at Freetown was Samuel Ajayi Crowther. He was born in around 1806 in Oshogun, in the district of Ibarapa in Oyo. He was captured in 1821, shipped as a slave from Lagos and subsequently convoyed to Freetown following the ship's interception by an anti-slavery patrol in 1822. In his narrative written in 1837, Crowther recorded that after six months spent 'under the care of the Church Missionary Society' at Bathurst, he was 'able to read the New Testament with some degree of freedom; and was made a Monitor'. In this account, written almost 30 years before his consecration as the first African Anglican bishop, he explained how 'The Lord was pleased to open my heart, to hearken to those things which were spoken by His servants; and being convinced that I was a sinner, and desired to obtain pardon through Jesus Christ, I was baptized on the 11th of December, 1825, by the Rev. J. Raban'. He expressed the hope 'That the time may come when the Heathen shall be fully given to Christ for His inheritance [...]'. His subsequent preaching in Badagry and Abeokuta in 1845 and 1846, in addition to his formation in 1857 of the Niger Mission with 'an all-African staff' all highlight his commitment to spreading the gospel (Curtin, 1967, p. 8, pp. 289–316; Ajayi, 1969, pp. 25–27; Hair, 1966, pp. 217–219). Joseph Wright, who worked as a missionary for the Wesleyan Methodist Missionary Society, recorded in *The Life of Joseph Wright, A Native of Ackoo* in 1839 that he was sent to York and 'placed at school' where he 'came to know that high and glorious name of Jesus Christ the Saviour'. His attendance at the Methodist chapel later led him to go out 'among my friends, telling them that the Lord is good; inviting them to come and taste for themselves [...]'. Wright, who was of Egba Alake origin and born in Oba, recorded how he 'was born a Heathen in a Heathen Land, and was trained up in my youth to the fashion and customs of that heathenish country [...]'. This reflected a standard narrative convention in which he traced his spiritual path from being a 'heathen' to his acceptance of a new life of Christianity (Curtin, 1967, p. 8, pp. 193–194, pp. 317–333).

Further evidence of the acceptance of Christianity by some Africans is reflected in memorials in the churches and graveyards of Freetown. The adoption of Christian commemorative practices by some high-status individuals is evidenced by the gravestones in the Circular Road cemetery. One memorial record that was set up

> *"In Memory of John Taylor (Native of Ilawo Abeokuta, in the Egba Territory) Trader of this Settlement" who "Departed this life on Monday the 2nd of October 1876, at the Good Old Age of About 107 Years, Blessed are the Dead which Die in the Lord. Rev[elations]. 14.13".*

Other inscriptions reflect memories of individuals' homelands. In St. George's Cathedral, an inscription to William Henry Pratt, who died on 21 February 1865 aged 62, records that he was 'A Native of the River Niger, Merchant and Marshall of the Vice Admiralty Court of this Colony' and 'President of the Eboe Association to Aid the Niger Mission'. The memorial also included an extract from Psalm 37 (verse 37) – 'Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright: for the end of that man is peace'. A memorial erected in the cathedral to commemorate Isaac Benjamin Pratt following his death in July 1880 describes how he was a 'native of the Ifeh section of the Aku tribe'. The inscription records how he had 'Arrived in the Colony in 1825, and in After Years Filled the Important Post of King or Headman among his Countrymen in the City'. The final line on Pratt's memorial inscription was taken from Proverbs, chapter 10, verse 7, of the Old Testament, and stated that the 'The memory of the just is blessed'.[2]

Return migration and missions

The outward spread of Christianity from Sierra Leone to Yorubaland was linked to the return migration of Africans to their places of origin from the late 1830s. Prosperous Yoruba traders started to 'return' to Badagry and Abeokuta after 1838 to pursue economic opportunities along the coast, and these Saros made the first appeals to the CMS to establish missionary stations in their new locations. One of the early returnees to Badagry was James Ferguson, who had converted to Wesleyan Methodism in Freetown. Not all returnees were Christian; a group of 50 Muslim Aku under the leadership of Mohamadu Savage was among those who left the colony (Fyfe, 1962, pp. 227–228; Ajayi, 1969, pp. 25–34; Hair, 1964, pp. 14–17). Walls has emphasized how the spread of Christianity in nineteenth-century West Africa was often through informal contact with 'an itinerant or immigrant Sierra Leonean'. The form of Christianity that returnees exhibited was syncretic in nature and did not conform to the type of Protestantism that European CMS officials promoted in Sierra Leone. Ayandele has argued that returnees tended to 'conform to indigenous pattern in all essentials' (Walls, 1996, p. 105; Ayandele, 1966, p. 7, p. 15).

2 Remember Me: The Changing Face of Memorialisation digital project. Available online https://remembermeproject.wordpress.com/2016/01/07/surveying-memorialisation-in-freetown/. (Accessed 29 July 2022.)

Central to CMS efforts in Sierra Leone and further afield was the role of 'native clergy' educated at Fourah Bay College in Freetown. As Hair points out, the importance of clerical education in Freetown is reflected in how just under half of the 112 'native clergy' who served the CMS in West Africa between 1843 and 1899 were trained at Fourah Bay College (Hair, 1962, pp. 71–72; Hair, 1964, p. 15). The endeavours of missionaries educated at Fourah Bay College also had wider cultural and economic effects through the secular attractions of their educational work, which influenced the emergence of a 'class of Western educated elite' in Yorubaland. African languages were used in evangelization, and the translation of the Bible into Yoruba and other West African languages promoted new standards of linguistic work. Ajayi points out how Crowther, following his ordination in London in 1843, returned to Sierra Leone and began preparing 'for a mission to Abeokuta by beginning to conduct services in the Yoruba language' (Ajayi, 1969, pp. xiv-xv, p. 30, pp. 33–34, pp. 67–77, pp. 223–224; Ayandele, 1966, p. 12; Peel, 2003, pp. 1–8, pp. 10–11; Hair, 1966, pp. 127–129).

African initiative was central to the spread of Protestant Christianity in nineteenth-century West Africa. When Thomas Clarkson referred in 1791 to how trade would be the means by which 'a road would be opened to the Christian missionary', he was no doubt thinking in terms of European missionaries and traders spreading the gospel of Protestant Christianity to Africans unfamiliar with the Bible. In contrast, the pattern that emerged in late eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Sierra Leone was characterized by the extensive and influential roles played by Africans in transmitting Christianity outside the boundaries of the colony. As Lynn has emphasized, the entrepreneurial behaviour of 'liberated Africans' and their descendants in developing new trading opportunities outside the colony provided an important means through which Christian influences spread along coastal commercial routes in the mid-nineteenth century (Lynn, 1992, pp. 423–427; Ajayi, 1969, pp. 26–29).

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CHAPTER 34

THE KRIOS PEOPLE OF SIERRA LEONE:

A Rooted Errance

Sylvie Kandé

Introduction

The concept of the African, or black, diaspora, partially borrowed from Jewish history, is often understood as the scattering of part of a homogeneous population from Africa, towards the Americas and Europe for the most part, but also towards Asia. The paths taken could be confused with routes of the slave trade or, when in the opposite direction, those of colonial conquest. This pattern invites us to think of the movement of Africans and Afrodescendants towards Africa as a 'return', a restorer of lost unity, or even a liberator, for the regions and players concerned.

From the 1990s, Paul Gilroy, critical of the notion of geographical centre – and hence of Afrocentrism – emphasized in his work the multidirectional flows of people and ideas within a region, the black Atlantic, characterized by the concomitant emergence of capitalism, the slave trade and modernism. The emphasis was on roads, rupture, hybridity and creolization instead of return or preservation. Diasporic communities would no longer be defined by a dual identity, but instead by tension, since migratory journeys from one or more 'elsewheres' formed part of their identity, and by their presumed difference owing to the fact that they occupied a new geopolitical space.

Current research on African movements focuses on the 'deep genealogies' of the human and technological circuits within the continent and in the final transatlantic destinations. The historiography of Sierra Leone and its Creole/Krio population is the subject of both theoretical debates and local and Atlantic events.

Sierra Leone – the different angles of return

The project for a 'return' to Africa[1] was the first of its kind.[2] The founding of the Province of Freedom in 1787 posed a risk to British abolitionism, and even more so to travellers. Its creator, Granville Sharp (1735–1813) had the support of philanthropists, Quakers, charities, parliamentarians, bankers and educated people, such as William Wilberforce, Olaudah Equiano and Hannah More, all of whom banked on non-forced labour and colonization (Ojukutu-Macauley and Rashid, 2013, p. 80).[3] The Province of Freedom, the first modern colony in Africa, established on the west coast peninsula of the Rokel and Bankasoka River estuaries, had to demonstrate the viability of an agricultural alternative to slavery. In terms of a return from slavery, it was also to represent a 'promised land' for those who, scattered by the slave trade, stayed in English ports or (formerly) British North American colonies (Land, 2013). It is worth noting that the process of protecting the black settlers (or the 'returned') from slave trafficking had its shortcomings in terms of their reintegration into the local Temne, Mende or Sherbro groups and of the deportation of 'undesirables' (Shyllon, 1977; Kandé, 1998).

This colony was initially financed by the British Government and by private funds, then managed by the Sierra Leone Company from 1791 to 1808 and finally taken over by the Crown. It was intended for the 'Black Poor' of England and the Black Loyalists of the United States of America who, when first being shipped, were left behind in England or in Nova Scotia after the United States War of Independence, becoming either 'Black Poor' or Nova Scotian. The Maroons of Jamaica were also liberated via Nova Scotia, in addition to the 'recaptives', or 'liberated Africans' who were seized on slave ships in 1807.

1 The term 'the Returned' may indeed be understood in its active or passive sense.

2 From 1820, African-Americans left the United States of America for Liberia; Afro-Brazilians settled in Togo-Benin following the 1835 Malê revolt. See also the story of Libreville in Gabon and Frere Town in Kenya.

3 Chapter by M'bayo.

Sierra Leonean historiography covers, in great detail, the merging in around 1870 of all these diasporas. This merging is said to have happened around the capital, Freetown[4] – while Great Britain was considering self-government for the colony – forming an Afro-Victorian elite, the Creoles. The political, commercial and cultural hegemony of the Creoles over the region continued until the declaration of the protectorate in 1896, which split British subjects from the peninsula and hinterland in accordance with the *indigénat* – until the first discovery of diamonds in the late 1920s.

Becoming native?

This Creole community - literate, Christian, merchant and law-abiding – was it not called to lead Sierra Leone to independence? In fact, the colony had the first non-Islamic university in Africa, Fourah Bay College, which was affiliated with Durham University as of 1876. Its press published quality newspapers, half-owned by Africans and read all over the coast (Alie, 1990, p. 82; Wyse, 1990, pp. 23–25). The Nova Scotians, already Baptists or Methodists when they first arrived, were competing in proselytism with the Church Missionary Society (CMS), particularly in the villages of the liberated. Before the establishment of the Lebanese state, the Creoles, women in particular (White, 1987, p. 3), controlled the regional trade. Along with Samuel Lewis, Freetown's first mayor and member of the country's legislative council, they supported the railroad (which, incidentally, would generate new identity categories)[5] for better access to the protectorate's palm oil, cocoa and rubber. In addition, they created civic and political rights organizations such as the Sierra Leone Mercantile Association, the Sierra Leone Bar Association, and the Sierra Leone branch of the National Congress of British West Africa (NCBWA) which, led by H. C. Bankole-Bright, ensured the relay of petitions and delegations to London on behalf of the first settlers.

'Creoledom', a counter-model of local chieftaincies (Spitzer, 1974, p. 12) and a critical ally of the colonial administration, would have seen its aspiration for self-government left unrealized. The destruction of Granville Town in 1790 and the cheap trade of settlers seemed to usher in a series of 'native' hostilities

4 See the work of Fyfe, Peterson, Porter, Spitzer. This interpretation is sometimes still valid: see the chapter written by N. Blyden in Ojukutu-Macauley and Rashid, 2013, p. 62.

5 For example: 'up-line/city' in the chapter by Sengova in Dixon-Fyle and Cole, 2006, p. 173.

towards the 'returned' and their descendants, victims in 1898 of the rebellion against housing tax and indirect rule. Creole owners and traders were soon expelled from the protectorate, an agricultural hub and mineral reservoir, to which the British granted growing political representation (Ojukutu-Macauley and Rashid, 2013, pp. 136–137).[6] The two world wars confirmed the decline of the Creoles. The 1947 constitution even asserted 'native' dominance over the legislative council of a colony by British subjects. An 'ethnic' polarization opposed the National Council of Sierra Leone, with its separatist ideology and opposition to exile (Ojukutu-Macauley and Rashid, 2013, p. 128),[7] and the Sierra Leone People's Party, whose leader, Milton Margai, a nationalist prime minister, imposed taxes on the Creoles as a 'handful of foreigners to whom our ancestors gave refuge' (Ojukutu-Macauley and Rashid, 2013, p. 146).[8]

Although the question of return at the heart of English and Nova Scotian evangelism (Sidbury, 2007, pp. 67–129) quickly faded, the narrative about Creoles, and about those who identified as such, remained haunted by non-Indigenousness, the right to the land and the right to power. Independence in 1961 rendered the colony/protectorate's political identity invalid, although a segregated land tenure system was maintained in the 'provinces' (Ojukutu-Macauley and Rashid, 2013, p. 68).[9]

Krio movements

Whether as a political project or a historiographical category, the stability of Creole unity in Sierra Leone could not last. The first settlers were Wilberforce-worthy 'Africans'; they signed their petitions 'free British subject', 'American' or 'Nova Scotia Black'. It was the British Parliament which, in 1853, granting the status of British subjects to the liberated, encouraged all the residents of the peninsula who identified as being of non-local African descent to regroup. The name of Creole spread, with positive connotations (Africanus Horton) or negative connotations (Edward Wilmot Blyden), and with people labelled in the press as '(real) Sierra Leoneans', 'colony-born, (peninsula) natives', then

6 Chapter by Cole.

7 Chapter by Cole.

8 Chapter by Cole.

9 Chapter by Blyden.

'non-natives' from 1898. This census category appeared for the last time in 1921 and was replaced in 1931 by 'colony Africans'.[10]

Independence, however, brought about the need for a new policy for representation of the populations making up the nation (Ojukutu-Macauley and Rashid, 2013, p. 205).[11] It is the historian Akintola Wyse who first worked towards the re-Africanization of the Krios, highlighting their contributions to and rights in the region. The neologism 'Krio' did indeed replace 'Creole' (Wyse, 1989, pp. 6–7) and the harmful westernization of the group was minimized (Alie, 1990, p. 78) or presented as emblematic of the post-colonial condition. For 'Kriodom', 1870 remained a pivotal date with the end of the mass arrivals of Yoruba, whose language, secret societies such as the Oje, and even urbanism would have transformed the Sierra Leonean culture. As many of these liberated Yoruba were Muslim[12] (the Aku), the Christian identity associated with the Creoles was challenged (Dixon-Fyle and Cole, 2006, p. 224).[13]

The focus then shifted to the commercial, religious, family and political relations between rural Krio and a hinterland on which the peninsula depended for its survival. Besides, did the Krio not support the rebellion of the protectorate in 1898, the anti-Syrian protests in 1919 and the rail workers' strike in 1926, at the cost of the dissolution of the Freetown City Council (Alie 1990, pp. 175–176)? The pan-African and transethnic initiatives of Krio politicians – the Sierra Leone Aborigines' Society of A. E. Tobuku-Metzger, the West African Youth League of I. T. A. Wallace-Johnson and the Sierra Leone Women's Movement of Constance Cummings-John – were also positively reassessed.

The Krio historiography seemed, at that time, to be ahead of existing studies of African movements, their emblematic figures and their stories. *Provincializing Europe* traced the 'deep genealogies' of individual movements or of transfers of objects and technology on the continent (Bruijn; Van Dijk et al., 2001; Transfers, 2006; Wyse, 1989, pp. 19–32). This epistemology was based on the networks of Freetown women traders specialized in cola nuts, who were pioneers and cultural brokers (White, 1987, p. 47), and on the resale by the liberated of items seized on slave ships, and in diaspora circuits. One such circuit was that of the Saro who, together with Bishop Samuel Ajayi Crowther (1809–1891) and

10 For a debate on this terminology, see Kandé, 1993; Goerg, 1995; Coleman, 2008.

11 Chapter by Abdullah.

12 They were well integrated in Foulah Town and at Fourah Bay. (Peterson, in Fyfe and Jones, 1968, p. 102; Fyfe, 1979, p. 48, note 1).

13 Chapter by Spencer-Walters.

CMS evangelizer James Johnson (1839–1917), settled in Nigeria (Dixon-Fyle and Cole, 2006, pp. 107–131; Boahen, 1996, pp. 82–83).[14]

The study of Krio movements, by contrast, had a tendency to ignore the distant diasporas, in addition to the British, American or Caribbean history of certain inhabitants of the peninsula. Although the Krios are now rerooted in Sierra Leone, the 'invention' of their ethnic group, or its reconversion into a social class, remains insufficiently analysed (Amselle and M'Bokolo, 1985; Kandé, 1993; Knörr, 2010, p. 217).

Roots and routes: the Sierra Leonean diasporas

The use of 'we' in the Afro-British press indicated that said press classed itself, along with the English, with the 'natives' (Zachernuk, 2000, p. 43)[15] or with a community of the 'in-between'. The complexity of this identity was better understood through the concept of hybridity, which also subverted the teleological narrative of the rise of the nation. By emphasizing the multiple crossings of Afrodescendants who constituted the black Atlantic and of whom the diasporas were themselves composed, Paul Gilroy outlined that origin and return remain negotiable arguments.

The Province of Freedom was founded in an already hybrid region, one that was penetrated by Islam with the Mandingo and Fulbe in the seventeenth century and where Portuguese presence dated back to the fifteenth century. The French and the English also owned warehouses there. Language, dress (Sidbury, 2007, p. 100) and ambitions of local rulers testified to their familiarity with these cultures. Naimbana, for example, married his daughter to a settler, sent a son to France, another to England and made a third Muslim (Fyfe, 1962, p. 23, p. 30).

As for the so-called 'Black Poor', they included lascars, sailors of the East India Company, English women and demobilized soldiers of the Ethiopian regiment whose exodus had begun on the American plantations of the south. It is recorded that the 'intermediary exiles' of the settlers, in Nova Scotia, for example, did not necessarily unify them; although African-American Baptists and Methodists saw Africa as a place of resurrection (Brooks, 2003, pp. 87–113), their Ethiopian project (Boahen, 1996, pp. 78–83) was violently crushed in 1800

14 Chapter by Dixon-Fyle.

15 Zachernuk quoting Erechuo.

as a result of Maroon accommodationism.[16] It was also on the basis of presumed 'tribal' origin that the colonial administration had spread the 'liberated' into villages and then into the 'Seventeen Nations'.

In this identity chaos that was the colony, classifications were transitory and loyalties constantly reinvented. The Nova Scotians remained faithful to their African-American religious leaders (White, 1987, p. 8). One of them, David George, however, claimed London as a common homeland. Other settlers, such as Frank Peters, reintegrated into local societies, sometimes only to be enslaved again; others worked in factories (Sidbury, 2007, p. 95, p. 124). The cumulation of the effects of these multiple affiliations shaped the so-called Creole culture, linked to the Atlantic world by its ports and rebellions (Coleman, 2008; Misevitch, 2008); to Africa and the Caribbean by its architecture (Kandé, 1998); and to England by links once seen as essential, but today viewed as tenuous (Land and Schocket, 2008).

In addition, a portion of the 'returned' identified as Temne, Baga or Bullom (Dixon-Fyle and Cole, 2006, pp. 39–40);[17] others obtained land outside of the colony from local landlords.[18] The births of 'natives' in the colony, Krio-Sherbro (Knörr, 2010, p. 215) marriages and concubines also played against the native/settler or Indigenous/Krio dichotomy. Although this dichotomy had been weakened (Ojukutu-Macauley and Rashid, 2013, p. 127),[19] it is now resurfacing in the form of female genital mutilation, practised on 94 per cent of girls except Christian Krios,[20] and traumas related to the civil war (1991–2002), the violence having spread from the hinterland to the capital.

In turn, Sierra Leone generated new diasporas. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, this concerned the entire coast of Guinea and parts of Nigeria, and was permanent in the Gambia (Ashcroft, 2015, p. 103). Individual trajectories contributed to the political, scientific and artistic spheres of the time: Thomas Peters (1738–1792), born in Nigeria, was a Loyalist transferred to Halifax

16 The decision of the Maroons, as soon as they arrived, to fight the Nova Scotian rebellion against the abuse of the Sierra Leone Company, remains insufficiently explained. Land and Schocket (2008) call it a "surprising twist".

17 Chapter by Cole.

18 Notably after the destruction of Freetown in 1794 and in response to the rent collection project (quit-rent) in 1800 (Sidbury 2007, p. 107, p. 127).

19 Chapter by Cole.

20 http://www.who.int/bulletin/volumes/90/2/11-090886/en/ 2007 numerals. See White 1987, pp. 49–51, in which the author mentions the admission of Krio traders into the Bundu without discussion of FGM (female genital mutilation).

who throughout his life resided in England, Germany, the Gold Coast and the United States of America. He brought to London a petition that allowed the return of 1,000 Nova Scotians to Sierra Leone (Shama, 2005, p. 468); Adelaide Casely-Hayford (1868-1960) was a member of the Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA) and founded a girls' school in Freetown. A fraction of the Sierra Leonean elite, including some Krios, had prepared for independence by training in Europe[21] or the United States; refugees from the civil war followed.

However, these expatriates and their descendants acquired a transnational identity without rejecting the concept of nation or of return (Mitchell, 1997, pp. 533–540), unlike the anti-hegemonic presuppositions associated with hybridity. Associations, congregations (Ashcroft, 2015) and social networks of Sierra Leonean diasporic communities in exile were eager to participate in the national reconstruction: thus the Leonenet forum served as a virtual nation during the war (Tynes, 2007, p. 498; Ojukutu-Macauley and Rashid, 2013, p. 71).[22] In addition to financial aid – which has been increasing since the Ebola virus disease outbreak from 2014 to 2016[23] – were skill transfers, including annual visits by Sierra Leonean medical staff based in the United Kingdom to schools and hospitals[24] of their native country.

In Sierra Leone, we now think of the world and the nation simultaneously. Despite its conservatism, the Krio Descendants Union (KDU/KDY), founded in 1950, is now defined by dual membership in the diaspora and Sierra Leone.[25] DNA testing and journeys made between Freetown and the Sea Islands took on a national dimension when, in 1988, President Joseph Saidu Momoh said in South Carolina: 'We are one people despite the distance that separates us' (Ojukutu-Macauley and Rashid, 2013, pp. 65–67).[26]

The distinctive characteristics of the Krio have now spread to the whole of Sierra Leonean society: Krio has become a national language and education is becoming more widespread, as has Freetown's pidginization model.[27] The

21 http://www.qualitative-research.net/index.php/fqs/article/view/1375/2870

22 Chapter by Blyden.

23 http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/BX.TRF.PWKR.DT.GD.ZS?end=2015&locations=SL&start=1980&view=chart

24 https://www.theguardian.com/global-development-professionals-network/2016/may/11/remittances-three-times-greater-aid-sdgs

25 http://www.kduglobal.org/

26 Chapter by Blyden.

27 The notion of creolization is problematic, since the term 'Creole' has been repudiated in the context of Sierra Leone. (Spencer-Walters, in Dixon-Fyle and Cole 2006, pp. 223–230).

peninsula residents face the challenge of playing, on the basis of their non-involvement in war crimes, a major role in promoting a regional culture of peace (Dixon-Fyle and Cole, 2006, pp. 19–20; Knörr, 2010, pp. 222–226). It is likely that the future of the Creole/Krio will not be the subject of a historical investigation. But the stories of wandering roots, still in the heart of Sierra Leone's history, invite us to rethink the ambivalences of a common African identity construction.

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CHAPTER 35

AGUDÁS – THE 'BRAZILIANS' OF BENIN

Milton Guran

Ainsi soit-il. Ainsi soit-il. / Je ne suis d'aucune nationalité prévue par les chancelleries
[So be it. So be it. / I am of no nationality recognized by the chancelleries]
(Césaire, 1983, p. 39)

Introduction

'Are you a Brazilian? So, you are not a foreigner in Benin; you are like a relative of Uidá!'

This is how I was welcomed everywhere in Benin, a fact that testifies to the strength of the 'Brazilian' cultural presence in the country. Indeed, in this region of West Africa, where Portuguese was the lingua franca when the French colonial administration was established in the late nineteenth century, there are still people who greet each other with a loud '*como passou?*' and lunch on feijoada or cozido with cocada for dessert – traditional dishes in Brazilian cuisine. Feijoada is one of Brazil's typical dishes, made with black beans and pork; cozido, a stew of Portuguese origin, is made from vegetables and cooked meats; cocada is a sweet made with grated coconut and sugar.

The festival of Our Lord of Bonfim is celebrated in January, as it is in Bahia. In Porto-Novo, one of the cities of Benin with the strongest 'Brazilian' presence,

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FIGURE 1. *Celebration of* Festa do Nosso Senhor do Bonfin *(the festival of Our Lord of Bonfim) in Porto-Novo, 2010*

this festival begins on the eve of the Mass, with a carnival parade ushered along using large Brazilian flags and everybody in costume. There are also songs in an approximate Portuguese, as well as in Yoruba, Fon and Gun, that reaffirm the festival's Brazilian origin. The celebrations are completed by the *bourian*, a popular show that is nothing more than an African version of the *burrinha*, a form of merrymaking that was much appreciated in Brazil in the nineteenth century, but has now virtually disappeared.

In this region of Africa, the presence of Brazilians, and that of Africans who returned from captivity in Brazil, extends from the present-day city of Lagos in Nigeria to Accra in Ghana. This paper focuses on the case of Benin,[1] where such presence is highly significant today in historical, cultural, economic and political terms. It was mainly through these Brazilians (slave traders and formerly enslaved people) that this region had systematic access to the social codes of

1 The process of social identity construction that has been exacerbated in Benin is analysed by me in more detail in Guran 1996, 2000, 2007, 2010, 2014.

western culture, manufactured goods and a language of universal expression, to name but a few examples. It was the Agudás[2] who guided the region into the era of durable construction, with brick buildings made by reproducing the techniques and the style of nineteenth-century Brazilian architecture (Costa e Silva, 1989*a*; Da Cunha, 1985*b*; Sinou and Oloudé, 1988; Sinou, 1995).

The importance of the 'Brazilians' in terms of the local economy is highlighted by Verger (1968, p. 611) using an extract from the edition of 1 March 1882 of the *Journal Officiel des Établissements Français du Golfe du Bénin*, which shows that 'Seven of the twenty-five trades (wholesalers) established in the country were "Brazilians", along with seventy-eight of the one hundred and four merchants (retailers); i.e. one third of the traders and half of the merchants'. Long before that, from 1845 to 1846, the English traveller John Duncan was already greatly impressed by the level of organization of the 'Brazilian' community, which he presented as being the main engine of the economy (1847).

The political importance of the Brazilian presence in the region from the beginning of the nineteenth century can also be illustrated by the role played by Francisco Félix de Souza. This all-powerful Bahian slave trader became viceroy of Dahomey, with the title of Chachá, and contributed to the fall of Andadozan, king of Dahomey, who was deposed by his brother Guêzo, the future king, in 1818 (Costa e Silva, 2004). At this time, the majority of white people resident in the country were of Brazilian and Portuguese origin and were dedicated to trade – the slave trade, in particular. The human landscape of the region nevertheless changed profoundly with the return from Brazil of formerly enslaved people, owing largely to the deportation of hundreds of participants in the great revolt of 1835 in Bahia (Reis, 1987).

Le retour

This movement of return to the Bight of Benin was the culmination of several factors. These journeys were almost always voluntary and were made both individually and collectively. They were paid for by the interested parties, often helped by Catholic brotherhoods of freed Africans (De Almeida Prado, 1954; Costa e Silva, 1989*a*, 1989*b*, 1989*c*, 1994; Da Cunha, 1985*a*, 1985*b*;

2 On the Agudás, see also: De Almeida Prado, 1954; Braga, 1968, 1970; Castillo, 2011*a*, 2011*b*, 2016; Castro, 1965; Da Costa e Silva, 1989, 1994; Da Cunha, 1985*a*; Freyre, 1990; Krasnowolski, 1987; Law, 2004; Lewicki, 1967; Lima e Souza, 2008, 2013; Rodrigues, 1962; Ross, 1965; Soumoni, 2001; Turner, 1975; Verger, 1953, 1968, 1992; Yai, 1997.

Freyre, 1990; Lima e Souza, 2008, 2013; Pantoja, 1998; Sarracino, 1998; Turner, 1975; Verger, 1968). The idea of proximity to their origins also led many cult leaders to return to the main headquarters of the Jeje and-Nagô sects, which had spread throughout Bahia (Castillo, 2011*a*, 2011*b*).

It is impossible to ascertain the exact number of Africans and Creoles – the latter being almost always children accompanying their parents (Turner, 1975, p. 69) – involved in this return movement. Verger (1968, p. 633) speaks of 3,000; this is increased to 4,000 by Turner (1975, p. 85). Da Cunha (1985*a*, p. 17) estimates that 7,000 to 8,000 Africans and Creoles left Brazil to settle in the region extending from Lagos to Lomé in the course of the nineteenth century.

The descendants of the Brazilians who established themselves in the area to run the slave trade, in addition to the descendants of enslaved people who returned to their homeland, are known to this day as 'Brazilians', in inverted commas, or indeed Agudás, as they are called in Yoruba, Fon and Mina, the relatives 'of Uidá', in other words Beninese people from families with surnames of Portuguese origin. However, it should be noted that in nineteenth-century Nigeria, all Catholics were called Agudás (Da Cunha, 1985*a*, p. 189) and the name is also used in Togo, to this day, to refer to members of the Lebanese, Syrian and Indian colonies. The word Agudá probably derives from a transformation of the word *ajuda*, which was well known in the region because of the Portuguese fort in Ouidah, called *Forte São João Baptista de Ajuda.* Hazoumé presented the word *agouda* as a transformation of the word *agouram*, from Fon and Huéda, the original language of the city of Ouidah, explaining that this was used to refer to the 'vain and indolent' Europeans. This version, however, does not appear to me to be compatible with the other historical data available and is not discussed by any other author. I therefore prefer the other explanation, which is still used today (Braga, 1968).

Being an Agudá in Benin today means possessing a particular social identity among the various others present in the country. The Africans who returned to Africa after being enslaved in Brazil were not the same individuals on their return as they had been when they left, as natives of a certain village and subjects of a certain king. Indeed, all of their social and family ties had been cut by slavery. Moreover, they often returned to the port from which they had been shipped to Brazil and ended up settling there, since their village or social context of origin had entirely changed, or had disappeared altogether.

The fact that numerous individuals were sold by their own families or by rival political factions is in itself a likely explanation as to why these returning Africans did not wish to, or could not, be reinstated in their native villages.

The most well-known example of this practice is that of the mother of King Guêzo, who was sold by Adandozan (Verger, 1953; Hazoumé, 1937, p. 31). Her story is similar to the one told by Hilário Bandeira, a resident of Lomé, to his nephew Augusto Bandeira in 1996, about his ancestors:

> The fact is that our grandfather, who came back from Brazil with the surname Bandeira, was not Brazilian. You heard right. He was not Brazilian. We come from Savalou. We are Mahis. His village was Mokpa. You know very well that sometimes there are disputes in families. If someone tries to see things from a more enlightened perspective, this can result in them being pushed away. Why? Because of inheritance. If he's savvy, he might take everything from those who don't understand anything, or understand very little. These individuals are therefore eliminated. This was what happened to our ancestor.

Having been sold or simply given to the slave traders – and thus already excluded from the society to which they were returning – these people who had left as enslaved people came back completely alienated from the social structure of their places of origin. They were different from the others: they dressed like white people, ate with cutlery and said they were Muslim or, in the majority of cases, Catholic. They were bricklayers, joiners, carpenters, tailors, foremen and commercial house managers, among other kinds of workers, and, although very often illiterate, they considered themselves to be on the right side of progress and modernity, in comparison to a society that they perceived primarily as primitive and wild. This society, in turn, continued to see them as enslaved people, in spite of their 'white ways'.

Ethnic identity is constructed based on differences (Poutignat and Streiff-Fenart, 1995, p. 41) – that is, in relation to the 'other'. As Da Cunha emphasizes,

> As emphasizes, what has been gained from studies on ethnicity is the precise notion that identity is constructed situationally and through contrast, i.e. that it constitutes a political response to a given conjuncture, an articulated response to the other identities involved, with which it forms a system (Da Cunha, 1985a, p. 206).

The construction of identity is therefore based on a strategy of highlighting differences. In this respect, the situation is very clear: the formerly enslaved people returning to their homeland view the native people as wild and continue themselves to be viewed as slaves who imitate 'white manners'. On the whole, the only thing the formerly enslaved people – whether of Yoruba, Fon, Mina or another origin – had in common with each other was the fact that they had been enslaved in Brazil: they spoke Portuguese, had 'white ways' and mostly said they were Catholic. They thus identified with the Brazilians who had long been settled on the coast, forged alliances with them and came to be considered as 'Brazilians'.

Mémoire bricolage as a social insertion strategy

The life experience acquired in Brazil, common to them all, allowed these returnees to assimilate into the Brazilian community established in the region and thus share the place they occupied in local society. This experience enabled them, above all, to enter the economy on the order-giving side, rather than as simply a workforce. By the time the clash of traditional culture and expanding capitalism became more prominent in the region, they were in a position to drive the economy alongside the Brazilian traders and traffickers. The meeting of these two groups – the traders and traffickers of Brazilian or Portuguese origin on the one hand, and the formerly enslaved Africans on the other – shaped the profile of the Agudá community we can see in West Africa today.

One of the most important aspects to highlight in the study of this social group is undoubtedly the exemplary manner in which these formerly enslaved people succeeded in integrating into the very society that had excluded them. They had certainly been freed in Brazil, but not in Africa, where they were considered by the majority of the population as enslaved people. It was this treatment – the same as they experienced in Brazil – that constituted a catalyst for their building of a new collective identity. This identity allowed them to have a social and economic function and the condition of full citizenship in the very society that had rejected them.

Origin, religion and language are generally considered the main elements drawn upon in the creation of an ethnic group. Indeed, in order to succeed in integrating into the local society, the returnees drew upon their 'stay' in Brazil, which was the only thing common to them all, given their diverse ethnic origins. It is almost as if slavery was taken as the starting point for a new life, as if it was predestined to be the new common origin. It was indeed, therefore, the culture acquired in Brazil that controlled the process. The Portuguese language and the Catholic religion were thus used to compose the new collective identity, which in reality corresponded to the identity of the Brazilians already established in the region.

The inclusion of the formerly enslaved people as citizens in society at large thus occurred by means of their identification with the members of the Brazilian colony, a fact that is recognized by all those within this social group, who indistinctly call each other Agudás. It is therefore possible to say that the former slave traders and those who were sold as enslaved people succeeded in socially overcoming the seemingly insurmountable contradiction between their initial social conditions to together form a social group strong enough to

consolidate the economic and social advantages already acquired by the first Brazilians to settle in the region.

Being an Agudá in Benin today means sharing a common memory in relation to a series of achievements and a 'Brazilian' way of being. To better understand this situation, we can break down into three successive periods the process by which this social identity was constructed (Guran, 1996, 2000, 2010).

The first period starts at the time during which the presence of Brazilian slavers on that coast became stronger, from the early nineteenth century. By that time, the slave trade had already been prohibited north of the equator and the Bahian slavers were doing everything they could to continue conducting their trade for a few more years. These Brazilian traders and traffickers established in the region had their own way of life and married native women. They maintained commercial and political relations with the native population, into which they were assimilated, to a certain extent, through marriage. They were not very numerous, despite their economic and political importance. They made their fortunes and lived according to their own culture. Along with their mestizo children, they were referred to by everyone – themselves included – as Agudás.

The second period began with the mass arrival of Africans who had been enslaved in Brazil, from the mid-nineteenth century. These people were black, but had 'white ways'. They discriminated against the natives, whom they considered to be 'savages' and, in turn, were rejected by them, as they continued to be seen as 'slaves', i.e. excluded.

The issue of slavery, which is practically absent from school books and very often minimized in scholarly works on the ancient kingdom of Dahomey, is nevertheless still present in social and personal relations. Indeed, as Meillassoux (1986, p. 107) indicates, 'capture (or purchase that presupposed capture) marked the slaves with an indelible stigma'. The slave trade was the driving force of the economy for centuries, and slavery has always been viewed as an institution by all people involved in it. It is therefore not surprising that social discrimination deriving from the condition of enslavement remains very present in the Agudás' relationships, whether among themselves or with other social groups.

All of the 'Brazilians' I interviewed while carrying out my research affirmed that they had been referred to as 'slaves' in various day-to-day situations. This is more or less the rule, in school and at the market. In contrast, within the private sphere, as historian François de Medeiros explained, during an interview in June 1996 in Paris, '*Il y a un accord tacite pour ne jamais parler d'ascendance esclave*' [There is a tacit agreement never to speak of slave descent].

These individuals had different ethnic backgrounds and were united by only a handful of similarities. They shared a common memory of a social experience, expressed through living practices, a way of being and, most importantly, they all had a professional qualification in accordance with the new European cultural and economic parameters gaining increasing momentum in the country. They used white surnames, which they inherited from their masters, and the model of white culture they acquired in Brazil. This culture was the trump card that allowed them to join the slavers from Bahia in the region's dominant economic activities, which were based on the slave trade. As the slave trade came to an end, the activities evolved into more varied forms of local and international trade, including the exploitation of local resources such as palm oil.

Their number, increased by the local enslaved people at their service, was growing; as a result, they constituted a growing proportion of the region's population. During the second half of the nineteenth century, they constituted their own distinct and practically endogamous society. Its identity was also reproduced through religion – they were Catholic, for the most part, despite mixing with voodoo cults – and schooling. Élisée Reclus notes in his 1887 work that 'in [Agudá] families of colour, consanguineous marriages, even among brothers and sisters by different mothers, are very common and not frowned upon' (cited by Verger, 1953, p. 12). Of de Souza's 20 daughters, as listed by de Souza (1992), eleven were wedded to Agudás, either by first or second marriage, and there were several cases of consanguinity: four daughters married their uncles or cousins, three married their nephews, seven married their brothers and there was one union between father and daughter. In the work *Relation sur l'établissement des missions dans le vicariat apostolique du Dahomey*, found in *Annales de la Propagation de la Foi*, vol. 36, Lyon, 1864, p. 439, cited by Verger, 1968, p. 601), Father Francesco Borghero, a superior of the Apostolic Vicariate of Dahomey noted that Agudá boys and girls attended the Catholic Mission of Lyon school, where they learned to read and write in Portuguese. The subjects of Abomey, however, were forbidden from frequenting its classrooms.

Consisting, at this time, of the descendants of slave traders, formerly enslaved Africans who had returned from Brazil, their descendants and the people enslaved locally, the Agudás were at not only the forefront of western culture penetrating the region, but also the origin of virtually all related economic activities. Indeed, at this time, they represented the future, given that European culture would eventually impose itself on everyone. If we take a closer look at the Agudá culture of this second period, we can see that it is different from that of the first Brazilians; it came to serve a social purpose. The Bahian traffickers were

white and thus naturally different from the natives. As such, they had their own place in local society. This place was ensured by their economic alliance with the king of Dahomey and expressed symbolically by the role of the Chachá and other Brazilian *cabeceiras* in the existing power structure. This neologism, created from the word *cabeça*, meaning 'head' in Portuguese, referred to someone who was at the head of an enterprise. At the court of Abomey, this title implied the right to certain prerogatives, such as the use of a parasol and other symbols of power. The most prominent of these individuals was Domingos José Martins, the son of one of the heroes of Brazilian independence (Rossi, 1965).

As we have seen, the African returnees were forced to create a place for themselves in a society that did not accept them. They were seen as people who had already been expelled - sold to be enslaved - and, at the same time, as foreigners, especially since they had returned entirely different and with 'white ways'. Building a new social identity based on the memory of their time in Brazil gave them a way of gaining a foothold in this society, in the same place that had already been created for whites. As Meillassoux explains (1986, p. 105):

> *The notion of "foreigner" is common to all African populations. It is usually opposed to the notion of "man", that is, of "citizen", "patrician", a person provided with all social prerogatives in the environment in question. [...] The foreigner must ally himself with a protector, his guarantor and his "witness" in the society he is penetrating, a prerequisite that will allow all the other bonds to be forged.*

In the situation in question, it is precisely this 'Brazilian' identity that acts as a guarantor for these enslaved Africans on their return to the homeland, making their social reintegration strategy effective.

They did indeed become Agudás, but not exactly like the others, since they had also brought to Africa a certain culture of their own, developed among the working classes of Brazil. Thus, aside from the architecture and representation of the self, the most visible indicators of 'Brazilian' identity could be traced back to practices of the enslaved people themselves than of their masters in Brazil. This was true of feijoada,[3] the festival of Our Lord of Bonfim[4] and the *burrinha* festivities.[5] Agudá culture, primarily a European-style one, was thus being enriched by aspects of Brazilian mestizo culture, as it was being built in Brazil itself.

3 Feijoada was originally a dish from the slave quarters before it became the Brazilian national dish.

4 The festival of Our Lord of Bonfim was primarily an African and Creole celebration in Bahia before it became a source of devotion for an entire people.

5 *Burrinha* is a popular folkloric festival that was never really practised by the Brazilian elites.

And so we come to the third period important to understanding the Agudá identity in Benin, following redemocratization in 1989; since then, the memory of the experience of living in Brazil has given way to the memory of the achievements realized in Benin. In the same way that the first memory had the function of allowing the returnees to integrate into local society, the second also had a specific social function. It is the memory of their achievements – the contribution they have made to the development of western culture in the country – that the Agudás use to defend the legitimacy of their place in Beninese society today.

Analysing these three stages in the construction of the Agudá ethnic identity in Benin allows us to understand how the Agudá established themselves as key players in the transition between traditional societies and the formation of a 'modern' state. In reality, the integration of the Africans who returned from slavery in Brazil, along with that of their descendants, as citizens with full rights, was initially possible because Beninese society as a whole was undergoing a process of development that was heading in the same direction as the culture they brought back with them. Moreover, the admission of these previously excluded individuals was absolutely necessary to make this process of development not only possible, but also more effective. First acting as intermediaries between traditional societies and western culture, they soon became the interpreters for this society and the colonial power. Mixed and intertwined with the traditional societies through marriage and still living in various different culture groups, the Agudás thus present themselves as one of the main players in the construction process of modern-day Benin.

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CHAPTER 36

BACK TO AFRICA

The Return of Slaves Freed in Brazil

Mônica Lima e Souza

I'm beseeching the water to convey my longing to my dear land.

Introduction

The above sentence was recorded in 1830 by the French traveller H. Furcy de Bremoy. An African freedman was watching the ships in the port of Rio de Janeiro from a distance, on one of the mountains surrounding the city centre. De Bremoy asked him what he was doing, and the above was his reply. The traveller writes that this man, called José, was a skilled carpenter and was gathering all his savings in order to return to Angola, from where he had been taken to be enslaved. He managed to obtain his freedom, after 10 years of enslavement in Rio de Janeiro, and built a cabin on that same mountain, from where he would watch the boats, amplifying his desire to return. José's story is told in far greater detail in the 1833 publication by the traveller and, although it might have been somewhat romanticized through the eyes of the foreigner, it may well have had its desired ending (De Bremoy, 1833).

During the nineteenth century, many African freedpersons and their descendants left various regions of the Americas – Brazil in particular – and headed for Africa. Such migratory movements were already taking place even

before the eighteenth century, though they were less frequent and most journeys were ones made by individuals. By the nineteenth century, however, the return journey from Brazil was often being made collectively, in ships loaded with groups of Africans, many accompanied by friends and family members in the same situation.

Groups of freedpersons and their descendants had been leaving the English Caribbean since the late eighteenth century, and the United States of America since the first decades of the nineteenth century. Encouraged and supported by religious societies and by authorities of the governments of Britain and of the United States, these groups travelled to Sierra Leone and Liberia (Prah, 2012). There were policies that sponsored the foundation of colonies on the coast of West Africa to host the returnees, justified by not only the interest of avoiding the threat that a free black population could pose – with the example of Haiti uppermost in peoples' minds – but also by humanitarian or religious discourse based on redemption. Another argument was the political importance of establishing a free space on the African continent in order to combat the slave trade; this could also be seen as a starting point for the growth of European presence in the region. As the nineteenth century progressed, certain black leaders, especially in the English-speaking Americas, began to speak and write about the subject, urging Afrodescendants to return to Africa (Blyden, 1978). However, this stance was not shared unanimously by the black population in the United States at that time; some of them asserted that having achieved their freedom or been born free, they would rather stay and fight for their rights.[1]

In addition to those who returned to the West African coast of their own volition, there were also the Africans recaptured by Britain's Royal Navy on their expeditions to suppress the Atlantic slave trade in the first half of the nineteenth century. Those who had been recaptured were sent to Freetown, Sierra Leone, where some trained in the city's religious schools before returning to their native region, mainly in Nigeria, and becoming local leaders.[2] Much like the Brazilian returnees, freedpersons and their direct descendants from Cuba also went back to the West African coast, in voluntary migratory waves, the characteristics of which changed over time. In the Yoruba region in the nineteenth century, the

1 In 1817 in Philadelphia, United States of America, around 3,000 people gathered for a demonstration against the back-to-Africa campaigns, which they had interpreted as a form of expulsion.

2 One of the best-known examples is Reverend Samuel Ajayi Crowther, of Yoruba origin. He followed this path and ended up returning to Nigeria, where he worked as a translator and missionary alongside English Christian expeditions and missions. In the nineteenth century, Crowther also published studies of native languages in Nigeria, which now serve as a reference for local language knowledge.

returnees who came through Sierra Leone were often called Saros, while those returning from Brazil and Cuba were called Amaros (Ajayi, 1965; Sarracino, 1988, p. 218). Some Cuban returnees mingled with the more numerous freedpersons arriving from Brazil in the communities of the West African coast, taking on new identities and even rendering more Portuguese the Spanish surnames they had adopted (Sarracino, 1988; Da Cunha, 2012).

These journeys back to Africa involved different phases, motives and circumstances, and were commonly called returns, although for some it was their first trip to mainland Africa. Taking into account the symbolic representation of the African destinations, we could indeed consider the journey to be a return even for those of the descendants born in the Americas – a return to the homeland of their ancestors. In the case of Brazil, the majority of those making the journey had been born in Africa and almost always came from regions close to their destinations. Historian Mariza de Carvalho Soares works with the term "group of origin" to refer to the specifics of the organizational forms of African communities in Brazil (De Carvalho Soares, 2000; 2004, pp. 303–331).

The history of these returns, and that of the groups involved in them, is documented in various records from that period, including port records, passports, reports of missionaries and travellers and notices in periodicals that published the departures of freedpersons. Evidence is currently emerging with regard to the communities that were forming on the African continent - communities that formed a sense of identity through their experiences of the Atlantic and the diaspora in the New World. The freedpersons who returned to Africa from Brazil in the nineteenth century built identities drawing upon elements of Brazilian culture: languages, first names and surnames, habits, religions and even celebrations.

Several studies have been conducted on the freedpersons who returned to Africa. The majority of these studies begin by presenting the existence of groups of returnees on the West African coast – the make-up of which has attracted attention – along with their position vis-à-vis local communities (Amos, 2007; Castillo, 2016, pp. 25–52; Da Cunha, 2012; Guran, 1999; Law, 2004; Prah, 2009; Sarracino, 1988; Silva, 2016; Soumonni, 2001; Lima e Souza, 2008; De Souza, 1992; Strickrodt, 2004, pp. 313–344; Turner, 1975; Verger, 1987). Terms such as 'the Agudás of Benin', 'the Tabon of Ghana and Togo' and 'the Brazilians of Nigeria' have all come to exist as a result of the ways in which these communities formed, and all refer to their key players.

First stories

The first academic writing on the subject can be found in works dating back to the nineteenth century, at the time of the very formation of communities of returnees from Brazil in certain cities on the African continent. One of the first known individuals to address this point was Élisée Reclus, a French geographer and anarchist who published a work entitled *Nouvelle géographie universelle : la terre et les hommes (1876–1894)*. He devoted a few pages to the idea that the trajectories of the Brazilian communities of the Bight of Benin served as catalysts for progress in this location, in the context of the end of the Atlantic slave trade and the implementation of what he deemed legitimate trade. In 1874, the Brazilian Antonio Joaquim de Macedo Soares published a study on the presence of the Portuguese language as spoken in Brazil, in which he pointed out the specifics of the use of this language among returnees from the country on the African coast (De Macedo Soares, 1942).

In the twentieth century, works by authors such as Gilberto Freyre (1943), João Fernando de Almeida Prado (1956) and Pierre Verger (1953, 1957 and 1968) analysed the presence of groups identifying themselves as descendants of returnees from Brazil and their cultural practices in cities near what was formerly the Slave Coast.[3] Among these authors, we can highlight the work of Verger, who expanded his historical research to cover both sides of the Atlantic. He examined the ways in which enslaved people expressed themselves and sought freedom and, above all, the ways in which, once freed, they made it possible for themselves to make their return journey. For these individuals, this preparation sometimes involved engaging in activities related to the slave trade itself. Brazilian sociologist Freyre was interested in the essential features of Brazilianness – and, beyond this, the specific characteristics of the black population in the state of Bahia – as they can be seen in the practices and customs of communities of returnees on that African coast, supporting his already well-known theory on the cultural similarities between Brazil and Africa (Freyre, 1973, pp. 263–313). De Almeida Prado highlighted Brazil's relations with what was once Dahomey and the methods used by these groups to modernize local societies, referring to the reports of travellers who also focused on this aspect (De Almeida Prado, 1956, pp. 377–439).

3 Region located on the coast of West Africa, comprising an area stretching from the coast of Ghana to the city of Lagos - thus including the Bight of Benin. It was also referred to as the Mina Coast or Coast of Africa in Brazilian documentation of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Attributing civilizing features to the freedpersons who returned to Africa from Brazil and viewing the returnees as bearers of progressive ideas was very common in nineteenth-century travel literature. This perspective had an influence on those who used this type of source and can also be found in records of the words of the descendants of returnees. The image formed of returnee communities set them apart from their ancestors and from the Africans who had not experienced the diaspora, and was echoed in the political support for the groups emerging from the back-to-Africa process.

Also of note among these early works on the subject is Antonio Olinto's text, which differs from the previous examples as it takes the form of an investigation based on personal experience in the field, with the character of a formal academic study (Olinto, 1964). In addition to being the author of this work, Olinto was a representative of the Brazilian Government in Nigeria. The contacts he had allowed a Brazilian returnee, who had travelled to Lagos with her African family in one of the last great return shipments, to make a return trip to visit Brazil. The arrival of Dona Romana da Conceição in the city of Rio de Janeiro in 1963 was marked by celebration and a ceremony, and her activities in the country led to a bid for closer links between Brazil and Africa – a desire that characterized relations between the two regions in the late 1950s and early 1960s.[4]

In the same context, African study centres were set up in major universities in Brazil as a result of increased interest in various aspects of the societies of the African continent among Brazilian researchers, who focused primarily on finding links between the two sides of the Atlantic. The 'African spring' of the 1960s aroused feelings of identification among the members of the black diaspora in Brazil, as was the case with the anti-racist struggle in different parts of the Americas. More recent analysis has identified a need for a project to disseminate the notion of a racial democracy, triggered by the new economic interests of the Brazilian Government with regard to the African markets (Alberto, 2011, pp. 97–150).

4 The true story of Dona Romana da Conceição inspired Antonio Olinto to write a beautiful novel entitled *A Casa da Água* (The Water House), originally published in 1969, with successive new editions. It has been translated into several languages and has also become the subject of academic studies in Brazil.

Agents of transformation

In the same period, and with a variety of issues as their starting points, studies by African historians, including J. F. Ade Ajayi and Isaac A. Akinjogbin, highlighted how Brazilian freedpersons in the Bight of Benin contributed to nineteenth-century trade relations and the local political sphere, in addition to underlining the role of this community in the fight for independence in the second half of the twentieth century (Ajayi, 1965; Akinjogbin, 1967; Morton-Williams, 1964). Among the points addressed by these works, in particular by that of Ajayi on the history of Brazilians in Nigeria in the nineteenth century, was the relationship between these individuals and the freedpersons who returned from other regions of the Caribbean, along with those who had been recaptured and sent to Sierra Leone and who had integrated into the 'Brazilians' group. The contribution of these returnees to the spread of Christianity, agricultural labour and European habits was also brought to the fore. Along the same lines, Brazilian researcher Alcione M. Amos conducted a study on the returnee communities of Togo and Ghana, providing an abundance of local sources and focusing on family history. He highlighted the role played by the communities that grew on the west coast of Africa and emphasized their relationship with Brazil and contribution to civilization in the nineteenth century – the period during which they established themselves in these societies.

The issue of identity

The early 1970s saw the publication of the first more extensive academic study by a university researcher on the history of the freedpersons who returned from Brazil. This work was by Michael J. Turner, a young African-American historian on a Ford Foundation scholarship, and was the result of his research work, from the late 1960s onwards, on the 'return of Afro-Brazilians to West Africa' (Turner, 1970, p. 23, 1975). Turner's research work included a bibliography produced in Portuguese and in English, interviews carried out during his fieldwork, new data and new ideas. In this publication, he argued that the identity forged by the returnee communities was created under pressure from the Indigenous groups that rejected them. He suggested that the experience of these Africans, who were seen as foreigners on their home continent, was comparable with that of the other black returnees (freedpersons, free people of colour and recaptured

Africans) arriving in Sierra Leone or Liberia, who experienced serious problems with the African societies in the regions to which they migrated.

In the early 1980s, Brazilian anthropologist Manuela Carneiro da Cunha published a work considered to be a watershed in terms of knowledge about the freedpersons who returned from Brazil (Da Cunha, 1985, 2012). This was the first book to be written exclusively on the subject and published in Portuguese since, at that time, Verger's work had not yet been translated and any previously published texts had been articles in journals of limited circulation. The book dealt with the issue of identity construction within the Brazilian community in Lagos, Nigeria. The study consisted of a theoretical discussion based on in-depth historical research and field work carried out in Lagos.[5] Moreover, it presented an approach to the experience of the freedpersons in Brazil's slave society, considering aspects of the personal subordination faced by many Africans even after securing their freedom, and the fact that these freedpersons were seen as 'undesirable' in the eyes of the authorities and of society. This work went on to serve as a reference not only for the further study of the freedpersons who returned from Brazil, but also for other works examining aspects of black rebellion in nineteenth-century Brazil.

Other important works were published in the wake of this rich discussion on the formation of identities within the returnee communities established on the West African coast – in Nigeria, Benin, Togo and Ghana – in the nineteenth century. These included Milton Guran's study of the Agudás of Benin. Guran used photography as a tool for investigation, along with research into the archives and intensive fieldwork, to shed light on individual trajectories and social strategies of affirmation among the African freedpersons who returned to Benin from Brazil (Guran, 1999). Paradoxical aspects of the history of the returnees, such as the strong presence of a positive memory of their Brazilian experience – in a context of enslavement – have been debated. Key considerations in this context include the mechanisms for building a self-image that allowed them to put themselves in a valued position within local societies.

5 Manuela Carneiro da Cunha's field work was carried out when accompanying her husband, Marianno Carneiro da Cunha, who was conducting pioneering research in the 1970s on the Brazilian presence in the cities where the community of returnees from Brazil was established, with a particular focus on Lagos, Nigeria (Da Cunha, 1985).

Atlantic contexts

Another way of looking at the constitution of the returnee communities is through their Atlantic dimension, which influenced both the formation of the groups organized for the return trips and the construction of an identity in Africa itself. As part of his research into the Yorubas, Robin Law, a British historian long devoted to the study of the West African coast, considered the presence of returnees from Brazil and Sierra Leone acting as intermediaries between native and European groups. He saw this as a factor that contributed directly to the redefinition of local identities. This Atlantic perspective could be considered a key element of the history of returns from the Americas and of the formation of returnee communities in West Africa. This is true both in terms of the way these freedpersons organized their return trips and their integration into the places where they settled on the African continent. Law has published several papers on the subject. Studies by Beninese historian Elisée Soumonni continue along the same lines of analysis, incorporating sound African historiography and some advances in the debates around ancient Dahomey.

This perspective has taken on other dimensions in more recent academic papers, bringing to the debate elements of the wider context of the Back-to-Africa movement from other regions of the black Americas. This includes the political discourse and actions – especially those of the British – that drove these movements, which have had an influence on the black populations of Brazilian cities (Lima e Souza, 2008). In addition, the concept of Atlantic circularity comprises an analysis of cultural practices present on both sides of the ocean. More than just a recreation or transposition by the returnees, these practices are indicative of mutual influences undergoing a permanent process of contact and transformation (Silva, 2014).

These and other discussions on the global and Atlantic contexts of the returns were given a special arena for discussion during a symposium held in Cape Town in 2008, the sole subject of which was the history of the returnees from Brazil and their communities. This meeting led to the publication of a book, bringing together pieces from several African and Brazilian scholars, which was published the following year by the Centre for Advanced Studies of African Society (CASAS) with several contributions (Prah, 2009).

Returns

Studies on this subject, throughout its historiography, have been more concerned with the communities as they formed on the West African coast than with the return process itself. The demographic dimension of these returns, the constitution of the groups that made the trips, their motives over time and the conditions under which the trips could be carried out, although present, have received relatively little consideration. Identifying these aspects demands in-depth research using various types of sources, in archives on different sides of the ocean, with a view to gathering information and identifying the relationships between the different sources.[6] Investigations of this nature can highlight aspects that, up until now, have received very little visibility in the handling of this subject. One of these aspects is the presence of social networks of kinship, religious ties and interdependence of the groups of returnees based on the discovery of connections between them. Such data can be obtained only through cross-referencing information from different sources, ranging from embarkation lists to travellers' personal data, which may be found in marriage and baptism records, as well as inventories and other documents held by the local police (Castillo, 2016). The travel contracts that larger groups of returnees signed with the ships' captains who took them back to Africa, along with their statements setting out the reasons they were asking for support in these endeavours, can reveal the conditions of travel and the justification given when seeking solidarity and support (Lima e Souza, 2008).

For a time, the return of freedpersons from Brazil to West Africa was considered by historiography as a process with a similar general character throughout its implementation period. Some more recent studies indicate the existence of phases in these migratory movements. From the eighteenth century until around the 1820s, the connections operated throughout the area covered by the Atlantic slave trade and were characterized by journeys made chiefly as individuals, or in small groups. From 1830, and especially after 1835, the groups became larger and their movement was prompted by the persecution and more restrictive conditions faced by freedpersons in Brazil. After the end of the slave trade to Brazil, the journeys were made in both large and small groups. The reasons behind them reveal both the intention to settle on the African coast in

6 It moved in this direction, bringing quantitative and qualitative data, for example in the pioneering work of Verger, the thesis of Monica Lima e Souza and the article by Lisa Earl Castillo (Verger, 1987; Lima e Souza, 2008; Castillo, 2016).

a privileged position as partners working with the new European interests and the desire to return for personal and religious reasons - in the latter case, with the possibility of leaving to eventually return (Castillo, 2016; Lima e Souza, 2009, pp. 59–74).

The prevailing focus on the communities of returnees from Brazil in the Bight of Benin, at the expense of research into the return journeys themselves, has also led to a reduction in the identification of their starting points and destinations. The port of Salvador was undoubtedly the place from which the majority of ships departed during the entire period of travel from Brazil. Nevertheless, several ships carrying groups of Africans and their descendants also left Rio de Janeiro for the African continent in the nineteenth century. Their destinations were not restricted to the West African coast; they also included the coast of the Congo-Angola region, in relation to which the history of these returns has not been sufficiently studied. There is a possible indication of notices attesting to the existence of returnee communities near the bay of Cabinda in travellers' reports cited by certain studies (Karash, 2000, p. 424; Lima e Souza, 2013), which undoubtedly merits further investigation.

There is still much to research in terms of the trajectories of these extraordinary men and women who managed to break free of the chains binding them to captivity and go against the current of the slave ships. Their stories reveal as much about the African diaspora in the Americas as they do the dynamic Atlantic contexts of the African coast in the nineteenth century; the ways in which they have been narrated in historiography bring to light the striking similarities between the interests and disputes on each of the various ocean shores inhabited by Africans and Afrodescendants.

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SECTION III

LIFE STORIES AND FREEDOM NARRATIVES OF GLOBAL AFRICA

INTRODUCTION

Life Stories and Freedom Narratives of Global Africa

Paul E. Lovejoy

People in Africa have moved, migrated and mingled throughout history. We know this from archaeology, linguistics and historical documentation, which allow some reconstruction of how societies have evolved, social structures have developed and economic change has occurred. The *General History of Africa* (GHA) provides an overview of this long history. Historical analysis can reveal social and political forces that are important in examining the process of change and the resulting impact of climate, ecological and environmental parameters, war and economic development. Sometimes, however, the picture that is painted leaves out the fact that history involves individuals, whether in kin groups, villages, towns or cities.

Certainly, one of the most important, massive and long-lasting migrations that has affected Africa, and which formed the contours of Global Africa, arose from enslavement, the slave trade and slavery. Over the past five hundred years, many millions of people were displaced through slavery, at least 12.8 million across the Atlantic and several million more across the Sahara, the Red Sea and the Indian Ocean, although not all of these migrants survived the journey. Moreover, millions more were relocated within the African continent and, because enslavement was usually violent and the transfer of people over land and sea hazardous, the attendant mortality affected the lives and livelihoods of an even larger population. On one level, the tragedy of what this entailed has

been recognized as a crime against humanity, demanding a full investigation of what happened, when and where. Only then can the suffering, degradation and exploitation that occurred be established, and the nature and extent of reparations determined. On another level, to understand slavery as forced migration, severance from home communities and imposed assimilation into new relationships requires careful historical analysis and reconstruction. How events of the past are interpreted is always contentious and subject to review and fresh insights. No other historical phenomenon deserves more attention than slavery because of the influence it has had on history over at least the past five hundred years.

In this section, the focus is on individuals and their life stories, as far as these can be reconstructed. The reason for focusing on individuals is to unravel this crime against humanity, of people viewed as 'slaves', reduced to property, with individuals turned into commodities and things that could be bought and sold, punished in sometimes barbaric ways, and generally treated as objects rather than as human beings. The aim here is to reveal human dignity, resourcefulness and personality, which could involve a focus on open acts of resistance, expressions of culture and actions that reveal individuals as opposed to slaves. Life stories follow people to different parts of the world during the era of slavery. Their experiences offer a view of Global Africa that helps in understanding the slave trade across the Atlantic, within Africa, into the Islamic world and across the Indian Ocean. Too often, slavery is approached as if it was a uniform institution, unbending in its oppression and victimization, without an appreciation of the fact that the people who were enmeshed in this tragic history had lives filled with pain and suffering on the one hand, but also with joy and dignity on the other. A clear theme in many of the stories is the quest for freedom through escape from the conditions of enslavement. Personal accounts of individuals who were born free in their natal societies stand out. Despite their experience of a period of enslavement, they nonetheless re-established their freedom and thereby overcame the trials and tribulations of severe subjugation and humiliation.

There are various types of life stories that are connected to the history of slavery and the quest for freedom from bondage. Sometimes these stories of enslavement are described as 'slave narratives', but in many cases it would be better to refer to them as 'freedom narratives', 'conversion narratives' or some other term (Lovejoy, 2011). Many accounts were written by individuals who achieved their freedom; others were dictated to people who recounted the quest of individuals seeking freedom. Thus, the life stories presented in this section recount more accurately how a number of people managed to escape from

enslavement. The narratives chronicle personal resistance, unwavering struggles for survival and successful achievements, demonstrating that enslavement did not destroy the humanity and dignity of those who were exposed to its oppression, an oppression that has since been recognized as a crime. This is specifically the case of individuals who were once free in Africa, and whose personal accounts help us understand more fully what enslavement meant to those who endured the Middle Passage across the Atlantic or the tortuous journeys within Africa, across the Sahara and the Indian Ocean. Their stories focus on the quest for emancipation, through escape, self-purchase or other means, but always resulting in freedom (Gates, 1987). The trauma of the Middle Passage has been the subject of considerable reflection in discussions of the impact of transatlantic slavery on the cultures and societies of the Americas. It is these narratives that attest to the 'curse of constant remembrance', as Laura Murphy (2008) describes the long-term effects of trauma resulting from the psychological scars of the Middle Passage that mark 'the unfortunate legacy of the slave trade' in modern literature. As her analysis in this collection demonstrates, there are thousands of testimonies of those who experienced enslavement in the United States of America, allowing us to hear the voices of these individuals who struggled to survive.

The impact of the trauma of the Middle Passage raises issues of how people identified and how they were identified, relating to questions of consciousness of historical events and false consciousness arising from the strain of survival among the enslaved population. How do we understand the ability of individuals to modify and otherwise chart a course through the cultural oppression of enslavement and the inevitable subjugation they endured under exploitative work regimes, and the related racialized and dehumanizing social discourse of enforced inferiority? How do we unpack the complicated and debilitating experiences of these people? What does it tell us about Africa? It is important to recognize the impact of trauma because we want to understand how individuals made it through that experience.

The statistics of slavery inform our understanding of the odyssey, furnishing details in terms of mortality, malnutrition, exposure to disease, the incidence of rape, brutal treatment, suicide and the consequent degrees of degradation. Individual voices, however, are often lost in the analysis. Moreover, what does the experience of the Middle Passage tell us about Africa? We have long tended to look at the Middle Passage from the perspective of the Americas, as something that took place beyond the shores of Africa, as where African history ended. The study of slavery in the African context has often been overlooked.

Furthermore, that passage was sometimes reversed, as Kristin Mann and Lisa Castillo demonstrate in their study of individuals who returned to Lagos from Brazil and maintained relationships with kin on both sides of the Atlantic.

Across the black Atlantic, individual voices bear witness to the quest for salvation, social status and economic autonomy. The accounts of settlers in Sierra Leone, who came from London, Canada and Jamaica, record varied reactions and positive adjustments to displacement and cultural survival. The freedom and conversion narratives of 'recaptives' – those taken off slave ships in Sierra Leone, Cuba, Brazil and elsewhere – also attest to this voiced resistance and declaration of personal identity. Are these to be considered within the context of the 'slave narrative' trope or do they represent something that is far wider, that allows a reconstruction of Global Africa through sources that give voice?

The ways in which slavery and the slave trade have been remembered owe a lot to the personal narratives of enslaved Africans and their Creole descendants. In a real sense, these narratives are "survivals" of slavery and, hence, suggest that we revisit the approach of Melville Herskovits, who traced these cultural features of African background but did not concentrate on the recorded memories of individuals as one of those "survivals". Similarly, narratives reveal patterns of resistance to slavery among those who had been enslaved in Africa, providing evidence of cultural transference associated with their migration across the Atlantic. Whether individuals were able to identify with a reconstituted community mattered as much as the community that the Creole population was born into. Individuals coming from Africa were not always able to find comrades of similar background and had to form new associations, but arguments that suggest that the response of the enslaved population was relatively similar fail to appreciate the complex ways in which individuals had to respond and the ways in which they chose to resist as a strategy for survival. A study of individuals raises questions about the different ways in which Africans lived through slavery in the Atlantic world while attempting to retain or recreate their cultural and/or social backgrounds. Life histories illustrate the complexity of notions such as the 'Middle Passage' and 'diaspora' and what it meant to have been born in Africa. So the narratives of those born in Africa are accounts of Africa and slavery, and how African history was transferred to the Americas.

Of course, individuals had diverse experiences, which reveal the variety of conditions that existed under slavery. Not one of the men considered here was 'typical' or fits the stereotype of the slave. These were individuals, and they experienced the slave trade and their enslavement in virtual isolation. They had their own 'cultures' and 'origins', but they could not connect these

with those of anyone else. There were, thus, connections, but it was difficult to sustain ties to a community. Consider the cases of Gustavus Vassa, Muhammad Kaba Saghanughu and Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua. Vassa was possibly an exception, in that he mentions knowing other Igbo in London and deceiving his 'countrymen' on the Mosquito Shore, where he worked for Doctor Charles Irving and Captain Alexander Blair in establishing a plantation on the Rio Grande de Matagalpa. Vassa became associated with the community of radical thinkers and activists in London in the late 1780s and 1790s. He had earlier attempted to return to Africa as a missionary, and he was officially tied to the first Sierra Leone expedition, until his dismissal. Kaba was able to interact with and indeed provide leadership to a community on the coffee estates and livestock pens in Manchester Parish, Jamaica, but it is not known whether any of his own 'countrymen' were present there. He was associated with John Lewis, and helped the latter purchase his freedom. It is quite possible that Lewis came from the Upper Guinea coast and was also originally Muslim. Later, Kaba's sons were implicated and, indeed, executed for alleged involvement in the Christmas uprising of 1831–1832. Baquaqua was involved in the radical abolitionist agenda of the Free Will Baptists, including plans for an African Mission and lectures on the abolitionist circuit. His story is recounted herein by Bruno Véras. To be able to follow the lives of individuals who experienced slavery, in the detail that these accounts allow, requires careful reflection. We need to test the accounts for veracity, examine their context, critique the forms of transliteration and composition. Nevertheless, these are the voices of survivors. I include Kaba here; although he did not leave behind an autobiography, a lot of information has survived regarding his remarkable life.[1]

It is significant that these individuals were male. The enslaved population from the interior of West Africa sent to the Americas was predominantly male, which conformed to the pattern of trade: individuals from the interior were more likely to be male. Virtually all females who left West Africa as slaves came from near the coast, not from the distant interior, and the absence of Muslim women was almost certainly a factor in the eventual decline of Islam in the Americas. The collapse of social identities occurred for reasons relating to the imposed isolation from Islamic networks in Africa and the Middle East – not because the Middle Passage erased memory as posited by Stanley Elkins (1959), nor because the crossing amounted to a form of social death as argued

1 For a discussion of Kaba's life, see Daddi Addoun and Lovejoy, 2004; Warner-Lewis, 2009.

by Orlando Patterson (1982), but for reasons relating to the internal history of West Africa. The notion of the Middle Passage, as it is frequently used, does not usually take into account the complexities revealed in the biographical profiles examined here. As demonstrated in many studies, the Middle Passage was a complex experience that varied greatly depending upon where people went and what happened to them. Generalized accounts of the 'crossing' usually fail to take into consideration these differences.

We often forget that slavery involved individuals, and that thus, inevitably, each experience was unique. How people managed to survive under enslavement is revealed in these accounts, although it should be noted that these examples and, inevitably, most of the surviving narratives of slavery, concern individuals who became free. Venture Smith bought his own freedom in 1765; Muhammad Kaba Saghanughu outlived his enslavement in Jamaica, dying in 1845, twelve years after his sons had been executed for their alleged involvement in the Christmas uprising of 1831–1832, and seven years following the end of apprenticeship in Jamaica in 1838. Gustavus Vassa purchased his freedom in 1766, twenty-three years before he published his autobiography as Olaudah Equiano, the African; and Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua escaped from enslavement in New York City in 1847 when his master took him there as he was delivering a shipload of Brazilian coffee.[2] The actual amount of time spent in conditions of enslavement in these accounts varied considerably: for Baquaqua it lasted only two years, 1845–47; for Smith, it lasted 26 years, from 1739 to 1765, after which he lived another forty years in freedom; for Kaba, it lasted from 1777 until the end of British slavery in 1834, that is 57 years, whereafter he lived again in freedom until his death in 1845; Vassa suffered slavery from 1753 until 1766, some 13 years, before attaining his freedom in his early twenties and living another 31 years, dying in relative affluence, as did Smith. The accounts reveal relative levels of success in surviving slavery and achieving some degree of prosperity despite obstacles that arose after purchasing freedom, including limitations on accumulation that amounted to an undeclared tax, racial in its determination. The narratives reveal struggle, sometimes bitterness, but always conviction. Achieving freedom was necessarily a personal and individual matter, and this uniqueness limits any purpose the narratives have in the discussion of slavery. These accounts stand apart from the stories of 'slaves' because these individuals achieved freedom while most did not. It is this feature, irrespective of whether the individuals were born in Africa or

2 For a discussion of memories of the slave trade from an African perspective, see Bailey, 2007.

in the Americas, that distinguishes this corpus as a genre, and tells us something about slavery and freedom in Africa. In North America, there are fewer narratives of individuals born in Africa than elsewhere, because the 'slave narrative' genre was almost entirely a nineteenth-century phenomenon in North America, and mostly involved persons who were born into slavery. Hence, the North American genre is largely a 'Creole' phenomenon.

These 'freedom narratives' represent individuals who had known freedom, and they are not the only ones. As is clear from an emerging biographical database derived from numerous sources,[3] we have accounts of people liberated off slave ships, who subsequently experienced conversion as well as emancipation. From an Africanist perspective, the surviving profiles of individuals who were enslaved but achieved emancipation was the fate of only a minority of those who crossed the Atlantic. Among those who did, some returned to Africa, and we know some details of their lives. Many others who were liberated in the nineteenth century and settled in Sierra Leone, or freed in Cuba, Rio de Janeiro, Trinidad, Saint Helena and other places, have left biographical trails. Thus, the corpus of narratives that involve the loss of freedom as well as its regaining is larger than has been recognized. While this genre shows us that the concepts of freedom and slavery are opposites, it also demonstrates that you cannot have one without the other. The best study of shipboard bonding is from the accounts from Sierra Leone, but in that case the bonding happened in freedom not in slavery. In that important sense, those accounts differ from the accounts of people who, after the Middle Passage, underwent slavery rather than freedom, or at least apprenticeship. Such 'transit bonding' has parallels with caravan trails and river traffic.

In identifying accounts of those who had been born in Africa as 'freedom narratives', I am calling into question the major differences in accounts thus identified here from the narratives composed by or otherwise received from individuals who had been born into slavery, who were thereby distanced from the physical act of enslavement and, instead, exposed to slavery through birth, growing up in perpetual trauma. The Middle Passage reflected the life experiences of those who crossed the Atlantic. Doubts have been unnecessarily raised about Vassa's assertion that he was born in Africa and, therefore, about whether he ever experienced the Middle Passage. If the centrality of the shipboard experience is denied, then we are not really talking about Vassa as a 'founder' of a narrative tradition but rather as a fraud who lied. It is hard to imagine that falsification

3 https://www.freedomnarratives.org/

of a personal story can be seen as a contribution to the slave narrative tradition, as Vincent Carretta (2005) suggests through his characterization of Vassa as a 'self-made man' who was more interested in selling his book, and thereby making money, than in advancing the fight against slavery (see Lovejoy, 2012). Vassa was a politically vocal hero of the Enlightenment, one of the leading proponents of abolition, not an opportunistic, self-serving villain of a crass, materialistic world more representative of twenty-first century academia than the religiously-inspired dedication of fighting the crime of slavery.

The individuals in focus in the essays of this section include formerly enslaved individuals who rose to high positions in society after emancipation, as María Elisa Velázquez demonstrates in the case of Juan Correa, or free descendants of enslaved persons, as in Crosby-Arnold's discussion of Joseph Bologne de Saint-Georges, or the teaching and missionary career of Catherine Mulgrave-Zimmermann, as examined by Maureen Warner-Lewis. Similarly, Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua was able to escape from enslavement and he became one of the first Africans educated in a college in the United States of America, as discussed by Bruno Véras. The remaining cases depict individuals who owned and trafficked in enslaved people, as Vanessa Oliveira reveals in the life of Dona Ana Joaquina dos Santos Silva of Luanda. Edward Alpers focuses specifically on children caught in the slave trade in East Africa and the Indian Ocean. The essays also look at fugitives (Jean-Pierre Le Glaunec and Mary Mitchell) and eunuchs in the Ottoman Empire (Özgül Özdemir). The struggle for autonomy and emancipation is a common theme, as in the Brazilian cases examined by Daniela Cavalheiro and Nielson Bezerra as well as the Sierra-Leone case of Fuseng-be presented by Suzanne Schwarz.

The biographical studies presented in this section are intended to cover a wide geographical area of Africa in its global context, although it is inevitably impossible to reveal the full extent of the dispersal of Africans during the era of slavery. Alpers examines the movement of children in slavery and pawnship in eastern Africa, and the connections to the Indian Ocean. Bezerra and Cavalheiro follow the lives of Africans in Brazil, concentrating on Rio de Janeiro. Crosby-Arnold tells the story of a woman in Guadeloupe who became the concubine of a wealthy planter and of how their intimate relationship led to the stunning career of their son in France before and during the French Revolution. Imbua describes individuals who were taken from Calabar as slaves but emancipated in Sierra Leone after their ship was intercepted by the British Royal Navy. These 'liberated' Africans then returned to Calabar where they became involved in the palm oil trade, challenging the established elite of Calabar

who had been responsible for their deportation as slaves, and building successful careers as merchants. Le Glaunec teases out the activities of fugitive slaves through an examination of advertisements placed by their owners in newspapers. Mitchell examines the narratives of those who survived enslavement in the United States of America, and how their written and recorded testimonies were fundamental to the assertion of identity and the establishment of claims to dignified survival. Osifekunde's story is particularly poignant, as revealed by Ojo. Taken from Rio de Janeiro to France by a French master, Osifekunde became the subject of anthropological enquiry. Laws against the immigration of Africans and people of African descent in France, and Osifekunde's desire to be reunited with his son in Recife, resulted in his return to Brazil where he was exposed to the brutality of lynch mobs, dying an untimely death in 1842. Mohammed Bashir Salau discusses the extraordinary life of Nicholas Said of Borno, enslaved globetrotter and American Civil War veteran who published his autobiography in 1873 in the United States of America. Oliveira exposes the complicity of elite women in Luanda in exploiting and sustaining slavery in the Portuguese colony of Angola. Her account offers a sharp contrast to Unigwe's sensitive portrayal of the life and times of abolitionist Gustavus Vassa, who was born into a free household in Igboland as Olaudah Equiano, and who successfully purchased his own freedom after serving in Britain's Royal Navy during the Seven Years' War, which afforded him the opportunity of an education shipboard. Suzanne Schwarz relies on the 1809 court case documents in Sierra Leone to present the winning fight of Fuseng-be, an enslaved young woman who regained her freedom. Velázquez recounts the startling success of Juan Correa as a Baroque painter in late seventeenth and early eighteenth-century New Spain (Mexico). Véras tells us about Baquaqua, his background, his period of enslavement in Brazil, and his subsequent escape to freedom in New York City. Warner-Lewis describes the journey of Catherine Mulgrave-Zimmerman. Kidnapped as a teenager on the beach near Luanda, shipwrecked off Jamaica and adopted by the incumbent governor, she subsequently pursued a teaching career at the Moravian mission in Jamaica and thereafter at Osu, now Accra, on the Gold Coast. Ibrahima Seck discusses a plantation on the Mississippi, owned by a German immigrant, and the life stories of the plantation's enslaved population, the plantation now being a museum near New Orleans. Özdemir introduces us to a eunuch in the Ottoman court who was from Ethiopia, apparently of Galla origin. The geographical distribution of these accounts allow some understanding of the parameters of Global Africa and the range of experiences

of the enslaved population, including the achievement of unusual success and the tragedy of unwarranted death.

What we learn from these voices of freedom are the facts of diversity and courage in the face of oppression. No narrative is typical or representative of anything more than personal experience. Are there patterns in the accounts about slavery and freedom? There are, with reference to perseverance and endurance. The challenges facing each person were unique and called for individual strength, social bonds and a good measure of luck. How many people failed to achieve results like those whose narratives have survived is an open question. Disease, death, the arbitrary infliction of unbearable punishment, bad fortune and even fate undermined most of those caught in the nexus of slavery. Their voices were silenced. Hence, one of the common features of the narratives themselves is survival. Somehow, they were recorded or can be pieced together, however incomplete, fraught with inaccuracies and dependent on conjecture.

The United Nations declared slavery and the slave trade a crime against humanity in the twenty-first century, but it is important to recognize that the ways in which individuals survived such criminal activity in the past forms part of the history of Global Africa. An examination of the stories of those who suffered slavery makes it possible to appreciate the achievements of people from Africa in the development of the modern world.

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CHAPTER 1

CHILDREN IN THE INDIAN OCEAN

Edward A. Alpers

Historians recognize that women and children worldwide have been especially vulnerable to enslavement. No more vivid example exists than the famous autobiography of Gustavus Vassa/Olaudah Equiano (see chapter 6 in this volume). The same sad story holds true for the slave trade of the Indian Ocean, in which children were continuously preyed upon in the last decades of the nineteenth century (Morton, 2009; Alpers, 2009; Allen, 2009). Children were regularly kidnapped by rapacious slave raiders, sold into slavery by mercenary relatives or pawned off during famines before being sold into slavery. Even when already enslaved on Unguja (the island of Zanzibar), children were seized by unscrupulous slavers to be carried off to Arabia, Persia, and western South Asia. Descriptions of the enslavement of children in Indian Ocean Africa abound in official British antislavery accounts, both consular and naval, as well as in missionary and – a few – colonial narratives. The context of this evidence is strongly abolitionist, highly patronizing, and often racist. Nevertheless, through it all there emerges a body of fragmentary evidence that represents the voices of these children: the voices that I emphasize in this short chapter.

Although the full extent of the slave trade in eastern Africa is uncertain, there is no question that it reached its height during the nineteenth century. Demand centres in East Africa were part of the rapidly expanding clove and coconut plantation economy, first on Unguja and then, after the devastating

hurricane of 1872, on Pemba Island. In the last decades of the century, sugar and grain plantations took root on the coast itself, creating further demand for labour (Cooper, 1977; Glassman, 1995). In Arabia the growing market for pearls in Europe and North America stimulated the demand for labour in the pearl beds of the Gulf (Hopper, 2015). Meanwhile, a steady market for both male and female domestic labour continued in Oman, even after the State was separated from Zanzibar following the death of Seyyid Said bin Sultan in 1856. In the insular southwest Indian Ocean, the abolition of slavery by Great Britain in 1834 and by France in 1848 made it more difficult to meet labour demands on the rapidly expanding sugar plantations of colonial Mauritius, Reunion Island, Nosy Be and Mayotte. The British resolved this problem by instituting a system of indentured labour from India, whereas the French resorted to a system of so-called 'free labour emigration' from East Africa that amounted to a form of thinly disguised slave trade. There was also an increased demand for agricultural slave labour in western Madagascar in the nineteenth century that did not cease until abolition in 1896 (Campbell, 2005).

At the height of the slave trade, the strongest demand was for young adult labour, both male and female, but children – here defined as youths under 14 years of age – were also always sought. Unable to defend themselves from armed adults, children were easy prey for raiders and for senior authorities within their own extended families. Children were also valued because they had not yet acquired the habits of adulthood or the customs of their ethnic origins and were therefore more malleable once enslaved. Their ability to learn the languages of their 'masters' was equally enhanced by their young minds. To take but one example, in 1835 a British India official reported, 'The demand for African boys in Cutch [western Gujarat] is stated to be very great. They are there taught all the mechanical arts, and become most useful members of the community'.[1] With the gradual imposition of anti-slave trade treaties on Zanzibar and the slight progress being made towards abolition by the Portuguese in Mozambique, the attraction for slavers of seizing children to be transported during the 'illegal' period of the slave trade was further increased. According to an 1867 report by a member of the British anti-slave-trade patrol,

> The second day after leaving Zanzibar we took a dhow with 150 slaves, almost all children, or boys under fourteen; and as they had only just started they were in good

1 British Library, India Office Records. 1 December 1835. MSS Eur E 293/125 (Willoughby Papers), *Memorandum: On the Slave Trade to Cutch and Katthywar*, para. 7.

> health, all but a few, who are significantly called lanterns by the sailors, because, I suppose, you can almost see through them.[2]

Subterfuge was frequently employed by Indian Ocean slavers to disguise shipments of allegedly 'free' passengers that actually included captive children. In one notorious case in 1893, a British naval vessel stopped an Arab dhow flying French colours that was headed for Muscat. Although its passenger list included only adults between the ages of 16 to 40 years, when the dhow was boarded by British sailors, most of the 77 passengers were found to be children in various states of distress.[3] Children seem also to have been included in shipments of captive Africans to satisfy the French demand for plantation labour in France's Indian Ocean islands.

One example of the latter situation dates back to 1880, when eleven boys were inappropriately included in a shipment of *engagés* from Ngazidja (Grande Comore) to Mayotte for several sugar plantations on the French island colony. These children were temporarily assigned by French authorities to the missionaries at Dzaoudzi because of 'the irregularity of the recruitment', which is to say that they were too young to have freely agreed to work as contract labourers.[4] With the exception of one who was from Ngazidja, the boys – whose ages ranged from 8 to 14 years – all originally came from Mozambique. Each had been assigned a common Muslim 'slave' name by the recruiter, although in the short interviews conducted by French authorities, several were able to recall their original names (Prestholdt, 2008, p. 122).[5] The question-and-answer format of the French interviews do not leave much room for individual voices, but they do reveal the means by which each boy came to be enslaved. According to one, Ktéa, his parents had sold him to an African slaver. Moanner, who had been given the name of Cazambo #1, had been stolen from his parents' home. Cazambo #2 could not recall his family name and stated that his parents had sold him. Cazambo #3 stated that his real name was Jamloukou and indicated that he had been captured 'during the war'. Monyono, named Ouledi by the recruiter, said that he too had been seized 'in the war', as did both Michijaoué (renamed Canabois) and Mipazona (renamed Mabrouck #2); perhaps these four boys had fallen victim to the same conflict in Mozambique. According to Kouara,

2 *Anti-Slavery Reporter*, Vol. 15, No. 99 (16 September 1867), in Beachey, 1976, p. 92.

3 A.B. Grenfell, 11 April 1893, *Foreign Office: Confidential Print*, in Beachey, 1976, pp. 99–100.

4 Centre des Archives d'Outre-Mer (CAOM), Aix-en-Provence, Madagascar 269, d.602, [Edouard] Sasias, Acting Commandant, Mayotte, 13 January 1880. I am indebted to Dr. Klara Boyer-Rossol for sharing this invaluable documentation with me.

5 Attachment to ibid.

who had been dubbed Mabrouck #1, his brother had sold him into slavery, while Miki had been sold by his father. Moériha, renamed for recruitment as Moukoupahy, claimed that his mother had sold him. The one Ngazidjan boy, named M'dahonna but called Moudoihoma by his captor, blamed 'the sultan' (without specifying to which of the several sultans on that island he was referring) for having taken him against his parents' wishes to be sold to the recruiter.[6]

There are many other heart-rending stories of how children, both girls and boys, were forcibly removed from their households and villages in late nineteenth-century East Africa. The story of a ten-year-old Yao girl named Swema, from the interior of northern Mozambique, is a particularly moving one. In around 1865, Swema accompanied her mother, who was forced by debt to pay with her person, on a harrowing journey on foot to Kilwa Kivinje, the most notorious slaving port in eastern Africa. After her mother died on the long march to the coast, Swema herself became the subject of enslavement. By the time she reached Kilwa and after having barely survived the voyage by dhow to Zanzibar Town, she was so wasted that the man who financed this slaving caravan determined that she was not worth saving and ordered her to be abandoned in a shallow grave (Alpers, 1983). A collection of thirteen life stories written in the 1880s by boys at the Universities' Mission to Central Africa (UMCA) school at Kiungani, Zanzibar, reveals the wide range of circumstances that led to children being held captive. All these boys were 'liberated' from slavery by the British navy, then 'given' to the Anglican missionaries at Zanzibar; while they were not enslaved, they were by no means free. Some of the Kiungani boys were seized in targeted slave raids by groups of opportunistic young men from the far interior; some by coastal slavers operating near the coast; some were kidnapped; some were initially pawns for settling debts and then were sold into slavery. Nearly all suffered the ignominy of becoming the property of more than one owner before being released from bondage by the British. Furthermore, however violent and traumatic their odyssey, as the editor of this remarkable collection of stories observed,

> Even their omissions are sometimes significant – for instance, when a child finds nothing to record in all the horrors of the march of a slave-caravan from the far interior to the coast, except the number of days it seemed to occupy. What difference did a little more or less of starvation or torture make, after all, but a darker shade or so in the common tissue of human life? (Madan, 1887, pp. 3–4).

6 CAOM, Madagascar 269, d.601, 'Immigration africaine. Recrutement des travailleurs à Mozambique à destination de Mayotte et Nossi-Be (1874-1880), Interrogatoire des enfants faisant partie du convoie d'engagés introduits dans la colonie par le boutre français le Machassy […]', Sasias and interpreter Amadie, 13 January 1880. My gratitude again to Dr. Boyer-Rossol.

A fascinating parallelism between two quite distinct stories exposes the special vulnerability of younger siblings to being offered up into captivity. According to a Makua boy at Kiungani, his married elder brother, who was a drunkard, stumbled into the home of another woman and proposed marriage to her. The next day, when she informed her kinsmen, they objected and demanded compensation. At first, the elder brother was seized and confined by the woman's family. But as this boy was the youngest in his family, 'at last my family took me, and gave me in payment to his captors' (Madan, 1887, p. 39). Despite his mother's protests, he was taken away and sold, eventually to end up at Kiungani. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, a Norwegian missionary in Madagascar first recorded and then published, in 1919, a life story of a man born in Mozambique in around 1853 and named Kalamba Mahihitse Josefa. Kalamba was one of four children: three boys and a girl. Against his parents' admonitions, his eldest brother travelled to a local circumcision celebration being held some distance from their family home, but was captured en route by bandits. Since Kalamba's parents valued their eldest son, as it was he who would see to their proper burial when they died, they decided to exchange Kalamba for his brother. Thus Kalamba became enslaved; he tells us that he was only seven or eight years of age (Boyer-Rossol, 2015, pp. 864–865).

What kind of existence did these children lead in captivity or freedom? Those who became Christians stood outside mainstream society in the mostly Muslim western Indian Ocean societies into which they were thrown. As a consequence, many remained essentially as wards of the missionary societies to which they were assigned, whether Anglican, Roman Catholic or Protestant. For the vast majority, captivity meant adapting to Islam and, eventually, becoming Muslim. Whether on the coast, on offshore islands, in Arabia, Iran, Baluchistan or Gujarat, this entailed a life that began in domestic service. Unless they married free men, women often continued in domestic work, although some did enter the larger labour force in towns like Zanzibar and Muscat (McMahon, 2013). For boys, reaching adulthood brought with it the labour requirements of men, such as pearl diving in the Gulf (Hopper, 2015). Some became sailors, skilled artisans or day labourers. In East Africa, under colonial rule, all gained emancipation, although the stigma of slavery persisted. In Arabia, manumission was relatively common; however, slavery did not end until as late as 1970 in Oman, meaning that those of the enslaved children who had survived and themselves had children saw them born into slavery.

Despite the trauma of being violently torn from one's kith and kin, or of the undermining of family values precipitated by the opportunities for personal gain

created by the slave trade, many East African children survived their captivity and gained a new kind of freedom. A few of the children who found themselves committed to the UMCA became men of the cloth themselves. Among them was Yohanna Abdullah, the first Anglican priest in East Africa, a proud Yao and author of *Chiikala cha Wayao* (1919), and Petro Kilekwa, a Bisa from Zambia who published his autobiography, *Slave Boy to Priest*, in 1937. Captured in an Ngoni raid, Kibuli bin Mchubiri, also a Bisa, received the name Rashid when he was enslaved on Zanzibar. He later adopted the patronymic bin Hassani from the husband of a woman to whom he was assigned by his mistress, a sister of Seyyid Barghash bin Said, Sultan of Zanzibar (r.1870–1888), and who was manumitted upon the mistress' death at the end of the century. Rashid bin Hassani had a variety of jobs in colonial Tanganyika and ended his career as a forest guard near Moshi, at the base of Mount Kilimanjaro. Reflecting upon his life in captivity and freedom, he reminisced,

> When I was a child my father went to the shamba with his bow and arrows and took us with him; he dared not leave us even for a day for fear we should be seized and sold as slaves... It is true you were free to live where you liked and go where you liked, but it was much more a question of living where you could and going where you dared (Perham, 1936, p. 118).

To be a child at the height of the nineteenth-century Indian Ocean slave trade meant that one lived an often precarious existence that was fraught with potential dangers. Yet the strengths of children are their ineffable resilience, their hopes for a better future and their ability to forget the past and carry on living. Those who survived the violence of the slave trade embodied these characteristics as free men and women.

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CHAPTER 2

JUAN CORREA, A BAROQUE PAINTER OF AFRICAN DESCENT FROM NEW-SPANISH MEXICO

María Elisa Velázquez

The first Africans arrived in Mexico City, which was then called Tenochtitlán. By way of example, some of them, possibly Juan Cortés and Juan Garrido[1] came with Hernán Cortés, according to accounts related in various chronicles and images of the period. Some of the Africans who arrived with the conquistadores received rewards in the form of properties or *encomiendas* for their participation in the conquest of indigenous towns and cities (Restall, 2005).

A few years after the conquest, thousands of men, women and children began to arrive in New Spain to meet the needs of colonial businesses such as mining, agricultural estate farming and cattle farms, craft occupations and housework, work in convents, colleges and estates. The demographic catastrophe suffered by the indigenous population, starting from the time of the conquest in terms of outbreaks of epidemics of new illnesses, combined with ill treatment and cultural malaise, as well as the prohibition of enslaving indigenous peoples, were causes that won over and 'justified' the demand for slaves from different parts of Africa to migrate to New Spain. Slavery studies have calculated that around 250,000 enslaved people from Africa arrived in Mexico (Velázquez and Iturralde, 2012).

Authorized ports for the slave trade were Veracruz and later Campeche, although it is known that slaves arrived in Acapulco with the Nao de China,

1 Hernán Cortés was the main Mexican conquistador; he arrived in 1519 and took the city of Tenochtitlán in 1521.

from areas of East Africa or New Guinea. From different ports on the Pacific or Atlantic they were taken to Mexico City to be distributed among different places in the centre, north and south of the country: Guanajuato, San Luis Potosí, Zacatecas, Puebla, Morelos, Colima, Hidalgo, Monterrey, Sinaloa, Chiapas, Tabasco, Yucatán and practically all the modern-day states of Mexico took in African men and women during the period of the viceroyalty, particularly between the years 1580–1650. Around the middle of the eighteenth century, the slave trade ceased to have the importance it had had in previous centuries, given that the indigenous and mestizo populations had increased and therefore slavery was no longer as profitable as it had been in previous eras in New Spain (Gonzalbo, 1998).

Over time, many people of African descent succeeded in gaining their freedom and along with this, a better standard of living. Freedom was attained in several ways; it could be granted by their masters, by means of testaments or letters of freedom, and enslaved people could also buy their freedom in the event that they had been able to save money by doing extra work on the side or through financial help from family and friends.

It is important to state that interracial group marriages were not forbidden by the Church, and that many unions took place outside of wedlock, which fostered interbreeding between indigenous peoples and Africans. By the eighteenth century, Mexico had a significant Afrodescendent population throughout its entire territory; some of them had managed to acquire certain economic resources by means of military service, commerce or holding offices, whereas others continued to suffer poverty and marginalization like many other groups in society, especially indigenous ones (Gonzalbo, 1998 and Velázquez, 2006).

Juan Correa's studio work was well known by historians of New Hispanic art; however, it was thought, at least until the 1980s, and in spite of signposting by Carrera Estampa,[2] that only a very few 'negros' and 'mulattos' had managed to attain guild master status, and still fewer had achieved widespread recognition and prestige.

In the 1980s a group of art historians decided to carry out an investigation into the life and works of Juan Correa and to catalogue his output, both in Mexico and in other Latin American countries.[3] It was confirmed on the basis

2 Translator's note – the Carrera Estampa is a Mexican guild dealing with the regulation of crafts and arts with Spanish antecedents.

3 The results of this study were published in various volumes; one of them revealed all the archived documents found, on which the majority of the data revealed in this text has been based. Elisa Vargas Lugo and Gustavo Curiel, Juan Correa, su vida y su obra. Cuerpo de documentos, tome III, (Juan Correa, his life and work. Documentary body, tome III) Mexico, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1991.

of documental sources that Juan Correa was a mulatto, that his mother had most likely been an *oriunda* ('native black') from Africa and that his father was a Creole also 'dark-skinned', a well-known barber-surgeon of the Inquisition. On the basis of this information, and thanks to a series of documents in the possession of the work study team of the National Autonomous University of Mexico, the life and works of Juan Correa was located and published, and became a watershed in the assessment of the situation and qualities of Afrodescendent peoples in New Hispanic society, of the possibilities of social and economic mobility that existed, and of the diverse and complex family networks and blood relationships that were established during that period.

Juan Correa was born in 1646, in Mexico City, New Spain. His father, also known as Juan Correa, was a famous barber-surgeon of the Spanish Inquisition, a native of Mexico City, himself the son of a Spaniard whose mother was a native of Cádiz, Spain, probably a mulatta or a Christianized Moor, although there are at present no documents to confirm this. His mother was a free black woman, Pascuala de Santoyo, who had already given birth to two children in an illegitimate union by the time she got married to the doctor, by whom she had two sons, José, a master gilder, and Juan Correa himself.

Correa's artistic output was generally founded on religious themes, and in many instances were copies of European pieces, as was the custom at that time. Acknowledged and appreciated by New Hispanic society of the day, Correa churned out important, heterogeneous and numerous pictorial works in the final quarter of the seventeenth century and the early decades of the eighteenth century on the order of individuals and civil and ecclesiastical authorities. His production touches on all the iconography of the period: the subjects of archangels, Marian devotions, Christological themes, allegories, male and female saints, souls from purgatory, and even screen partitions bearing humanistic themes. Catering to the localized interests of New Spain, keen to highlight certain themes related to evangelical mission work, the didactic passages and American prayers, among them presumably the one to the Virgin of Guadeloupe, it is to Correa that we owe the first copy of the image of the Virgin of Guadeloupe, of whom the mulatto painter was a devotee, and a particular promoter of her culture. Throughout his life as a master, Juan Correa took several mulatto apprentices into his studio and trained important future New Spanish painters, including José de Ibarra (Velázquez, 1998).

A contemporary of thinkers such as the poetess Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz, the writer and scientist Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora, and the also famous painter Cristóbal de Villalpando, Juan Correa was born into a founding era in

the history of vice-royal Mexico, in which the presence of Africans and their interbreeding with other groups notably increased; an era, in short, in which the social and economic dynamics were complex.

The life of Juan Correa bears witness to the complex social diversity that was being lived out in the New Hispanic viceroyalty; on the one hand, Juan Correa's parents attained quite a comfortable standard of living in the Calle Águila (currently a Cuban Republic section of the old historic centre of Mexico City), which allowed them to lend their son the 300 pesos it took to buy the freedom of his slave Tomasa Gutiérrez, and fifty pesos more for the freedom of her similarly enslaved grandson, while conversely, Juan Correa had a black slave woman of 50 years of age in his service, whom he sold towards the end of the seventeenth century. Not much is known about the artist's early life and adolescence. His earliest works date from the 1660s. On stylistic evidence, some scholars believe he was part of Antonio Rodríguez's studio, and although the exact date of Juan Correa's entry into the guild of painters and gilders is unknown, it was reported that that he took the master's exam alongside other contemporary painters of the class of 1687, in other words, when he was already 41 years old. Guild studios, like the painters and gilders, were the only places qualified to exercise different arts and offices. Each one of them relied on a brotherhood (a congregation with religious and social welfare aims) and their patron saint determined the ordinances which regulated the technical and religious criteria that had to govern the creation of works of art, conditions of sale and the knowledge and characteristics which those who aspired to be masters had to attain. Despite the restrictions imposed and issued by certain guilds towards the indigenous peoples, Africans and people of castes holding offices, their entry into these corporations as apprentices, officials and in some cases, masters, was inevitable.

The characteristic themes of the era represented by Correa were those of the communion and the Eucharist, as well as those linked to the triumph of the church. These included representations of male and female saints, the iconography of Christ, the Virgin, archangels and other biblical themes. Among the painter's varied output, two interesting folding screens that were traditional in the Orient, which Correa created for historical and humanistic purposes, should be taken into account. They catch the eye with their pictorial production, which leaves a singular imprint on the work, the images of angels, cherubs and children of 'broken colour' (one adjective among many others used to describe mulattos in the colonial period). The depiction of these dynamic and almost exclusively blond celestial beings, exhibiting typical Baroque characteristics, had already been used

by other New Hispanic painters, but in Correa's work these figures acquired a new physiognomy. In light of investigations carried out by Elisa Vargas Lugo on his work, *Baby Jesus with Musician Angels,* it was the painter's intention to reflect artistically and spiritually the diverse ethnicity of his time, and probably also the presence of African descendants in New Spain, by endowing two of the angels who accompany the scene with a darker tint than the rest who make up the piece. Correa seemingly based his work on the work of the Czech artist, Wenceslaus Hollar, entitled, *Concert of Cherubs on Earth*, and he gave two of the musician angels, in particular one of them, positioned immediately behind the Baby Jesus, a noticeably darker skin tone, which contrasts with the light skin colour of the scene's protagonist; the other, positioned on the far left, curiously playing two tambourines, also differs from the other angels by having a skin colour more akin to that of mulattos (Rodríguez, 2011).

In 1706, sometime after taking his master's exam, and ten years before his death, Juan Correa was elected Guild Overseer, an important function in the hierarchy of this institution. In order to be elected overseer, a master had to be a person of renown and experience in the office, since they carried out the orders of mayors and town halls, and ensured compliance with the ordinances, orders and board of director agreements, or the advice of elders in their respective guilds. Other roles Juan Correa was associated with were that of asset valuer and inventory executor.

Juan Correa married twice in his life; the dates of the weddings are not known, nor is the 'status' of each wife. There were no children from his first marriage, since his wife María de Páez died prematurely, but there were four offspring from his second marriage to Úrsula de Montoya: Miguel, Francisco, Diego and Felipa. Two of them took up painting as a profession: his firstborn, Miguel, who later became an officer, and Diego, who reached the level of master, but died very young. So far, around 400 works by Juan Correa have been catalogued, with another 40 located in museums or colonial buildings in Mexico being attributed to him, as well as those in private collections at home and abroad. The life and works of Juan Correa reflect the vital, dynamic and contrasting history of vice-royal Mexico in the seventeenth century, which, far from being a gloomy and static period, was in truth an era of intense mobility, profound transformations and important cultural bonding in which people of African descent played a fundamental role in Mexico's economic, social and cultural construction. Juan Correa died in Mexico City in 1716.

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CHAPTER 3

BIOGRAPHIES OF AFRICANS IN DIASPORA

Individual Trajectories and Collective Identities

Nielson Rosa Bezerra

As a field of study, the history of the African diaspora has yet to face a significant challenge. Even considering the continuous advances made over the years, we still need to listen to the voices of the Africans narrating their personal histories. Using biography as a historiographical method has been a valuable tool in confronting this challenge. Thanks to this perspective, more than 12 million Africans, who came from different parts of Africa to the Americas during the period of the Atlantic slave trade, can be seen not as mere statistical data, in terms of numbers and percentages, but rather as human beings, with personalities, interests and, above all, as creators of their own histories.[1] Besides, biography as a method for studying the African diaspora offers a powerful alternative to the idea of slavery as the central feature of the history of Africans in the Americas.[2] However, the challenges that historians face begin long before, with the selection of historical sources capable of offering information about the lives and trajectories of African people who were taken from their homelands to live in other places, all too frequently under slavery. Not only the

1 For the number of Africans who were taken from Africa in the transatlantic slave trade, see http://www.slavevoyages.org/. This project also supports research on the origins of Africans in diaspora. See http://www.slavevoyages.org/about/origins.

2 For biographies of Africans in diaspora, see http://www.freedomnarratives.org and https://www.yorku.ca/research/tubman/.

method of treating sources but also the criteria used for choosing documents and information about people must be rethought. This way, documents that have been used only to generate numbers and statistics can also be used to reconstruct the trajectories of these people.

This essay is a contribution to the debate about the individual trajectories and collective identities of Africans in diaspora using the biographical method. Using testaments attached to death entries, it is possible to elaborate a part of the trajectory of Gracia Maria da Conceição Magalhães, for example, who initially was known only as Gracia Guiné, an enslaved African in Rio de Janeiro. Through labour, ingeniousness and effort, she managed to obtain her manumission, marry a man of mixed African and European background, become a member of a religious confraternity, and own slaves and a manioc flour mill. Her trajectory is a demonstration of the social re-elaborations of Africans, especially women, in diaspora. They were responsible for the changes that occurred in their lives over time, by building relationships that enabled social mobility or perpetuated the stagnancy in which they lived. Furthermore, this essay sheds light on the importance of the biographical method in providing a perspective on diaspora, revealing particular areas of interest within Brazilian historiography that are distinct from those produced by anglophone historians.

Gracia Maria da Conceição Magalhães: An African in the Recôncavo of Rio de Janeiro

Even after she was no longer a slave, the memories of the journey from Africa to Rio de Janeiro never disappeared. Gracia Maria da Conceição Magalhães had time to remember everything before her death. She took comfort in the knowledge that she had earned enough money in her life to guarantee all the Catholic sacraments. She would be shrouded in the habit of Saint Anthony, a special item, and her burial would be held in the cemetery of the confraternity of Our Lady of the Rosary, located in the parish of Nossa Senhora da Piedade de Iguaçu, where she lived out her last years. Judging by the pompous name she bore after being manumitted and by her ostentatious possessions, few people would imagine that Gracia Maria was an African, born in Guinea. She died just before Christmas, on 18 December 1789. Though a member of Our Lady of the Rosary, she was especially devoted to Our Lady of the Conception. Wrong were those who thought that she owed her surname only to Luiz de Magalhães, the former master who liberated her. Always canny, she paid her contributions

to the confraternity. In this manner, she ensured that everything would be done according to her will, since she was certain that the confraternity would meet the obligations that governed the religious institution. She was a widow when she passed away, her husband, Manoel Gomes Torres, having died years before.

While alive, she sometimes felt sad that she had not had children. The travails of slave labour may have been responsible for that. As she was a widow without children or heirs, she needed to leave her possessions in good hands. When her executor read the testament, there were no surprises. She was not rich but had two Angolan slaves, Lucrécia and Antônio. She had bought them rather cheap as the trade flow between Angola and Rio de Janeiro had been gradually increasing since 1750, decreasing the average value of slaves and making it easy for small farmers to have a slave labour force. Gracia Maria also had a well-equipped manioc house. The building was quite old, but it served its purpose. Among its items, there were boxes for flour storage and tools (axes, hoes, knives and so forth). She had a rifle, usually used by Antônio to frighten away predators from the forest of Tinguá, though only on her instructions. The conciliatory accounts and remarks recorded in her testament make it clear that Gracia Maria did not like to have her slaves involved in problems with the authorities. Her property was modest even by the standards of her parish – she had no more than 30 acres. However, that was enough for a good crop of manioc, which was processed into flour before being sold. She favoured her slaves, but not for fear of being unable to find peace after death. She had already received every possible Catholic sacrament. Gracia Maria had a certain affection for Antônio and Lucrécia, especially the latter. So, in her will, both of them benefited from the manioc crop and the manioc house for one year from the day of her death. Gracia Maria hoped that Antônio and (particularly) Lucrécia would save up enough money in one year to buy their letters of manumission. However, if Antônio could not buy his freedom by the end of that period, the executor was to sell him at market price. Gracia Maria stated that, in that case, he should only be sold to someone of his liking. However, she held Lucrécia in higher esteem. As a freedwoman herself, from the parish of Nossa Senhora da Piedade de Iguaçu in the Recôncavo of Rio de Janeiro, she stipulated that if Lucrécia Angola could not buy her freedom by the end of the period, the executor should offer her an extension of a year and a half so that she would not have to live as a slave any more. Gracia Maria also settled on a price for Lucrécia: 38,400 réis, which, it seems, was below the average price. In Lucrécia's case, it was clearly stated that as soon she gave the executor the money, her letter of manumission should be delivered immediately.

Obviously, Gracia Maria da Conceição Magalhães was not rich or powerful. For example, she owed 24,000 réis to a slave named Damião, who belonged to Francisco Barbosa. It was an old debt from when her husband, Manoel Gomes Torres was still alive. At the time, Damião was saving that money to buy his own manumission. To ensure the money would not be lost, Damião confided it to Manoel Gomes Torres, a man he trusted. However, things became difficult for Gracia Maria when Manoel got sick, so Damião's money was used to buy medicine and pay for medical services. When Manoel died, the remaing money was used to pay for his burial. Gracia Maria was a very decent woman. In her testament, it was stated that Damião should receive all his money back without any legal dispute. She was in debt to another slave, named Francisco, who also belonged to Francisco Barbosa, in the amount of 14,080 réis. It is clear that Manoel Gomes Torres had good relationships with the slaves owned by Francisco Barbosa, otherwise they would not have entrusted money to him.

Manoel Gomes Torres was a freedman of mixed racial background, devoted to Our Lady of the Conception, the preferred saint of people who came from this social background. In her testament, Gracia Maria da Conceição said that her deceased husband belonged to that confraternity. Besides owing money to the slaves owned by Francisco Barbosa, Manoel Torres was also in debt to his religious confraternity. So, before her death, Gracia Maria declared that part of the money collected by the sale of her possessions should be used to pay the debt of her deceased husband. Being a fair person, she had already paid 16,000 réis to the confraternity. Hence, for a debt of 42,430 réis, the executor had to pay only 26,430 réis.

Gracia Maria had her own debts. As she had done with her husband's debts, she declared that hers should be duly paid. She had already received 4,000 réis from Lucrécia Angola. Having reached an agreement concerning her manumission, Lucrécia periodically paid Gracia Maria three coins as part of the agreement. However, she was not the only person Gracia Maria had such relations with. She also owed 11 *patacas* to a freedwoman called Izabel de Almeida, money she borrowed in a moment of need. Besides stipulating the payment of her debts, Gracia Maria also said that she might owe money to someone else she could no longer remember. So, after her death, in case any creditor claimed a 'low amount', the executor was to pay it unquestioningly.

Gracia Maria did not only have debts but was owed money, since she had profited from buying and selling slaves in the competitive manumissions market created by freed Africans. She registered in her testament that the freed African named José Rodrigues owed her 38,400 réis, credit that she had granted him to

pay the second instalment of the amount required to liberate the slave named Izabel Crioula, his biological daughter. In full control of her faculties when she wrote her will, she declared that the money should be paid so that Izabel could receive her letter of manumission. If the due date expired, the executor should get Izabel Crioula back and sell her as a slave to any interested person, as stated in the agreement with her biological father.

Cautious in business and religious affairs, Gracia Maria da Conceição Magalhães wished to have four funeral masses held for her soul. For each mass, she offered a sum of 640 réis. Besides that, she stipulated that two more masses be held at any convenient place of the executor's choice and offered 320 réis for each one. Having in mind her old and new debts, she considered her money might not be enough. If needed, her gold earrings were to be sold to guarantee the money for the masses. The leftover money was to be donated at the altar of Our Lady of the Conception.

Her possessions included a little box that she wished to give Izabel Crioula, whose manumission had been settled. Her opulent skirt was to be inherited by the freed African named Escolástica de Magalhães, who lived in Rio de Janeiro, a friend from the days when she had been a slave. Both had belonged to the same master, from whom they had taken the surname Magalhães. Gracia Maria was very fond of her painted image of Our Lady of the Conception and her gold necklace, which were to be given to the freed African named Custódia, wife of Domingos Francisco Ramos. In appreciation of her old master, Gracia Maria also wanted 13 masses to be undertaken for the soul of the deceased Luiz Magalhães. Everything was to be done within four years. Gracia Maria was an experienced woman, and she knew very well that things would not work as planned if done in a rush.

Then, once her slaves, possessions and manioc crop were sold, Rosa and Ana, daughters of José de Azevedo, were to receive 2,000 réis each. The remaining money would belong to the executor, Manoel Rodrigues, an old and inseparable friend, for all the trouble taken with the execution of her will, and for being close to her after her husband's illness and death. It was only fair for him to receive a proper reward for his trouble.

However, her last wish concerning the manioc house could not wait four years to be fulfilled. Gracia Maria expected that Antônio and Lucrécia, her Angolan slaves, would make enough money with the manioc house to pay for their manumissions. Thus, by the end of the term appointed, the manioc house,

its items and her lands were to be donated to a freed African named João Gomes da Conceição who lived in the city of Rio de Janeiro.[3]

There is much to be learned about the trajectory of the freed African named Gracia Maria da Conceição Magalhães. She came from Guinea, arrived in Rio de Janeiro as a slave, then was liberated, became a member of the Our Lady of the Rosary confraternity, was devoted to Our Lady of the Conception, owned a manioc house and some slaves, and had influence over many people who, from the point of view of the legality of slavery, were not under her power. However, this trajectory is only a small demonstration of the importance of biography as a method that yields the possibility of 'listening' to the voices of Africans in diaspora. In this case, the testament is particularly rich since Gracia Maria da Conceição Magalhães was the one who revealed all the information about her life. With similar data, it is possible to examine people and institutions mentioned by her and amplify the information concerning her own context, her community and the social interactions she had built, from the time she was a slave until the moment of her death, as a freed African with property, as reported in her testament.

Biographies of Africans in diaspora: Methodological contributions

In Brazil, biographies are used in historiography. Biographical studies of Africans or people who underwent the experiences of the Atlantic slave trade are recurrent. While biographical studies in the anglophone world are embedded in the tradition of using autobiographical narratives followed by a long contextualization, Brazilian historiography is devoted to writing about individuals who continually appear in the documentation. Some of them are so present that it is possible to establish details about them. Thus, one can identify two historiographical traditions in relation to biographies of Africans: one is a tradition focused on autobiographies, focusing on narratives written by the individual himself or herself, and with direct participation. The other is more consistent with establishing a 'historical imagination' based on documents containing information, testimony or evidence of the person's trajectory. However, in both cases, the methodology involved in using biography needs to

3 Livro de Assentos de Óbitos e Testamentos de Livres – Freguesia de Nossa Senhora da Piedade de Iguaçu, 1777–1798, Arquivo da Cúria Diocesana de Nova Iguaçu.

be grounded in the following four parameters: first, a focus on the subject of the biography is crucial, seeking as much information about his or her physical characteristics, activities, occupations, beliefs and cultural perspectives. When it is impossible to find an autobiography where the person is described with some accuracy, self-descriptive information can be found in documents such as reports of escape, rental or purchase and sale advertisements, police records and testaments. Second, context can help when considering an individual trajectory. Even if it is not possible to fill in all the gaps, it is possible to place the subject in his or her context, searching out close relations, taking as examples other people who held similar social positions, and using baptisms, marriage and death registers in ecclesiastical books that can provide information. Third, establishing collective experiences is crucial as people generally live in a collective, and it is that social living that characterizes people. Hence, thinking about a person and his or her trajectory also involves considering at least some collective parameters of social relations, regardless of the condition of the individual in the social sphere. Many documents – commitments to brotherhoods, testaments of freedmen or letters of manumission – are available to conduct biographical research into the lives of Africans in diaspora. Finally, it is important not to expect definitive answers because the diversity of human experiences cannot be condensed into a few descriptive lines of a police record, a baptism entry or even an act of commitment to a brotherhood. People are generally involved in a multitude of contexts, which can be confusing if the researcher is not able to discern the African subject, independent of his or her social status.

Paul Lovejoy and Robin Law (2007) have investigated the life of Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua using documents from diverse places relating to his Atlantic trajectory, taking into consideration the clues provided by his autobiography. The most significant of clues are to be found in the name – Baquaqua – that he chose to use after reaching freedom in the city of New York in 1847. In his autobiography, Baquaqua says that, when he was a slave in Brazil, his Christianized name was José da Costa, a common enough name in the Christian universe. The last name was derived from that of his master, Captain Clemente José da Costa. When he found shelter with activists of the American abolitionist movement, together with another escapee, the latter, a slave named João da Rocha, chose a typically American name: David. Given the possibility of choosing his own name, José da Costa opted for Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua, a name that bore a reference to his cultural heritage, retracing his past in Africa, a place Baquaqua wished to return to during his lifetime.

Law and Lovejoy argue that the names that Africans adopted when they became free possibly alluded to overcoming slavery.

Considering the methodology in examining Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua's autobiography, one could think about using testaments as autobiographical documents that offer information about the way Africans lived in diaspora, their interests, and the circumstances and contexts of their lives. I think the same method can offer many perspectives when applied to various documents, mostly with the objective of discovering the trajectories of various individuals so that their identities may be revealed despite the long hiatus between the times in which they lived and the present time in which their lives are being studied.

Besides her remarkable declarations in her testament, Gracia Maria da Conceição Magalhães provided proof of her conversion to Catholicism. Nevertheless, the fact is that we cannot know if she had truly adopted Christian attitudes while she was alive. I would like here to underscore the analysis of the name of our protagonist. Throughout her testament, Gracia Maria praised the fact that she bore Our Lady's name, a mark of Catholic Christianity often seen in societies shaped by European colonization. Interestingly enough, she was a confrère of Our Lady of the Rosary in whose cemetery she was supposed to be buried. The contributions duly paid were the only thing she did for the confraternity. Judging by her testament, Gracia Maria was truly devoted to Our Lady of the Conception. She had already paid 16,000 réis for her husband's debts and instructed the executor to pay what remained. Also, she insisted that the money left from the sale of her earrings be offered at the altar of Our Lady of the Conception. Gracia Maria had an image of Our Lady of the Conception. Besides, she had adopted her devotion as her surname. It might be coincidence, but her testament expressed her desire to give her manioc house to an old slave of hers, a freedman named José Gomes da Conceição. I would presume, with some certainty, that Gracia Maria da Conceição was only buried in the cemetery of the Rosary because the presence of Africans among the brothers of the Conception (her husband had been one of them) was restricted or at least frowned upon.

Historiography shows that it was common for slaves to adopt the surnames of their former masters when they were manumitted. I analysed the subject in research about manumissions in Jacutinga in the nineteenth century (Bezerra, 2008, chapter 2). For Gracia Maria, her surname ensured her freedom. The name Magalhães made people think of her master, so her freed condition would not be questioned. Perhaps those 13 masses required for the soul of her former master were not ingenuous. Incidentally, Gracia Maria left her ostentatious skirt

to Escolástica Magalhães, a freed African. They may not have been sisters by blood, but they were certainly in captivity together when they were owned by Luiz Magalhães. Gracia Maria respected Catholic symbolism. Long before her death, she had already had her habit of Saint Anthony made, that being one of the most popular practices of devotion in the Recôncavo of Rio de Janeiro.

Judging by the methodology developed by Law and Lovejoy (2007), the name Maria did not allude to Africa, but to an advanced process of ladinization (Reis, 2015). Usually, when an African was baptized, he/she would receive a Christian name. His/her origin completed the identification. It did not mean conversion to Catholicism, but the imposition of Catholic rituals on enslaved Africans, with a view to justifying the institution of forced labour. Then, during captivity, our African protagonist was possibly known as Gracia da Guinéou, or simply Gracia Guiné. In case of Gracia Guiné, it seems that the process of ladinization resulted in her conversion to Catholicism, as she dictated in her testament. It is not difficult to understand why she adopted Maria as her second name. The Maria devotions were many. Besides, such devotions were allocated among confraternities, which served to represent social hierarchy during the colonial period. The Rosary confraternity was more appropriate for Africans. Conception was mainly attended by men and women who were identified as 'mulattoes'. Gracia Maria, a freed African, did not object to such social hierarchy and joined the Africans' confraternity. However, when she had the chance to choose another Catholic representation as a name, she chose Conceição, and when she manumitted her slave, he started to call himself José Gomes da Conceição.

As we can see, analysing the names of people is a possible way of revealing individual trajectories and collective identities. The Christianized names adopted by Africans reveal many things to researchers who, on the basis of numbers and percentages, have determined the flow of the Atlantic trade. The names chosen by Africans after manumission, even those taken in relation to their former masters, may offer some perspective on people about whom we know very little.

Final considerations

The method of studying biography not only contributes to understanding individual trajectories but also makes possible a detailed investigation of the collective identities that people wove throughout their lives. However, a historian cannot investigate archives at random, in search of an opportunity to produce the biography of an African. Such opportunities must be made. Therefore, it is necessary to review the criteria used for selecting documents. The method of biography of Africans in diaspora should not be chosen after the selection of the sources because one can select documents according to the voices one wishes to hear, the narratives one wishes to create and the people one wishes to study as protagonists of history. In this case, the choice of documents, the modes of analysis and the style of the narrative are fundamental, so that Africans can be more than numbers, so that they can be seen as individuals who were able to manage their histories.

The documents with narratives about Africans in diaspora should be privileged. Testaments are particularly interesting since the information they present is usually dictated by Africans themselves. Besides, they did so at a moment when they were examining their own lives carefully, emphasizing interests and stating what should be done with their possessions and their bodies as well as stating their convictions about the afterlife. In this process, evidence that was ignored by statistical methods turns out to be fundamental, aiding historians in identifying and analysing transformations that people underwent over the course of their lives.

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CHAPTER 4

JOSEPH BOLOGNE DE SAINT-GEORGES (1745–1799)

Margaret Crosby-Arnold

Eulogizing his long-time friend, the playwright Jean-Guillaume-Antoine Cuvelier de Trie (1766–1824) captured his contemporaries' esteem for Joseph Bologne de Saint-Georges (1745–1799) when he described the latter as 'the Voltaire of the musical arts'. While many biographical sketches of Saint-Georges have been published, most scholars have unquestioningly relied on race as their main category of analysis, treating him as a 'mulatto' anomaly in a western world otherwise marked by the enslavement of Africans. The global Atlantic of the eighteenth century was, however, a highly cosmopolitan world, far more marked by migration and diversity across colour than scholars have previously depicted. Particularly from the second half of the eighteenth century on, when human migration on a global scale – forced, coerced or otherwise – accelerated everywhere, almost everybody was either a newcomer, or not more than a generation or two removed from somebody who was. Increasing globalization and migration drove the increase in diversity and, in that atmosphere of cultural exchange, transfer and hybridization, a tremendous flowering of new and agglomerated ways of being was inevitable. Whether German or West African, French or East Indian, Scottish or Chinese, Irish or Walloon, urban or rural, Catholic, Protestant, Muslim, crypto-Jewish or a blend of some sort, the great patchwork of eighteenth-century populations shared common histories of migration and experiences of being newcomers. It is important to understand

that the horrific circumstances of enslaved African migration occurred alongside not only the coerced migration of a host of non-African peoples but also the voluntary migration of free people of African descent. It was, thus, a world of fluid identities, socioeconomic multiplicity and constant migration as well as cultural transfer and flowering that both shaped Saint-Georges and made his rise to international celebrity possible.

Diverse families, whether ethnically so or recomposed, were as much the norm in metropolitan Europe as they were in the colonial Americas and elsewhere. Kings and ennobled aristocrats across Europe sired children with multiple women, chose whether or not to recognize them and/or adopted a diversity of children, including some of African descent. Irrespective of any verbal condemnations that may have arisen from the clergy, among the nobility and other estates, extramarital relationships amongst men and women were the accepted norm. In the colonial Americas, this merged with the polygynous familial cultures of West Africans and Native Americans, and a variety of conjugal unions and familial relations prevailed in the Americas. For this reason, neither Saint-Georges nor his polygynous family were unusual or irregular in the eighteenth-century Atlantic world, including metropolitan Europe.

Saint-Georges was born on Christmas Day, 1745, in the French colony of Guadeloupe, on the sugar plantation named Saint-Robert, belonging to his father, Georges de Bologne de Saint-Georges. By then, the de Bolognes had long been marked by familial diversity, so much so that they defied strict ethnic or national identification. Like so many migrant families from a Europe torn by religion, they had fled persecution time and again and, despite their eighteenth-century surname, were no more native-born French than their enslaved Africans. Following the Siege of La Rochelle (1628) that quashed Protestant resistance in western France, the Protestant patriarch of the Guadeloupe line, Louis de Bologne (1605–1664), fled to the Dutch Republic, where the family name became 'van Bolongien'. With the Union of Utrecht (1579), the Dutch Republic embraced multiconfessionalism as a basic organizing principle of the State and, thenceforth, became a haven for a diversity of religious refugees from across Europe. In Rotterdam, Louis married a Dutch woman and had two sons, Willem (1631–1670) and Pieter (1645–1721). The influx of religious refugees to the Dutch Republic, including wealthy Sephardic Jews, helped finance and stimulate overseas expansion. By 1630, the Dutch Republic controlled most of northern Brazil, paradoxically expanding the slave trade as well as tolerance and freedom consciousness across the Atlantic. This made the colony attractive to religious 'others' fleeing Europe, and the van Bolongiens were among the many

who immigrated to the Pernambuco region of north-eastern Brazil in the mid-1630s. There, even Indigenous populations and enslaved Africans were left to their own religious beliefs.

Louis established his family in Recife, in the Atlantic sugar trade, and there they prospered until the city fell to Portuguese forces in late January 1654. By March, Louis was once again a refugee, but this time along with his family and a multiconfessional, multi-ethnic group of other refugees, including enslaved people of African descent. Led by Nicolas Jacob Classen, lieutenant colonel of the infantry at Recife, a large vessel carrying refugees first sailed to Martinique where, at the behest of zealot Jesuit priests, the party of 'Jews and other heretics' were denied entry. The Governor of the new French colony of Guadeloupe, Charles Houël, however, was keen to expand the sugar business, and he welcomed them. The immigration of this diversity of refugees from Pernambuco to Guadeloupe sparked a critical advance in the French sugar business, and the latter was on the verge of global dominance by the time of Saint-Georges's birth in 1745. Four additional ships carrying refugees arrived in the days following the arrival of Louis and his family. The motley crew of migrants numbered, roughly, nine hundred people, three hundred of whom were soldiers. The other six hundred civilians comprised one hundred *habitants* (planters), two hundred women and three hundred 'Brazilians'. Many of the latter group were described as free and practised their various faiths, but it also included a good many enslaved people of non-Catholic Judeo-Christian faiths, who were specifically skilled in the cultivation of sugar cane and the production of sugar. In 1647, Houël had written to the King, complaining about the exorbitant prices that Dutch traders charged for slaves and asking for some means of augmenting the slave workforce. The refugees, who were wealthy in slaves, were thus quite the windfall. In early accounts, special mention was made of two *nègres*, especially skilled in the manufacturing of sugar moulds, while the others had been brought along specifically to prepare the new land for the cultivation of sugar cane.

This diverse party of refugees, many of whom had immigrated to Dutch Brazil from hither and yon, brought memories of persecution as well as cultures of diversity and liberty of consciousness with them to Guadeloupe. Nevertheless, as non-Catholics in the French Antilles, their position was not secure, and they again faced the prospect of expulsion in 1664. Many Protestants were dispersed to North America and elsewhere. Louis died in 1664, and it is not clear whether this was in Guadeloupe or Rotterdam.

Willem (now Guillaume) and Pieter (now Pierre), remained in Guadeloupe and were eventually numbered among the *convertis*, religious converts for economic convenience. Willem was naturalized in 1667 and Pieter in 1672. In 1670, Willem was condemned for contraband trading with the Dutch colony of Sint Eustatius. In 1678, Pieter made his fortune the old-fashioned way, marrying a twice-widowed Dutch woman, Catherine van Eybergen. Her first husband was the aforementioned Lieutenant Classen, with whom she had two sons and from whom she inherited the sugar plantation in Montagne Bellevue, Basse-Terre, that Pierre renamed after himself when she died. With her second husband, Nicolas van Houten, she had one daughter and, with Pieter, a son, Pierre de Bologne (1678–1744), Saint-Georges's grandfather. In 1701, Pierre married a woman of Basque descent, Catherine d'Hirigoyen (born in 1680). As a matter of fact, Georges de Bologne de Saint-Georges (1707–1774), Saint-Georges's father, was the first in the family to formally marry someone French, Jeanne-François Méricane (1722–1801). She was from the area of Grenade, north of Toulouse, along the vital inland navigation corridor of the Garonne River and the Canal Royal de Languedoc (now called the Canal du Midi), that connected trade on the Atlantic and the Mediterranean.

This prelude of intra-European migration and familial diversity is important for a number of reasons. First, as crypto-Protestant immigrants living in the French Antilles, the de Bolognes, regardless of their wealth, had equality and inclusion problems. Second, just as it is far from surprising that the history of dispersal and its threat contributed to the formation of alternative familial ties among enslaved peoples of African descent in the Americas, by the same token, it is unsurprising that similar responses emerged among the coerced and dispersed religious migrants of Europe in the Atlantic world. This goes a long way towards explaining not only the siring of Saint-Georges but also the normalization of the increase in African diversity within Europe and European families. The massive refugee crisis that accompanied the religious wars between 1524 and 1648 and persecution had already so shuffled the demographic make-up of continental Europe that the immigrant experience and living in diversity were predominant. Thus, by the time of Saint-Georges's birth, more than a century of migration had shaped diverse familial identities in Europe. The factors shaping the latter included intra-European migration as well as resettlement in the Americas. Families like the de Bolognes were, quite often, not age-old, native-born subjects of the metropolitan powers whose colonies they inhabited. Given this diversity, resettlement in the Americas and/or everyday life with still more newcomers, whether Fulani, Mandinke, Wolof or otherwise, perhaps did not

require as much adaptation as scholars once thought. And then, in the eighteenth century, two generations later, many of the refugees-turned-planters returned to Europe with a sociopolitical vengeance, African offspring and all. This diversity meant that the socioeconomic environment, especially in the Basse-Terre region of Guadeloupe, was far more complex than any understanding that categories of analysis like 'race' or even 'ethnicity' would allow.

Saint-Georges was born into a colony where identity and place were fluid and contested. Census-makers in Guadeloupe did not create the category *blanc* (white) until 1729. Authorities in Guadeloupe lamented the prosperity of the *presque libres*, an unofficial estate of almost free persons who engaged profitably in trade and professions. Since he lived twenty-two years before the category was created, we simply do not know whether Georges de Bologne ever became *blanc*, any more than we know whether he became a practising *catholic français.* It also seems likely that Saint-Georges's mother, Anne (1722–1795), called Nanon, may have numbered amongst the *presque libres*, and there is some indication that cultural diversity and cosmopolitan consciousness were influences in her case as well. Anne's mother was an enslaved woman named Marguerite, and Anne was born in Grand-Cul-de-Sac on a plantation belonging to Saint-Georges's grandfather, Pierre. From the visa authorizing her voyage from Guadeloupe to Bordeaux in 1748, we have a description of Nanon as a *négresse*, of petite stature with a *visage rougeâtre* (reddish face). A number of travellers to West Africa described Fulbe, 'Mandingo' and Wolof women as beautiful, as Anne was recognized to be by contemporaries, but only the Fulbe were consistently described as having reddish brown complexions. Following his travels in West Africa between 1785 and 1787, the French geographer, Sylvain de Golbéry (1742-1822) described Fulbe women as 'spirited and handsome' with a skin colour of 'reddish black'. This is consistent with the observations recorded by his contemporary, Moreau de Saint-Méry, of enslaved Fulbe in the French colony of Saint-Domingue: *leur couleur est rougeâtre* (their skin colour is reddish). It is likely, therefore, as some have suggested, that Anne was of Fulbe descent. This is also not surprising given French dominance in the slave trade from the region of the Sénégal River: enslaved Africans destined for French colonies in the Caribbean first disembarked in Martinique, and Georges de Bologne's uncle, Samuel de Bologne, and cousin, Joseph de Bologne, owned a twelve-ton ship, *La Félicité*, that, amongst other trading activities, was heavily involved in the inter-island slave trade.

Ultimately, Saint-Georges's matrilineal line needs more research, but Nanon, his mother's name, was unusual – not only in French culture, but also for an

enslaved woman in the eighteenth-century French Atlantic. 'Nanon' is 'Anne' in Hebrew. Thus, the name she went by suggests that her family's history of enslavement may have included bondage to a crypto-Jewish family or Jewish owners, prior to the expulsion of Jews from the French Caribbean colonies in 1685. It also seems that, sometime after she was emancipated, she gave herself a surname and signed her will, bequeathing all her possessions to Saint-Georges, as Anne Danneveau. This choice of surname may suggest a conscious identification with the diverse, martial world of the eighteenth-century French Atlantic world that made possible the social mobility of not only her son but also many other newcomers. Indeed, members of the van Bolongien family had also taken up military service to cement their naturalized status as de Bologne(s), and almost all of Saint-Georges's patrilineal forebears had served as musketeers. Danneveau, the gentleman from Picardy, appears as one of the original Musketeers in Gatien de Courtilz de Sandras' popular, fictionalized depiction of Charles de Batz de Castelmore (1611–1673), called Monsieur d'Artagnan in *Les Mémoires de M. d'Artagnan* (1700). D'Artagnan was a famous seventeenth-century military figure whose early career, like that of Anne's son Joseph, included service in the King's guard. De Sandras' novel later inspired Alexandre Dumas' *The Three Musketeers* (1844).

We do not know when the relationship between Georges and Anne began, but it was a love affair that spanned the Atlantic and continued until Georges's death in 1774. It is worth keeping in mind that being 'white' was a concept that was less than two decades old when Saint-Georges was born in 1745, and it is likely that public acceptance of the concept took some decades. As prosperous but naturalized and crypto-Protestant planters in the Catholic French Antilles, unwanted 'administrative' attention would have gone with the territory for the de Bolognes.

The correlation between times of economic dislocation and the targeting of 'others' in the French Atlantic world was unmistakable. Having disrupted trade, the War of the Austrian Succession (1740–1748) was such a period. In addition, the Protestant German immigrant and illegitimate son of the elector of Saxony, Maurice de Saxe (Moritz von Sachsen), was raised to the highest military command in France and, amongst his notable additions to the French army were regiments composed of a diversity of soldiers of African and Arab descent. Voices of rabid opposition echoed from the French planters to the Ministry of Navy and Colonies in the very year that Georges and Anne welcomed the birth of their son. Brought up on trumped-up murder charges in December 1747, Georges was condemned to death by hanging and his property subjected to confiscation in May

1748. He chose to flee Guadeloupe for metropolitan France before the sentence was handed down, but, in his absence, he was hanged in effigy.

Travelling together, Georges's polygynous family soon followed. On 4 January 1749, his legal wife Elisabeth Méricane, their daughter and Saint-Georges's sister Elisabeth-Bénédictine, Georges's concubine Anne, their son Saint-Georges, and a fourteen- or fifteen-year-old 'mulatto' male valet François, arrived in Bordeaux on board the *La Paix*. Centrally positioned between the Atlantic ports of Bordeaux and La Rochelle, Angoumois provided the Atlantic world with many Protestant refugees and was a Protestant stronghold. Its capital, Angouleme, sits on the navigable Charente waterway. By the mid-eighteenth century, the crypto-Protestant Angoumois diaspora, comprised of the transatlantic descendants of religious refugees, was not only diverse but had grown wealthy from trade in critical colonial commodities (sugar, coffee, indigo and slaves). This diaspora was bound together by global trading ties, not infrequently cemented by intermarriage and familial bonds. After their arrival in France, the polygynous family stayed with Georges's older brother and the toddler Saint-Georges's uncle, Pierre de Bologne (born in Martinique, 1706-1792) at his home in the St. Jean parish of Angouleme. After serving in the European campaigns, as a musketeer in the diverse army commanded by Maurice de Saxe in the War of the Austrian Succession, Pierre married Bénédictine Husson in 1738. By the time of Georges's legal crisis, he was well established in ancien régime parliamentary circles and, through his connections at court, was able to secure a King's pardon and return of property for his brother Georges. Elisabeth-Bénédictine remained in France to begin her education. Jeanne-François Méricane was left to travel with Georges's nephew François Cazaux, on the *Chaste Catherine*, back to Guadeloupe, via Martinique. They departed from Bordeaux on 1 August 1749. Georges, however, travelled together with Anne, the four-year-old Saint-Georges, François and the plantation manager, François Beraud (born in Angouleme). They left Bordeaux on the *Achille* a day later, with a layover in Martinique.

Undoubtedly, there were some tensions in this polygynous family, something that is suggested by the fact that Méricane procured an *arrêt* dated 27 September 1776, towards ensuring that she and Elisabeth would inherit the estate after Georges's death in 1774. By all accounts, however, Saint-Georges enjoyed the childhood privileges of a cherished only son of a wealthy planter, both in Guadeloupe and France. In the summer of 1753, Georges, accompanied by a 'mulatto' valet, Jean Charles, escorted his son Joseph and two of Méricane's nieces to France for their education. They arrived in Bordeaux on *Le Bien Aimé* on 12

August 1753 and headed for Angouleme. There Joseph was entrusted to the care of his brother, Pierre, and enrolled in the Collège de Saint-Louis. It cannot be emphasized enough that, by the mid-eighteenth century, there would have been nothing unusual about the presence of polygynous families or their offspring in France more generally, and particularly along the Atlantic coast. It was not accidental that the wealthy indigo planter of colour from Saint-Domingue who would be so influential in the revolutionary years, Julien Raimond, and his wife, settled in Angoumois, near Angouleme, and that Raimond travelled back and forth to Paris from there in his efforts to persuade officials at Versailles of the injustice of new and mounting discriminatory colonial decrees. In this Atlantic region, with its major, decidedly cosmopolitan port cities, populated by sizeable immigrant populations that, for historical reasons, were barely French and crypto-Protestant, people of colour were not unusual. Joseph was not the first 'mulatto' son of a wealthy planter to be schooled in metropolitan France and, it is more than likely that he encountered a diversity of people in his Angoumois years, including but not limited to people of colour.

Presumably, in association with the completion of Joseph's studies, Georges and Anne travelled together from Guadeloupe and arrived in Bordeaux on *L'Aimable Rose* on 26 August 1755. Georges joined the ranks of the countless absentee planters living in France and, in 1757, purchased a title of nobility from the French crown. Anne, reunited with her son, Joseph, was in France to stay, and the purchased title meant that Joseph would become known as the Chevalier de Saint-Georges. Georges settled with Anne and Joseph in a three-storey home at 49 rue Saint-André des Arts, on the left bank of the Seine River, in the Université section of Paris. As the district's name suggests, it was in the area of the Sorbonne, today called the Latin Quarter. In the mid-eighteenth century, this area of Paris was home to a diverse population of both temporary and permanent newcomers. It was home to the Collège des Lombards that was founded for students from the Italian peninsula in the fourteenth century, but when the Irish Catholic refugees migrated to France in the late-seventeenth century, it was acquired by Irish clerics and became the Collège des Irlandais. In the first emancipation era, the neighbourhood would also be home to the troubled Institution nationale des colonies, a school that specifically recruited students of colour. As residents of the Université neighbourhood in the late 1750s, Georges, Anne and Saint-Georges were surrounded by diversity in what was among the most cosmopolitan cities in early-modern Europe.

Georges actively promoted the equality, social mobility and inclusion of his only son in high Parisian society, at a moment when economic dislocations,

associated with the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), were again bringing on rising xenophobia in metropolitan France and its wider reaches. It was expressed in anti-*noir* (anti-black), anti-Protestant and other terms, all of which identified a more generalized anti-immigrant fever. Saint-Georges had already shown a talent for fencing and music while in his uncle's care in Angouleme. In Paris, he was among the first students enrolled in the fencing institute of Nicolas Benjamin Texier de la Boëssière (1723–1807), which opened on the main artery of the rue Saint-Honoré in 1759. He excelled immediately, so much so that, out of spite, Alexandre Picard de Brémond, head of a newly opened rival school in Rouen, disparaged him as 'the mulatto of Laboissièré'. Georges took offence and encouraged Saint-Georges to challenge the more experienced Picard, promising his son a horse and cabriolet if he beat Picard. Held in Rouen, the match was a *cause célèbre* attended by hundreds of spectators from Paris, Rouen and elsewhere. Saint-Georges dispatched his rival decisively and with ease.

The eighteenth century marked the rationalization and rise of modern fencing as an elite sport, especially in France. Through his show-match and decisive victory against the bigot Picard, Saint-Georges helped to open a path for social mobility and acceptance for people of colour in the arena of high-culture athletics in metropolitan Europe. This, in turn, opened more doors, metaphorically speaking, on the right bank of the Seine River. Acknowledging his victory, Louis XV made him a *Gendarme du Roi* (King's Guard) and his father, Georges, bought him his prize as promised. The King's appointment was significant insofar as it represented a public repudiation of the bigoted calls of the procurator of the naval and colonial ministry, Guillaume Poncet de la Grave (1725–1803) and others, who were calling for the banning of people of colour in metropolitan France and, to some degree, it helped forestall the incorporation of racial ideology in French law.

Subsequently, Georges returned to Guadeloupe at the end of the Seven Years' War but left Anne and Saint-Georges a sizeable annuity of between 7,000 and 8,000 *livres*. And it is clear that he journeyed across the Atlantic and continued to be involved in his son's advancement.

Throughout the eighteenth century, but especially from the middle of the century onwards, the colonial powers were flooded with intra-European newcomers, notably German-speakers, in addition to those from beyond Europe. While many moved on to the colonies, many also stayed in the metropolitan dominions of England, France, the Dutch Republic and Spain. The changes in the world of music reflected this broader demographic change, with the newcomers clamouring for recognition and acceptance. It was in this

environment that the wealthy bourgeois and leading patron of music, Alexandre Jean Joseph Le Riche de La Pouplinière (1693–1762), built the most important of the private orchestras. His musicians were almost exclusively young outsiders and newcomers, from everywhere except France, who challenged the dominance of the French style. Heated controversies over the merits of French versus other forms of music, such as the *Querelle des Bouffons* (1752), marked the mid-century. At the Paris Opera, supporters of the French style took to gathering beneath the King's box, while critics gathered under the box of the Queen, Marie Leszczyńska, of Polish-Lithuanian extraction. She was the daughter of the deposed King of Poland, Stanislaw Leszczyński, later styled the Duc de Lorraine. Jean-Jacques Rousseau (born in Geneva); Friedrich Melchior, Baron von Grimm (born in Regensburg); and Baron d'Holbach (born Paul-Heinrich Dietrich in Edesheim) were amongst the most prominent agitators for the inclusion of other cultural genres of music, and all were newcomers. The fact cannot be overemphasized: the rising agitation for equality and inclusion in civilian circles, coming from such newcomers, occurred after many decades of African, Scottish, Irish, Polish, German, Turkish and other soldiers had donned the uniform and fought the many global wars of France.

As a result of these ongoing tensions, in their diversity, a community of newcomers and outsiders across estates evolved in metropolitan France and its wider orbit. Saint-Georges and people of colour more generally were not alone in feeling the sting of bigotry, whether in the colonial or metropolitan world. Recognized as a young, handsome, ennobled son of a wealthy planter, Saint-Georges was popular in Paris and rarely seen without a diverse entourage of friends. One such friend was François-Joseph Gossec (1734–1829), his composition teacher and lifelong friend. Just as the military, commerce and athletics offered opportunities for social mobility, music was another important pathway. Born in Vergnies, Gossec was of Walloon extraction and, as the son of a poor farmer, came up through the choirboy ranks. At eighteen, he landed a position as a violinist in Pouplinière's private orchestra, and, in 1755, he succeeded Johann Stamitz (born Jan Václav Antonín Stamic in Maribor, Slovenia), the preeminent composer and violinist of the Mannheim school, as director. Following Pouplinière's death in 1762 and after a stint with the Prince de Conti, Gossec founded the Concert des Amateurs in 1769. Performing at the Hôtel de Soubise, the present location of France's Archives nationales, it was one of the first independent orchestras. While it is not clear exactly when Gossec and Saint-Georges met, it seems clear that the latter was under Gossec's training and was becoming known in music circles before Georges returned to

Guadeloupe in 1764. Already in 1764, the violinist and composer, Antonio Lolli had dedicated concertos to Saint-Georges, and in 1766 and 1768, respectively, Gossec dedicated a set of trios and sonatas to him.

The Concert des Amateurs was the largest orchestra of its kind. Gossec extended an invitation to Saint-Georges immediately and, in 1769, he took the Paris stage in the first violin section. String quartets were a relatively new genre in the mid-1760s, and it was in this new genre that Saint-Georges first excelled. He made his debut in the 1772–1773 season. He advanced into concertos and, according to Gabriel Banat, initiated the modern French violin school, the technical aspects of which influenced, among others, Ludwig van Beethoven. As an upwardly mobile newcomer who, in making his way up the ranks of Parisian music circles, was helped by similarly positioned upwardly mobile newcomers who had preceded him, it is not surprising that Gossec mentored Saint-Georges. In 1773, he named Saint-Georges his successor. As its director, Saint-Georges transformed the Concert des Amateurs into the leading orchestra in France and, arguably, Europe. It comprised some 80 musicians, and many of the period's leading musicians debuted at the Hôtel de Soubise with Saint-Georges. Indeed, it would be difficult to overstate his influence on the development of classical music. By the mid-1770s, his orchestra was recognized as the finest in Europe, and he was an intimate of the entourage of musicians of the French queen, Marie-Antoinette (1755–1793), along with Christoph Willibald Ritter von Gluck (born in Erasbach, 1714–1787) and André Grétry (born in Liège, 1741–1813). When the position of music director at the Paris Opera opened up in 1776, Saint-Georges was seen by many as the best candidate to fill what was the most prestigious music post in Europe. An anti-mulatto backlash thwarted his appointment, but the fact remains that the iconic musical innovation of the classical period (1750–1820), prized as the emblem of European high culture, was heavily influenced, in both technique and style, by an upwardly mobile, half-Fulbe, Creole newcomer.

It also cannot be overemphasized that, in the world of inner circles and salons that characterized Parisian society, almost nobody was likely to find acceptance in all of them. For one reason or another, many in elite circles experienced some form of social rejection. One such person was another of Saint-Georges's important friends and patrons, Charlotte Béraud de la Haie de Riou (1738–1806), known as Madame de Montesson. Widowed in her early thirties, her second marriage was to the fourth Duc d'Orléans, prince of the blood and the King's cousin, Louis-Philippe-Joseph, also widowed. She was a marquise by marriage but, because she was a commoner by birth, the marriage required Louis

XVI's consent. He gave it only reluctantly, refusing recognition by the Crown. They were, furthermore, required to wed clandestinely, with only the blessing of the Church. This they did at midnight on 23 August 1773. Effectively, Madame de Montesson became wife to a prince of the blood without a title. The Palais-Royal, originally the Palais-Cardinal, had been the main residence of the House of Orléans since the mid-sixteenth century, but, wishing to avoid scandal, the couple moved out, leaving it to the Duke's son, Louis-Philippe II (1747–1793). The Duke built a palatial new residence on the Chaussée d'Antin, equipped with a theatre named after his new wife. Perhaps out of spite at having been shunned, Madame de Montesson sought to have the best private entertainment in Paris and soon began making overtures to Saint-Georges. He maintained his position with the Concert des Amateurs but was now also engaged as the director of the Théâtre Montesson. Sweetening the deal, the Duke also named Saint-Georges lieutenant of the hunt for his country estate, Château du Raincy, and gave him a premium apartment in the Paris residence. The partnership was a success for Saint-Georges since an invitation from Madame de Montesson was among the most sought after in Paris.

Louis-Philippe II, or Philippe-Égalité as he was styled after the French Revolution, emerged as one of the most outspoken critics of the ancien régime. In October 1773, he was elected as the first grand master of perhaps the most important Freemason order in continental Europe, the Grand Orient de France. Conveniently, as the residence of a prince of the blood, the Palais-Royal was exempt from government censorship and intrusion. It was not long before Louis-Philippe II made it a haven for groups and individuals who, like himself, were critics of Louis XVI and the house of Bourbon. It is not clear when Saint-Georges became a Freemason, but he was a brother in the legendary *Neuf Sœurs* (Nine Sisters), an affiliate of the Grand Orient de France and an order filled with notable revolutionaries from both sides of the Atlantic. The Concert des Amateurs was hit hard by the financial crisis that accompanied the American Revolutionary War (1775–1783) and was forced to close in 1781. Even under these circumstances, Saint-Georges was well enough connected and resourceful enough that a new replacement, an orchestra of 65 musicians, Le Concert de la Loge Olympique or Concert Olympique, was founded under the umbrella of the Masonic lodge Société Olympique.

Unfortunately, Saint-Georges's woes were not over. In 1785, the Duc d'Orléans died and, after the King refused to allow her to ceremonially mourn the loss of her husband, Madame de Montesson shuttered her home and theatre and moved to a convent. For Saint-Georges, this meant not only the loss of an

important performance platform but also income and his home. At the same time, the King, who was not pleased with Louis-Philippe II's various political activities, did not renew the Concert Olympique's permit to perform in the Salle des Cents Suisses in the Tuileries Palace. The orchestra was forced to relocate to the *grand salon* of the Palais-Royal, but Saint-Georges must have maintained some measure of friendship with the Queen. She attended his concerts fairly regularly over the years, and was there for the Concert Olympique's premier of Hadyn's 'Paris Symphonies' in 1786.

Despite the misfortunes that Saint-Georges faced, he proved resilient. However, the mid-1780s were years of political and financial crisis in the Atlantic world. The French monarchy emerged from the American Revolutionary War in financial ruin, and, by 1787, it seemed likely to many that the ancien régime would fail. Across the Channel in England, the loss of the North American colonies was a global humiliation that also plunged the English economy into a depression. What is more, these were the years when Parliament seriously questioned the mental stability of George III and debated the need for a regency government. At the same time, many reform-minded aristocrats in Europe came to fear the prospects of revolution from below and favoured controlled political reform. In France, many reformers favoured the setting up of an emergency government headed by a lieutenant-general chosen from among the princes until a constitutional monarchy could be formed.

As the new Duc d'Orléans following his father's death, Louis-Philippe II and members of his entourage, notably the abolitionist Jacques-Pierre Brissot de Warville (1754–1793), plotted to position Louis-Philippe for the position if circumstances permitted. Obtaining the neutrality of the British government – which was facing its own challenges – was critical. In particular, it was crucial to obtain the tacit consent of the likely regent, George IV, in case of an abdication by George III on account of insanity.

Now, more dependent than ever on the patronage of Louis-Philippe, Saint-Georges soon became a pawn of trans-Channel political intrigue. While Louis-Philippe was interested in positioning himself, Brissot also wanted to renew his associations with prominent English abolitionists and promote the cause in France. George IV had long expressed a desire to meet Saint-Georges and hold a fencing match in England, and this provided Louis-Philippe and Brissot the opportunity to make overtures. Louis-Philippe asked Saint-Georges to visit London as a personal favour to him and, by 10 January 1787, the *Morning Herald* announced Saint-Georges's imminent trip to London. He stayed with Henry Angelo, another famous head of a renowned fencing academy, at his

home on Carlisle Street. Angelo's home drew an eclectic crowd of visitors to say the least, including the transgendered Chevalier d'Éon de Beaumont (1728–1810), commonly known as Madame la Chevalière d'Éon. In the event, the matches between Saint-Georges and d'Éon, among others, were held on 9 April 1787, and were to some degree a grand spectacle.

Saint-Georges returned to France the day after his matches, but he had been influenced by English abolitionism and, in 1788, was one of the founding members of the *Société des amis des noirs* (Society of the Friends of the Blacks). He continued to write operas but, in the wake of financial crisis and the French Revolution of 1789, his best years in music were behind him. In August 1789, he returned to London, but this time he stayed at the Grenier's Hotel, among the finest in London, at Louis-Philippe II's expense, until he was cut off. He was again a part of George IV's circle of leisure until he was unable to pay his debts and had to accept a fencing match to cover the costs of the remainder of his stay at Grenier's. Saint-Georges returned to France in July 1790 but appears to have stopped in Lille where, lacking other sources of income, he gave a number of fencing exhibitions. Soon after the matches, Saint-Georges took ill for several weeks with pneumonia or meningitis. He was nursed back to health and adored in Lille, however, where he was able to revive his music, premiering his opera, *Guillaume tout Coeur*. We should not be surprised, however, by Saint-Georges's warm reception in Lille. The town had long played host to the soldiers of African descent in Saxe's army, who had been transferred there after Saxe's death in 1750. Saint-Georges was adored in Lille and, in September 1790, he was among its first citizens to join the National Guard. In September 1792, Saint-Georges was named colonel of the new unit of soldiers of colour, the *Légion des américans et du Midi* (Legion of the Americans and of the South). Men of colour from all over France came out of the shadows to join this regiment, and it was here that the famous French Revolutionary General of colour, Alexandre Dumas, launched his career as an officer in the army. Many of the soldiers served in the notorious fighting in the Vendée, including Dumas, but conspiracy theories and suspicion about 'counterrevolutionary' designs shadowed the revolutionary years of the early 1790s. On 25 September 1793, only a week after the enactment of the Law of Suspects that gave the Committees of Public Safety and Public Security sweeping powers, Saint-Georges and ten other officers of his regiment were arrested. No formal charges were brought against them. They were simply arrested, but it is likely that they had been caught up in the ongoing reactions to the Haitian Revolution and debates about both the status of people of colour under the new political system and the abolition

of slavery. In the only justification later offered of Saint-Georges's arrest, he was accused of disseminating 'Liberticidal' principles (Banat, 2006, p. 405). He remained incarcerated at Houdainville military prison for more than a year before he was cleared of all charges and released on 23 October 1794. Earlier that year, on 4 February 1794, the National Convention had passed a decree abolishing slavery in France and its territories but, paradoxically, perhaps the most famous and celebrated Creole of colour spent the first eight months of full liberty in revolutionary France jailed on questionable grounds. He was not reinstated after and was given only a brief command in September 1795 before being dismissed entirely in October of the same year. He returned to Paris, ill and impoverished. Though he performed, it was in a much diminished music world, a relic of the bygone ancien régime. His dear mother, Anne, passed away on 16 December 1795, nearly fifty years to the day of her son's birth and just three-and-a-half years later, on 12 June 1799, Saint-Georges died in Paris, aged 53, from a bladder ulcer.

In conclusion, the early modern Atlantic was an important axis of a dynamic global world where identities and categories could not be fixed and were in a constant state of alteration and transformation. The sheer pace of global migration meant that social realities were never as simple as academically convenient dichotomies of black/white, slave/free, African-descent/European-descent/indigenous, or even *nègre/mulâtre* and French/English divisions suggest. As a man of colour, Saint-Georges was simultaneously outside and inside the inner circle of the classical music world. On the one hand, he was a newcomer and/or 'other' among many others like himself, and the consequent levelling effect made his social mobility conceivable and possible. On the other hand, neither his education nor his tremendous athletic and musical talents erased the colour line. Time and again, he was disparaged as a 'mulatto'. Here, it is important to remember that there was a lot of xenophobic tension in late ancien régime France, and a variety of populations were targets. The *Police des noirs* of 1777, for example, was introduced at a time of economic dislocation brought on by the American Revolutionary War and, at the same time, regime-wide Protestant hunts were revived. Local police went looking for Protestants in Bordeaux at the same time that they were looking for *noirs* (blacks).

Accordingly, while the history of the African diaspora is clearly an important prism through which to view Saint-Georges's life, his biography's strongest contribution is to the development of the presently woefully lacking history of immigration and diversity in metropolitan European history. Saint-Georges did not identify himself in racial terms, as 'black', as 'Afro-French' or as 'Afro-

European'. Settling his mother Anne's estate in 1796, he identified himself only as a *citoyen français* (French citizen). Indeed, the last decade of his life spanned the years when early-modern equality, diversity and inclusion reached its apex in revolutionary France, which not only abolished slavery, but also specifically rejected the so-called 'aristocracy of skin'. Saint-Georges, like contemporary generals Alexandre Dumas and Toussaint Louverture, sought identification, recognition and acceptance as full French citizens without hyphenation, a struggle that continues into the present for people of colour around the Atlantic World. Experiencing anti-black bigotry was, nonetheless, an inescapable torment in their lives. They did not race themselves, but were racialized and made black, post-mortem in Saint-Georges's case, as a result of Napoleon Bonaparte's constitutional and legal innovations. Scholars, therefore, must be careful not to reify this racialization that was imposed and designed to diminish the very humanity of Saint-Georges and all those of colour, a racialization of the First French Empire that was begotten by the Napoleonic regime through genocide.

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CHAPTER 5

NOTICES FOR FUGITIVE SLAVES IN THE ATLANTIC WORLD[1]

Life Stories and 'Little[s] Pace[s] of Narrative'

Jean-Pierre Le Glaunec

Fugitive slave notices have fascinated historians (especially in the United States) at least since the 1960s. There are articles, books, doctoral theses, anthologies of notices and now online databases: while some sources are no longer of interest to the specialists, fugitive slave notices continue to arouse curiosity. The reason for this is simple. By contrast with other sources available to historians of slavery, notices describing fugitive slaves are easy to find (they appear in all the newspapers of all the slave-owning societies, from Brazil to Canada, via Cuba and Barbados, not forgetting London or Bristol) and to interpret (notices are short and do not require training in palaeology). They offer countless sources that adapt to all historiographic shifts, whether it be the recent trend to merge Atlantic and biographical history, or the advent of digitization that has prompted many historians to explore the possibilities of interpretation offered by the world of computer programming.

Fugitive slave notices fascinate us, but the opinion I want to put forward in this chapter is that they are probably largely misunderstood. Was their main purpose really to give readers objective information that would lead to the capture of these runaway women and men? The answer to that question is obvious (I could add 'of course') if one relies on the historiography. And the implications of that answer are the following: fugitive slave notices are said to be predictable sources that offer no surprises. They are all said to be drafted in the

1 '*Petite[s] allure[s] de récit*', Farge, 2005, p. 15.

same way, from one slave-owning society to another, as their purpose, from the standpoint of the person drafting them, was to lead to the capture of a hunted slave. So, there is no need to compare them in time or across the Atlantic. It is enough to gather and collect them, transcribe and study them, like so much incriminating evidence. Evidence that slaves wanted to be free, and that slavery was a violent institution, based on terror. Evidence.

But what if the main function of the notices was not to lead to capture? And those well-known sources were something other than mere transparent pieces of evidence? What if it is time to read them again and allow ourselves to be surprised? Those are the three questions this chapter will set out to answer. The notices that follow are drawn from three regions: Louisiana, South Carolina and Jamaica, in the first fifteen years of the nineteenth century. The analyses presented rest on hypotheses that will have to be verified by sampling other bodies of evidence from other regions.

Meanwhile, let us open the gazette from Spanish Town, Jamaica:

> Trafalgar, November 12, 1808. RUNAWAYS.
>
> JUDDY, a middle aged creole wench, a great higgler, marked S on one shoulder, yellow complexion, and pitted with the small pox, an artful wench, and, if apprehended, may attempt to pass as free, under the cloak of – "Mistress left free to pck and nyam". PHILIP, or CAPTAIN YM, her son, a creole, or a kind of idiot, but more knave than fool. NED, her brother, of a yellow complexion, a creole, marked S on one shoulder, an artful rascal, and a great rogue and runaway: The above three negroes are partly harboured about Miss Fleming's Red Hills, (now Miss Good's) amongst their friends in town, or the King's Land, St. John's. HARRIET, calls herself KITTY, marked S, black complexion, short and stout, pretends to be purblind, but has the full faculty of her sight ; she is either harboured in Port-Royal, at Bonville, in St. Ann's, or about Mr. Evanson's, or Mr. Robert James mountain, at which latter place her husband, named Duke Thomas, has a brother named Phaeton. Whoever apprehends any of the above slaves, shall have a Pistole for each of them, on delivery to the subscriber, or lodging them in any workhouse. All persons harbouring &c. are cautioned from harbouring &c. and Four Doubloons will be paid on conviction &c. on applying to the proprietor.
>
> RD. POORE (*Saint Jago de la Vega Gazette*, 21 January 1809).

Juddy was not free to gather and sell the tops and the 'straw' – the name given to the leaves – of the sugar cane left on the ground when the plant had been cut and taken to the mill (Blachette, 1826, p. 28–9; Dureau, 1852; Roughley, 1823), the activity meant by the word 'pick' in Jamaican Creole (Cassidy, Le Page, 1967,

p. 348; Cassidy, 1961).[2] Selling this forage would have allowed her to subsist on her own, as indicated by the word 'nyam' (Cassidy, Le Page, 1967, p. 325), meaning to eat – the term is also used in various regions of West Africa – but according to the narrator, Richard Poor, that was not her mistress's intention. Philip, Juddy's son, 'a kind of idiot, but more knave than fool', might, like his mother, attempt to mislead his interlocutors: one can imagine his unfettered language in incoherent Creole, at least from the point of view of anyone who questioned or arrested him. For if Philip was playing the idiot, the clown or the fool, most of all he was a joker, a 'knave', unprincipled and dishonest just like his uncle Ned, another good-for-nothing, 'an artful rascal' and 'a great rogue', or Harriet, who called herself Kitty, and who could see much better than she let on: 'she has the full faculty of her sight'.

A rare and singular combination of fugitive lives, bound together in a theatrical game. Juddy, Philip, Ned and Harriet are clearly much more than just simple slaves 'on the run'. Each of them is playing a role they have freely chosen, and each is keeping up an appearance. None of them seems really to be on the run, but rather to be living in the interstices of some great human comedy, that of Jamaican slavery and its contradictions. It is also a rare example of a notice in which the arrogance and exasperation of the narrator blend so well with the description, coming so close to the slaves through the medium of the text. Lastly, this notice is one of the rare examples where the voice of the runaway is reported in direct speech, and one of the rare specific references to Jamaican Creole.

From the standpoint of both form and content, it is nonetheless ordinary in that it embodies, maybe better than any other, the charactersistic ambiguity of fugitive slave notices. Does Richard Poore's description in the end enable the reader to form a mental picture of Ned, Harriet, Philip and Juddy? Probably not: we only know that three of them are marked with the letter S – we do not know the size – that Juddy has smallpox scars and that she has a 'yellow' complexion like Philip. That is very little information when one considers that the slave population at the time was over three hundred thousand, that several thousand men and women attended the Sunday market in Kingston, where Juddy probably managed to sell her forage (McDonald, 1993, p. 29), and that smallpox was a common disease among slaves, not to mention their variety of appearance and skin colours.

2 On Jamaican Creole: D'Costa, Lalla, 1989; glossary, pp. 142–51; D'Costa, Lalla, 1990.

In this chapter I would like to show that runaway slave notices were not only intended to be mimetic, *tracing* and *describing* as accurately as possible the features of the missing bodies, but also purely and simply *narrative*: telling a story, in a nutshell, in which, paradoxically, the primary voice of the narrator mingled under the surface of the words with the voices of the slaves, the 'he' or 'she' in the notices. The notices distil and reveal, in the manner of the autobiographies of fugitive slaves analysed by Frances Smith Foster in the late 1970s, much more than simple, unambiguous and supposedly objective facts:

> My original goal had been to examine this body of autobiographical writings by former slaves **not from the perspective of historical accuracy or data, but as writings that somehow had the power to reveal, to transform, and to transcend.** It was not that mimesis was unimportant. Certainly the narratives offered unique and valuable information about slavery as it was experienced by slaves themselves (Smith Foster, 1994). [My emphasis]

The narrator is not only the person who buys space on a printed page in exchange for a desired service, the arrest and return of his runaway by 'whoever apprehends any of the above slaves', as Richard Poore wrote. Likewise, the recipient, the 'ideal' reader, is not only the person likely to arrest the slave in the notice and bring him or her back to their master. Through the notice, the narrator is engaging in a twofold process. He is speaking about himself through the slave, in a type of self-representation described by Walter Johnson in his study of the New Orleans slave markets: 'slaveholders often represented themselves to one another by reference to their slaves' (Johnson, 1999, p. 13) – but he is also making the slave speak indirectly, perhaps without realizing. The meeting of these two voices, and the circle or echo-chamber they create (Genette, *Figures III,* 1972, p. 10),[3] turn the notice into a form of biographical narrative, a polyphony involving the fugitive protagonist, the narrator, and the slave-owning society in general. That narrative is addressed as much to the slaves as it is to those who share the narrators' social power, and to the narrators themselves, confronted by the refusal, through flight, of a man or woman to submit to their supposedly legitimate power.

What exactly do we mean by narrative? In choosing that word, do we not take the risk of over-interpreting the notices, making them into something other than what they were from around the start of the eighteenth century, a few square centimetres of text subject to the rules of monetary trade?

3 The '*cercle de leur renvoi réciproque*': Genette is speaking of the complex relationship between the work and its author.

There are several possible definitions in response to both those questions, starting with the one offered by Gérard Genette in *Figures III* at the beginning of the 1970s, and taken up again in his *Nouveau discours du récit* at the beginning of the 1980s. A narrative is, primarily, a telling of events; secondly, the sequence of those events considered independently of the medium that brings them to our knowledge (*médium […] qui […] en donne connaissance*), and lastly, the act of narration in itself (*l'acte de narrer pris en lui même*). For the avoidance of terminological confusion, Genette reserves the term 'narrative' (*récit*) as such for the recounting of events, calls their sequence the 'story' (*histoire*) and the act of narrating them 'narration' (*narration*) (Genette, 1972, pp. 71–2; 1983, pp. 10–15). This definition, though intended to apply to literary texts, can also be applied to the fugitive slave notice cited in the introduction to this chapter. The text submitted by Richard Poore to the editor of the *Spanish Town Gazette* is the *narrative*, or more accurately the *micro-narrative* of a *story* of flight, albeit a very incomplete one. It rests moreover on an act of *narration*, in other words a set of descriptive and narrative choices, which in the present case are quite visible. This *story* has a beginning – even though this is not expressly set out in the notice – and a hoped-for ending, the capture of the four fugitives. The ending is, by nature, hypothetical. Juddy and Harriet, for instance, are reported in the same newspaper two years later as still being on the run. The *story* rests on the actions of the protagonists and the secondary characters – the friends of Juddy, Ned and Philip, 'their friends in town, or the King's Land, St. John's', as well as Harriet's husband and his brother – and on places known to both narrator and reader. It is addressed to one specific reader: the person who might capture them, or tell the narrator the names of any person who has helped the slaves to hide, and also to those accomplices directly: 'Whoever apprehends any of the above slaves, shall have a Pistole for each of them. […] All persons harbouring &c. are cautioned […] and Four Doubloons will be paid on conviction.' While not all the notices published in slave-owning societies across the Atlantic were as long or as rich as that of Richard Poore, this basic ternary definition – *narrative, story, narration* – applies equally well to fugitive slave notices in general. It is a reminder that these are not just descriptions, but involve a subjective act of writing: simple, admittedly, but writing nonetheless.

However, we cannot be satisfied with that definition, which in the final analysis is somewhat formal and static, and does not go to the heart of what the narrative says, represents or symbolizes. A second possible approach, then, is to read the notices as narratives in the sense that they are not documents, but texts, and look at all runaway notices from an intertextual perspective, as making

up one vast Text. By this we mean that the notices presuppose making a set of language choices that make them a form of 'fiction of factual representation' (White, 1978, pp. 121–34). The expression is Hayden White's, and was originally applied to the relationship of narrative similarity between a novel and a historical analysis. The point made here is a different one, but White's expression seems especially appropriate to the hypothesis I wish to develop. The fugitive slave notice is at the same time, taking the polysemy of the word 'fiction', both factual *illusion* and *creation*.[4] This does not mean that the notices are not aggregations of true facts, indeed thousands of them, but as Charles Davis and Henry Louis Gates remind us, 'No written text is a transparent rendering of historical reality, be that text composed by master or slave' (Davis and Gates, 1985, p. xi). The context of that quotation is the definition of an autobiographical account by a slave in the United States; it seems equally relevant when speaking of notices, texts under the control of slave-owners.

Narrative, story, narration, text and 'fiction of factual representation', creation: essentially, we propose to read fugitive slave notices as a *report (written) to the world*. Of course it is not certain that the creators of the notices had this idea in mind when writing, and reading, fugitive slave notices. However, maybe that is exactly what accounts for their popularity.

John Davis, an English traveller, poet, translator and novelist of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, found this out to his cost. Passing through South Carolina in 1798 and 1799, he was surprised to find that his poetic imitations were of little interest to the lowland planters:

> I indulged in the composition of lyric poetry, and when I had produced an Ode, transmitted it to Freneau, at Charleston, who published it in his Gazette. But planters have little disposition for poetry, **and the eye of the Carolina reader was diverted from my effusions, by the more interesting advertisements for fugitive slaves** (Davis, 1803). [My emphasis]

4 We should also recall here the work of Natalie Zemon Davis on letters of remission, analysed from the standpoint of fiction: 'I want to let the "fictional" aspects of these documents [letters of remission] be the center of analysis. By "fictional" I do not mean their feigned elements, but rather, using the other and broader sense of the root word *fingere*, their forming, shaping, and molding elements: the crafting of a narrative.' Zemon Davis, 1987: 3.

His judgment is of course doubly ironic. John Davis, like many travellers, deplored the lack of culture of the planters whose only interests seemed to be the day-to-day management of their slave workforce, present or absent. However, he was oblivious to the irony here: the advertisements for fugitives, those little stories and accounts of the everyday, maybe actually were 'more interesting' than his imitations of Horace's odes. Not only because the main preoccupation of the planters was their slaves, but because those notices were much more than mere notices: they were accounts of events and depictions of characters all of whom were or could have been familiar, little snatches of daily life.

For the narrators, whoever they were, the fugitive slave notice was first and foremost an opportunity to restate the racial inferiority of the slaves and thereby minimize the significance and implications of their acts of resistance. Far from being purely mimetic, the notice played a role, directly and indirectly, in both the construction and the day-to-day perpetuation of the idea of racial inferiority on which black slavery rested.[5] Advertisements for fugitive slaves depended on reading habits and a world of familiar relations. The representation of flight was as commonplace as the sale of wood, the arrival of a ship, the obituary of a dignitary or an advertisement for a play. It was rare for a newspaper not to publish notices of runaway slaves. The notices were tangible inscriptions; they were also fundamentally racial inscriptions. To take one example, let us study the description of this new African slave, published in the *Charleston Gazette* of 18 March 1805:

> A New Negro.
>
> Picked up on Saturday night last, on Sullivan's Island, a NEW NEGRO MAN, about five feet ten or eleven inches high, and about forty years of age; he came there in a canoe, without oar or paddle; had on a white negro cloth long jacket, straw hat and old velvet breeches; rings in both ears, and **remarkably large white eyes**. Enquire of
>
> Spencer Morrison,
>
> On the Island.
>
> March 18. [My emphasis]

5 See Thomas C. Holt, 'Marking Race: Race-making, and the Writing of History', *American Historical Review* 5 (1995), 7: 'It is at [the level of everydayness], I will argue, that race is reproduced via the marking of the racial Other and that racist ideas and practices are naturalized, made self-evident. […] It is at this level that race is reproduced long after its original historical stimulus – the slave trade and slavery – have faded.' The historian Walter Johnson recently suggested, in *Soul by Soul. Life Inside the Antebellum Slave Market,* 136, that this everyday scale should be applied to the particular racial rituals of the New Orleans slave markets of the antebellum period – 'at no site was race more readily given daily shape than in the slave market' – to the looks exchanged between slaves, buyers and sellers, to the demeaning rituals to which the slaves on sale were subjected, and to their strategies of resistance.

This notice of a capture can be read in various different ways: for its demographic context – the slave was one of thousands of Africans brought into South Carolina between 1803 and 1808 – for its geographical detail, or the description of clothing it gives. A further possibility is to read it as a debriefing on an encounter or confrontation, a look at that Other, the slave. In describing to the reader this slave freshly imported from the coast of Africa, Spencer Morrison mixes 'objective' details – height, presumed age, the description of clothing and earrings – with value judgments. This slave found just off Charleston is said to have had 'remarkably large white eyes'. It is hard to see this detail as having any descriptive value in enabling the reader to recognize his slave. 'Remarkably large white eyes' in a very black body: that, most probably, is the implied message in the notice. In one sense the arrested slave is as much or even more of a curiosity than a fugitive.

As such, the body of the fugitive is often misshapen or ugly. Louis Lessant, for example, a Louisiana slave aged about thirty years, is described as an 'extremely ugly' (*extrêmement laid*) character, and 'a bit stooped' (*un peu voute*) (*Le Moniteur de la Louisiane*, 3 June 1807). Michel, an 'English' slave also living in Louisiana, is said to have 'really ugly legs' (*les jambes fort vilaines*) with 'big knees, misshapen feet, very thick ankles and pinched toes' (*genoux gros & pieds difformes, la cheville très-grosse, & le bout fort-serré*) (*Le Moniteur de la Louisiane*, 9 March 1808). In the case of Bob, a Jamaican slave who fled from Clarendon Parish in 1809, his 'ugliness' was due to having been kicked by a horse: 'a remarkably ugly fellow, has a scar from the kick of a horse, on one side of his face' (*The Saint Jago de la Vega Gazette*, 25 March 1809). Others had marks on their skin, probably from smallpox. Quaco, for instance, a Carolina slave the subject of a notice in February 1802, was said to be 'remarkably ugly, pitted deep with the small pox, very thick lips, a large and very flat nose' (*City Gazette*, 23 February 1802). By insisting on Quaco's ugliness when the mere mention of smallpox scars would have sufficed to describe his face, his master Charles Colcock was doing more than merely announcing the flight of his slave. He gave an image of him that was almost monstrous and altogether revolting. He was thus emphasizing the distance that separated them, relegating the destabilizing effect of his escape to the background.

Where the fugitive was not ugly, he was often described, like Quaco, using the vocabulary of size and disproportion. The notice was a caricature and proceeded from hyperbole, as is indicated, unambiguously, by the recurring use of the intensifying adverbs or superlatives 'very', 'extremely', 'uncommonly', 'exceedingly' and 'remarkably' when describing the lips, mouth, eyes, nose, breasts or feet of the fugitives. Take for example Chloe, a slave from Carolina, the subject of a notice in the *Charleston Gazette* in June 1803. Almost nothing is known about

her except that she had 'remarkable large breast and very thick lips' (*City Gazette*, 14 June 1803). The description is of no help in painting a picture, even a vague one, of the slave in question. The reader would have difficulty recognizing her in the street and would probably not be much helped by her height: '[she] is about five feet three or four inches high'. But the description is not altogether useless and would in all likelihood be familiar to the reader. In fact, as Winthrop Jordan clearly shows in *White Over Black: American Attitudes Toward the Negro, 1550–1812*, the size of the nose, lips and breasts were among the demeaning tropes in the rhetoric about blacks from the seventeenth century onward (Jordan, 1968, p. 10). Women's breasts, in particular, crystallized those prejudices. They were at the same time a symbol of maternity and also of unbridled sexual passion. The frequently hyperbolic nature of the notices transformed the fugitive into a freakish spectacle and functioned as a reminder of the racial superiority of the narrator and the readers. As Shane White explains in his study of fugitive slave notices from New York, 'Even ostensibly objective descriptions of "thick lips" or "flat noses" then, are freighted with cultural meaning, referring back to a whole body of "scientific speculation" about the physical origins and intellectual capacity of blacks' (White, 1991, p. 120).

Though the narrator's voice in the notices can seem all-powerful and overwhelming, it is equally often the case that the voice of the slaves can be heard, although it is generally reported in indirect speech and thus truncated. The runaway slave 'says', 'does not say', 'gives an account of himself', 'declares', 'tells', 'told' or 'will tell a story', or stories. In the notices he speaks mostly of imprisonment or arrest, often there are transcripts or adaptations of depositions, voluntary or obtained by force. This, for instance, is the statement of a young African slave, recently imported into South Carolina:

> Committed to the Work-House,
>
> AS RUNAWAYS :
>
> […]
>
> An African Boy, of the Congo nation, taken up by the city guard […]. **The Boy accounts of himself (as from an interpreter) is that he was stolen from the wharf with another of the same age, that they arrived here in a ship commanded by a capt. Clark, a French gentleman; when taken from the wharf he was clothed in a red flannel shirt, blue trowsers and a blue cap**.
>
> […]
>
> Daniel Ward, M. W. H.
>
> August 2 (*Charleston Courier*, 2 August 1808).

Unfortunately it is not enough to change back the personal pronouns [he and I] to hear the words actually spoken by the slave. In this case his words are doubly indirect, first translated by an interpreter and then summarized and reported by the prison guard, Daniel Ward. It is unlikely that the slave would have used the words 'flannel' or 'gentleman', but it is perfectly possible on the other hand that he would have remembered the name of the captain of the slave ship on which he crossed the Atlantic, a Frenchman named Clark, though we can assume the name was either misheard or spelled wrongly. The slave is speaking, relating the sequence of events, taking the role of narrator. And like all narrators, he makes temporal choices: first he relates being stolen, then, in a flashback, refers to his Atlantic crossing and arrival in Charleston, before coming back to the moment he was stolen to describe his clothes.

In some notices, the fugitive's voice is closer to the surface of the words, and the censoring hand of the narrator is weaker and less visible. In the following notice, for example, published in the *Charleston Courier*, the narrator conveys the immediacy of the slave's words by shifting from the past to the narrative present tense and preceding the reported statement with a dash to indicate dialogue:

> An African.
>
> **CAME** on this day to my plantation on South Santee, a Mandingo NEGRO MAN […] : He **speaks** the guinea language to one of my Negroes – **says** that he **does not know** his master's name, nor the way back to his plantation, which he left a week ago, and **is** directed by a driver named Prince, who abused him and imposed on him. He **mentions** that his African name is Muldy, his present name Galter; that his master **lives** mostly in town, and **has** a waiting man called Dick (*Charleston Courier*, 15 March 1805). [My emphasis]

Still more audible are the words of Plenty, a slave from Carolina, and Catharine and Charles, two Jamaican slaves whose words come across to readers with only the minimum of distortion:

> Fifty Dollars Reward.
>
> PLENTY, a Negro Runaway
>
> From the Subscriber, and going about with a ticket **under the pretence of looking for a master, having declared his intention not to return until he be shot**, and there being in all probability not other method to cure him of the hostile disposition visibly increasing in him, having lately threatened the lives of several persons, and information being received of Plenty having twice made his escape through the indulgence of persons who out of regard for the master would not fire at him. […]

J. Laval.
July 19. [My emphasis]

St. Mary, April 14, 1812
RANAWAY, on the 27th May, 1811, a negro slave, belonging to the Subscriber, named CATHARINE with her Mulatto Child: they have been long advertised, and, on Monday the 13th instant, were taken, and lodged (as a place of the greatest security) in the Guard House of Ford Haldane, from whence she made her escape the same evening. […] She is tall and stout, aged 32 years, of a yellowish complexion, very artful, impudent, and assuming, **"she is determined she will be free, and belong to no buckra [Jamaican Creole for any white person] whatever"** (*Saint Jago de la Vega Gazette*, 25 April 1812). [My emphasis]

Spanish Town, July 24, 1812.
RANAWAY the following slaves, on Monday last : […] PATTY, […] a stout able wench, looks sulky, with a pug-nose. […] Patty […] is harboured at Mrs. Adolphus' red hill by a negro man named **Charles who, it is understood, is determined to lose his head before Patty shall be taken from him**, for which purpose he has built a house in the middle of the woods of the said mountain, where other runaways are harboured (*Saint Jago de la Vega Gazette*, 18 July 1812). [My emphasis]

The more threatening and determined the slave's voice, 'having declared his intention', 'she is determined she will be free', 'is determined to lose his head', the more likely it is to be reproduced unchanged. The notice is thus a public warning that the simple, everyday act of running away has been transformed into an act of revolt. The moment the slave leaves negotiation behind and affirms his or her freedom and freedom of speech, the narrator is bound to warn his neighbours and the slave-owning community in general. The text of the notice must offer a way of containing this disorder and transgressive language, 'impudent' and 'assuming' in the case of Catharine. It is especially true in her case: the reader is under the illusion of hearing Catharine's voice, between the indirect style (change of pronouns), indirect free style (disappearance of subordination and the declarative verb) and the direct style (narrative present, quotation marks). The narrative illusion is strengthened by the use of Jamaican Creole: it is unlikely, in practice, that the word 'buckra' was chosen by the narrator.

However threatening they may be, the real problem with the words of slaves, from the narrator's point of view, is that they cannot be trusted. A fugitive slave, a veritable trickster, relates, distorts, invents, manipulates, plays tricks and enjoys telling tales and misleading people. Freedom, whether temporary or permament,

is not so much to be found in physical appearances or clothing, as in the everyday words that the fugitives succeed in manipulating to their advantage. The trickster is one of the key figures of Afro-American and African, as well as American-Indian, vernacular culture. An animal character in fables – particularly the monkey, rabbit or snake – is a weak but ambivalent figure, both amusing and disturbing in its taste for trickery, but uses words to free itself from the more powerful. 'As its most elemental, then, the trickster tale consists of a confrontation in which the weak use their wits to evade the strong', explains the historian Lawrence Levine in *Black Culture and Black Consciousness. Afro-American Folk Thought from Slavery to Freedom* (Levine, 1977, pp. 106, 102–32, 370–85).[6] The comparison between the fugitive and the trickster is not used here to draw an analogy between fugitive notices and fables. Clearly, they are two very different forms. But on the other hand one can see from the notices the extent to which the power of the fugitive lies in his or her spoken words, just as the power of the master resides primarily in mastery of the written word. The notice is there to close down those spoken words, re-establish the truth and cut short the verbal illusion.

Peter, a slave in Carolina whose escape was advertised on 4 April 1807 in the *Charleston Courier*, was one of these 'tricksters' or manipulators, handy with words and situations. His story is woven out of lies and deception. His master, who nonetheless trusted him, had tasked him with finding a runaway slave belonging to him, named Diana. But Peter did not come back, and instead allegedly joined Diana, having several tricks up his sleeve to avoid arrest. In addition to the pass that enabled him to move around freely, his main asset was said to be his too-clever speech:

> On the 1st inst. in the evening, my Negro Fellow PETER was sent in search of [DIANA] […] He is about twenty-seven years of age, and well known in town [Charleston] as a carter. He may endeavor to pass for a free man, and may show his pass, which the subscriber requests may be detained. He […] is a **sly, subtle, cunning** fellow, of **smooth** speech, and has **duped** some people by his **fair** words and got off from them some time ago (*Charleston Courier*, 4 April 1807). [My emphasis]

The accumulation of adjectives connoting cunning and trickery shows yet again that the purpose of the notice was not merely descriptive. The narrator has been duped: so, as he cannot whip his absent slave, he spills forth his bitterness in words.

Peter is far from being an exception. Joe, for example, another slave in Carolina, had already passed himself off as a different slave, allaying the suspicions of the

6 On the *trickster* as a trope in African-American literature, see Gates, Jr., 1988.

people he met on the lowland roads and ferries he had to take to cross the rivers on his way from Waccamaw in the north to Cooper in the south:

> One Hundred Dollars Reward.
>
> ABSCONDED […]
>
> On the 5th inst. JOE, a very stout, strong, well set Fellow, about thirty-five years old […] he is dark complexioned, likely, artful, and as sensible as most of his colour […] This fellow went off from my plantation about twelve years ago and passed himself at the ferries and along the road for one belonging to Mr. Weston, going from his plantation on Waccamaw to Charleston, with a message to him.
>
> […]
>
> Allard Belin.
>
> May 16 (*City Gazette*, 16 May 1803).

Was he not capable, just like Peter, of fabricating stories and passing off the probable as the truth? 'He is capable of making out the most plausible stories.'

Around one in ten fugitives in the body of notices from Jamaica and Carolina studied for this chapter is said to be 'cunning' and one in twenty is 'plausible', not to mention all those described as intelligent, artful, sensible or a flatterer. Charles, for instance, a Jamaican slave the subject of a notice in the *Royal Gazette* in late December 1800, is described by his master as 'very artful' and 'plausible' enough to fool the crew of a ship: 'he may impose, and endeavour to pass as a free man, or may procure a forged ticket, and get on board some vessel at Kingston' (*The Royal Gazette*, 27 December 1800). Davy, a slave of African origin living in South Carolina, did not try to leave South Carolina by sea, but seems to have been every bit as wily as Charles, 'a smooth spoken artful fellow' (*City Gazette*, 6 May 1805). The slaves in Louisiana seem to have been no less adept at invention and role-play than their counterparts in Jamaica and Carolina. The story of Charles the mulatto, published on 12 March 1808 in *Le Moniteur de la Louisiane*, offers a good illustration. Charles plays on the ambivalence of reality and announces to anyone who asks him that he has been sent on 'important business' concerning the death (which was real) of his master. Not content with playing the role in which he had cast himself, Charles made his announcement in a tavern, as public a place as he could find in the absence of a theatre:

> 60 Psts. Reward.
>
> A Mulatto named Charles, belonging to the late John W. Gurley, made his escape on the evening of the 3rd of this month. He is about 25 years old, around 5 feet 10 inches, well proportioned, and speaks French & English; he is alert & intelligent, & he will make up all sorts of stories to make good his escape. I do not remember

> what clothes he was wearing. The said mulatto took with him one of his master's carriage horses, a bay, about fifteen hands, with a few harness marks. He was seen on the 4th of this month at the Marseille tavern; there he gave the news of his master's death, & said that he had been sent up the coast by friends of his master, on important business (*Le Moniteur de la Louisiane*, 12 March 1808).[7]

There were many fugitive slaves who, like Charles, did not merely invent stories but acted them out and staged them. The notices, as long as they are read carefully and with caution, take on a real air of the theatre of everyday life. Cuffee, a Jamaican slave, is said to have staged his own death very realistically, and Charles, a slave from Carolina, allegedly tried not to be taken for what he was, namely a slave advertised as a runaway:

> Kingston, May 23, 1812.
>
> THREE DOUBLOONS REWARD.
>
> RAN AWAY, about two years ago, a Negro Man, named CUFFEE, **who contrived to make it believe that he was drowned by the oversetting of a Canoe, near the Bath prison**, but has been since fishing about Hunt's Bay and Newland's, and is supposed to have gone to windward, about Christmas last, for the same purpose (*The Royal Gazette*, 9 May 1812).

> Fifteen Dollars reward.
>
> RAN AWAY some time since a Negro Man named CHARLES. He is a fellow upwards of 40 years old, about 5 feet 10 inches high, not of a clear black, but rather of a brownish cast; […] lately belonging to Mr. Negrin, and was formerly, for a long while, the property and confidential servant of Mr. Dupont, but originally belonged to Mr. Lenox. He […] knows how to read and write tolerably well, and may possibly endeavour to pass himself by another name, especially as **he is extremely artful in telling a fair story of himself, and has been known to make inquiry about a fellow Charles, that was advertised as a run-away in order that he might not be suspected of being the same person**.
>
> […]
>
> John H. Sargent (*Charleston Courier*, 11 May 1808). [My emphasis]

7 '60 Psts. de Récompense. *Un Mulâtre nommé* Charles, *appartenant à feu John W. Gurley, est parti marron le soir du 3 de ce mois. Il a environ 25 ans, à peu près 5 pieds 10 pouces, est bien proportionné, parle français & anglais ; il est alerte & intelligent, & il inventera toute sorte d'histoires pour favoriser la fuite. On ne se souvient pas bien du vêtement qui le couvrait. Ledit mulâtre a emmené avec lui un des* chevaux de la voiture *de son maître, bai, taille d'environ quinze mains, portant quelques marques de harnais. On l'a vu le 4 du courant à la taverne de Marseille ; il y a donné la nouvelle de la mort de son maître, & a dit qu'il était envoyé dans les côtes d'en haut par les amis du défunt, pour des affaires importantes.'*

This last notice is captivating, and raises questions. It seems that Charles had already been the subject of an advertisement, and that he knew about it either directly or indirectly, as he could read and write. The obvious irony of this new notice is that Charles would probably read it, finding confirmation of his acting talent and of the importance of changing roles. The notice is two-edged: it enables the narrator to have a dialogue with anyone who might arrest his slave, but it could also serve the purposes of the fugitive himself.

One clear finding emerges from this chapter, from all these intermingled voices and life stories like that of Charles. Fugitive notices are much more than mere descriptions, unambiguous documentary sources the historian can confidently use without fear of distorting the lost reality. The notices analysed in this chapter can be seen as a series of performances, stages set for dressing-up, carnivalesque expressions and carnival identities, and above all as the polyphonic telling of multi-faceted stories, peopled with characters that are plausible but not always real. As life stories or narrative fragments (*petites allures de récit*), fugitive slave notices will probably retain their popularity for a long time to come. Let us hope that they will be read in future in all their richness and complexity.

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CHAPTER 6

‘I AM NOT A SLAVE’

Liberated Africans and their Usage of the Judicial System in Nineteenth Century Rio de Janeiro

Daniela Carvalho Cavalheiro

Introduction

‘Fourteen years old, round face, big eyes, flat nose, big lips, small ears, without body marks’.[1] This is how Miquelina Conga was described in 1835, shortly after receiving the legal status of ‘liberated African’, a category involving quasi-freedom that followed British efforts to suppress the slave trade. This status would represent a major change in her life, perhaps comparable only to the change she suffered at the time of her capture in Africa, subsequent to which she was sold and transported as an enslaved person to the Americas. Belonging to the ‘liberated African’ category meant that she was subject to specific laws and conditions of labour and exploitation. In addition, being a liberated African in a country where slavery still existed was a challenge, since attempts to enslave those thus designated were not unusual (Mamigonian, 2002; Florence, 2002; Chalhoub, 2012).

In Brazil, many regulations were created to deal with liberated Africans. The first one was the Charter of 1818, by which all apprehended Africans in illegal slave ships were to be considered free and returned to Africa. When this was not possible, they were to fulfil 14 years of service under the responsibility of the

1 Arquivo Nacional GIFI 6D 12.

imperial government, and were expected to learn the Portuguese language and the customs and religion of Brazil. However, the return to Africa did not happen often, and most liberated Africans remained in Brazil (Mamigonian, 2002).

The Charter of 1818 was the only document, until 1853, that mentioned a period of service. All laws and regulations after this Charter stated that liberated Africans were to serve and work under guardianship, but for how long was not stated. Only in 1853 was it again stated that the term was 14 years. However, the Charter of 1818 was very clear on one point: liberated Africans should be treated in such a way that their physical integrity and their right to freedom were respected[2]. This understanding of the law is key to understanding the judicial procedure that Miquelina and her representative followed in applying to the Ministry of Justice to secure her freedom.

It is not known when Miquelina arrived in Brazil, though she was registered as 'a Liberated African of those who were by the Charter valid as a Law of 26 January 1818 and the Law of 7 April 1831',[3] and was described as belonging to the Congo nation, which establishes that she came from western Central Africa. The lack of further details, however, does not prevent one from appreciating how she managed her quest for emancipation and how she used the experience she acquired during her years of service to understand the judicial system and use it in her favour.

Miquelina registered her petition for emancipation in 1844. Petitions made by liberated Africans and their employers are prime sources for reconstructing their life stories. Such requests ranged in scope from petitions made by liberated Africans for final emancipation, after completing their period of service, to requests to change their place of employment (whether to follow a spouse, avoid undue physical punishment or for other reasons). As for employers, one finds requests for changing the concession or the place of employment, requests for dismissal of service, complaints of bad behaviour, and so forth (Mamigonian, 2002; Cavalheiro, 2015). Any dispute between liberated Africans and employers that went beyond household boundaries could be settled by the Ministry of Justice, often represented by the Judge of Orphans. Therefore, when Miquelina decided to seek emancipation, she went to the Ministry of Justice and, with the help of a representative, filed a petition.

2 Collection of the Laws of the Brazilian Empire, 1808-1889, including: Charter of 26 January 1818, establishing penalties for those engaged in illegal slave trade; Decree No. 1303 of 28 December 1853, declaration that liberated Africans whose services were for private employers were to be emancipated after 14 years of service, when they so requested, and regulations for the destiny of said Africans.

3 The original reads '*liberta dos que o são pelo inciso 1º do Alvará com força de Lei, de 26 de Janeiro de 1818, e artigo 1º da Carta de Lei de 7 de abril de 1831*'.

To serve and to be rented

In 1835, when our account begins, the Atlantic slave trade was already forbidden in Brazil. Moreover, liberated Africans could be hired by private persons, who were to provide the knowledge and skills needed, in exchange for services and a salary.[4] This salary was supposed to be paid to the government and not to the liberated African, and was to go towards creating a fund that would be used to protect liberated Africans after their final emancipation. However, this salary was rarely paid at all, and no such fund ever existed (Mamigonian, 2002).

In 1835, Colonel Manoel Joze de Oliveira hired Miquelina. She served him until he passed away on 3 July 1838. During the time she worked for the Colonel, Miquelina performed domestic chores as a house servant. After his death, Emerenciana Roza de Oliveira, his widow, became the person responsible for Miquelina. Finally, she entered the employ of Maria Izabel de Oliveira on 24 January 1844. Miquelina spent her entire time of service in the employ of private individuals, who, according to the regulations of 1834 and 1835, were supposed to take care of her, feed and clothe her, and be responsible for her learning Portuguese and necessary skills.

Many liberated Africans who fulfilled their period of service under the guardianship of a private employer endured a time when, in addition to the hardships of the service, they were alone and isolated in their workplace. That seems to have been the case of Miquelina, since there were apparently no other liberated Africans conceded to Colonel Manoel Joze de Oliveira. Nor were there any enslaved persons under his responsibility. When analysing the experience of liberated Africans in Brazil, this must be taken into consideration. The forms of labour, social relations, marriage, and even escape that applied to liberated Africans who worked for private individuals and lived in big cities such as Rio de Janeiro differed considerably from those that applied to liberated Africans who served in rural areas, or on frontiers, building roads and toll stations. The latter had more possibilities for establishing networks and strategizing in groups, since they worked in groups and, in many cases, alongside others who were enslaved, free or freed (Mamigonian, 2002; Moreira, 2005; Cavalheiro, 2015).

Nonetheless, that did not mean that Miquelina did not have any connections with other African people, or with people of African descent, whether enslaved,

4 Decree of 13 October 1834 determining that the services of Africans are to be taken under certain conditions; Decree of 19 November 1835 altering the Decree of 1834 related to the services of liberated Africans.

liberated or free. Historiography has already established that liberated Africans created bonds with those around them, including neighbours and others, who formed networks of support in times of need, such as the moment of requesting emancipation, even when living in urban contexts in a small work place (Moreira, 2005; Cavalheiro, 2015). Miquelina's petition does not indicate who may have been part of her support network, but it is important to highlight the participation of Jose Gomes da Silva, the person who wrote and signed her petition. As the judicial record does not yield any information about him, it is not possible to know whether he was a friend, neighbour or merely an acquaintance, but his presence in this process indicates that liberated Africans were not alone in their pursuit of freedom. During the nineteenth century, urban centres such as Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo witnessed the progressive growth of abolitionist organizations that included lawyers and *rabulas*, who promoted the cause of freedom of enslaved people in the courts. The participation of such figures in the emancipation of Africans via legal channels is clear.[5]

Deposit, emancipation and the right to freedom

While the Charter of 1818 stated that liberated Africans were to serve 14 years before acquiring final emancipation, Miquelina had only been under guardianship for nine years when she filed her emancipation request in 1844. However, that same Charter stated that liberated Africans could not be treated as slaves. In addition, article 10 of the Charter of 1832 stated that a liberated African whose physical being or right to freedom was threatened by another person could request placement 'in deposit', which meant that he or she could be taken from his or her employer and placed under the guardianship of a different person until a legal review took place to prove or dismiss the claim that the liberated African was in danger.[6] These are the two regulations that Jose Gomes da Silva used in Miquelina's petition that she be removed from her employer and then emancipated.

The complaint was based on 15 receipts to Emerenciana Roza de Oliveira for the sums she received for renting out Miquelina's service as a wet nurse

5 *Rabula* was the name given to a person who practised law without having a formal education or degree. On the abolitionist movement in Brazil, see Azevedo, 2010.

6 Decree of 12 April 1832, Regulations on the execution of the Law of 7 November 1831 regarding the slave trade, article 10.

from 19 April 1842 to 7 May 1844. As Mamigonian has observed, there were no regulations regarding an employer's practice of renting out the services of a liberated African. Yet such renting out of liberated Africans by their employers was widespread and very lucrative for the latter. The salary that was supposed to be paid to the government for a liberated African for one year could thus be collected in less than a month. In Miquelina's case, the amount to be paid to the government was 12,000 réis, while renting her out gave her employer from 16,000 réis to 20,000 réis per month.[7] Although it was not illegal to rent out the services of liberated Africans, the issue raised by Miquelina and her representative was that she was described as a slave in the receipts, using the words 'my slave, my black woman' and 'a black woman of mine' (*minha escrava*, *minha preta*, *uma preta minha*).[8] In short, she was being treated as a slave, and this was the basis of their argument. The problem Miquelina and Jose Gomes da Silva cited was not that her services were exploited through rent, but that the arrangement was based on a false claim of enslavement.

Miquelina's petition, which was filed in May 1844, nine years after she started working under the guardianship of her employer, requested her deposit. Since she was being referred to as a slave, the petition argued, the terms of guardianship under which her services were conceded to the employer should be terminated on account of non-observance of the regulations. In addition, the petition requested emancipation prior to fulfilment of the 14 years of service. This was based on the provision of the Charter of 1818 according to which liberated Africans who had already acquired the skills and independence necessary for living on their own before the end of the 14 years should be emancipated if they demonstrated what was called 'good behaviour'.[9] Miquelina and Jose Gomes da Silva used the argument that she was a good servant and demonstrated good behaviour.

Although the exploitation of the labour of liberated Africans was similar to that of the labour of enslaved people, the law stipulated a difference between the two categories of people. And, as E. P. Thompson has suggested, laws and regulations can only work and be respected if they present the possibility of being used by anyone in a society (1975). Thus, what this case highlights is

7 See also Mamigonian, 2002, p. 99, and Arquivo Nacional GIFI 6D 12, Petition of emancipation of Miquelina Conga.

8 This is a loose translation. It is important to remember that during the years of slavery in Brazil, reference to a person as a black man or woman meant that he or she was property. See Mattos, 2013.

9 Charter of 1818.

not only the exploitation of labour, but also the possibilities of fighting against that exploitation. The very same laws that stipulated periods of service and forms of labour – and therefore exploitation – also held forth the possibility of emancipation.

Both deposit and emancipation were, however, denied. In response to the petition, the Judge of Orphans rejected all that was requested, alleging that, in spite of everything, a liberated African needed to fulfil the period of 14 years of service. Nonetheless, Jose Gomes da Silva and Miquelina did not give up. They decided to use the legal system in every way possible, initiating a legal process in which we get glimpses of Miquelina's perceptions of freedom and of what it meant to be a liberated African, in relation to how she was to be treated and how this treatment, when not suitable, allowed her to demand emancipation.

The letter of the law was in her favour since liberated Africans were not supposed to be treated as slaves. But, as Sidney Chalhoub points out, Brazilian society was shaped in such a way that black people's experience of freedom during the nineteenth century was conditioned by the strength of slavery (Chalhoub, 2012, p. 233). Miquelina was being treated as a slave even though, since she was a liberated African, the legal system and society were supposed to corroborate her status as that of a person who was not to remain in a position of exploitation and servitude.

Miquelina and Jose Gomes da Silva thus filed a new petition. More emphatic than before, they argued that she needed to be 'freed from the maltreatment and extermination that she fears'.[10] She also demanded that she be emancipated because she was being treated as a slave, even though she still had several years to serve. The new argument rested on the fact that the last receipt for the payment of her services was signed by José Francisco Ribeiro at the request of his mother Rita Maria Joaquina, to whom Miquelina's services had never been entrusted. Therefore, since a new master who should not be taking advantage of her services appeared in the receipts, it was clear that the condition of slavery was being imposed, which reinforced the argument for her emancipation. This fact proved that Miquelina was being treated as a slave, since her employers were selling her services to anyone who was willing to pay for them.

For almost two years, from April 1842 to January 1844, Miquelina was hired out for her services as a wet nurse. What the legal process does not show us is that being a wet nurse meant that Miquelina must have had a child, since

10 The original reads: '*para que fique segura de sevícias ou extermínio que receia.*' Arquivo Nacional GIFI 6D 12.

she needed to be able to breastfeed. Usually liberated African women who had children would try to free their children when filing petitions of emancipation.[11] The fact that Miquelina did not mention a child during the legal process may indicate either that Miquelina was separated from her baby or that the child had died. Child mortality rates in Brazil were high during the nineteenth century, and the exploitation and hard work endured by mothers (Chalhoub, 1996), circumstances which seem to have been endured by most liberated African women, only increased these rates.

Miquelina was first rented out for 16,000 réis per month, a sum that did not differ much from what most liberated Africans received. Maciel Silva presents the case of Candida, a liberated African woman living in Recife in northeast Brazil in the 1840s, who was hired out for 480 réis per day, which added up to around 14,400 réis per month (Silva, 2007). The same amount was paid by another woman, Dionizia. She was not rented out but worked by herself as a washerwoman in the streets of Rio de Janeiro and had to pay 480 réis daily to her employer. She endured those conditions for 16 years from 1839 to 1855. This work arrangement, by virtue of which Dionizia was responsible for finding work and being paid for it, was a strong argument in her petition of emancipation, since she proved she was able to take care of herself (Cavalheiro, 2015, pp. 138–141).

From April 1842 until April 1844, Miquelina was rented out to José Martins da Rocha as a wet nurse. Until July 1843, the receipts were signed by Emerenciana Roza de Oliveira. Receipts from August to October 1843 are not attached to the file. Then, in November 1843, José Francisco Ribeiro started signing the receipts, stating that he was doing so for his sister Emerenciana Roza de Oliveira, who was legally responsible for Miquelina. However, in January 1844, José Martins da Rocha paid the fee to a different person. That receipt was signed by José Francisco Ribeiro representing his mother, Rita Maria Joaquina.

Shifting a liberated African from one employer to another was not impossible. However, it was necessary to file a request with the Ministry of Justice, which had to approve the conveyance and make it public. That had not been the case with Miquelina. The change in the name of the person who received the payment for her services, according to Miquelina's understanding and that of her representative, showed that she was being treated as a slave.

11 For a discussion of liberated African women requesting emancipation, see Cavalheiro, 2015, chapter 4.

The last receipt is dated 7 May 1844. For the sum of 20,000 réis, Miquelina was given to José Francisco Ribeiro by the Chief of Police without any notice from the Ministry of Justice or the Judge of Orphans. And she remained with him, living in Rio de Janeiro, at 32 Piolho Street, from where she filed her petition on 24 May 1844, only a few days after being transferred to Ribeiro's household. This petition was also denied on 19 August 1844. After that, the petition does not state where and with whom Miquelina lived and worked. However, newspaper accounts fill some of the gaps.

On 30 June 1848, an escape announcement was placed in the *Jornal do Commércio*, stating that Miquelina had fled her workplace. The announcement also stated that she might have escaped to Santa Ana de Niterói, a neighbouring city, across the bay from Rio de Janeiro.[12] Four years after beginning her quest for freedom within the judicial system and failing in the process, Miquelina decided to escape to pursue her freedom. It should be noted that, in 1848, Miquelina was completing 13 years under guardianship. The end of her time was near and yet she decided to escape. The reasons are not mentioned in the small space of the newspaper announcement. However, historiography points out that the transfer from one employer to another could have been a strategy to try to hold the services of Africans under employers' control. As shown above, Miquelina already feared that possibility since she was treated as a slave. Maybe she also realized that the end of the period of 14 years might not mean emancipation for her.

'I am not a slave'

Miquelina and Jose Gomes da Silva, her legal representative, tried every possible argument to gain her emancipation. They used proof of payments in which she was described as a slave to prove that her status as a liberated African was not being respected. They proved that she had been given, as only an enslaved person could be, to a third party who was not responsible for her. Miquelina's conditions during the nine years she was under guardianship in Brazil were far from what was stipulated by the laws and regulations under which liberated Africans were supposed to be allowed to live.

Being treated as a slave was something that a liberated African tried to avoid. Even though the work and living arrangements were very similar for these two

12 'Announcements' (*Annuncios*), *Jornal do Commércio* (Rio de Janeiro), 30 June 1848.

categories of person, a liberated African had the possibility of emancipation after completing the period of 14 years of service. That became clear in 1853, with a decree stating that any liberated African under the guardianship of a private employer and having fulfilled 14 years of service could file a request for emancipation. Once the time of service was proved, a letter of emancipation was to be given.[13] After this decree, it is possible to find numerous requests for emancipation made by liberated Africans in the 1850s and the 1860s.[14] Miquelina's case shows a level of interpretation of the judicial system that one sees in the case of other liberated Africans only after this decree.

In 1844, using the Charter of 1818, Miquelina and her representative built a case based on the ideas of freedom and slavery. Miquelina's trajectory allows us to perceive the different meanings that labour could have for employers and liberated Africans, also allowing us to observe that the struggles for freedom ran deeper than we know. Her trajectory demonstrates that there is still much work to be done in order to understand the experiences of liberated Africans in Brazil.

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CHAPTER 7

BIOGRAPHY, HISTORY AND DIASPORA

The Bight of Benin and Bahia

Kristin Mann and Lisa Earl Castillo

Exciting new research is demonstrating the possibility of recovering biographical information about individual African slaves and reconstructing the contours of their lives. Long limited to the rare African men and even rarer African women who left narratives or autobiographical testimony of one kind or another, historians are now expanding research on individual Africans, both enslaved and freed, by combing ecclesiastical, notary and other secular sources in archives around the Atlantic world and piecing together the fragments of information they uncover to narrate and interpret their lives. Oral traditions handed down within families, religious communities, town quarters, and other populations are also yielding vital insights. The work is beginning to reclaim the untold stories of men, women and children torn from their natal homes and brutalized by enslavement and trade, rescuing them from near universal anonymity. The recovery of these human stories is bringing to light anew the terrible realities of slavery and the slave trade in Africa and the Americas and making them more immediate and concrete. The biographical research, moreover, is casting a bold new light on Africans' resilience and resourcefulness in surviving slavery, re-forging identity and community, and, sometimes, escaping slavery through redemption, manumission, rebellion, running away, or other means. In the case of the fortunate minority of Africans who freed themselves, biographical analysis is demonstrating the oppression and vulnerability they

continued to face. All of this new historical knowledge is transforming our understanding of the origins and development of the global African diaspora (Law and Lovejoy, 2001; Reis, 2008; Sweet, 2011; Scott and Hébrard, 2012).[1]

Few sites of the transatlantic slave trade have proved richer for the recovery of biographical data about Africans sold to the Americas than the hinterland and littoral of the Bight of Benin and Brazil, especially Bahia. One reason is the richness of sources for these regions. Another is the long and superb tradition of scholarship that has used these sources to document, analyse, and interpret Afro-Bahian history and culture. Two short biographies presented in this chapter will illustrate the kinds of information it has been possible to recover about Yoruba-speaking Africans sold into the Bahian slave trade during the first half of the nineteenth century, when that branch of the commerce reached its height. In Bahia, these slaves were generally identified as Nagô. The first biography takes as its subject a woman who is still remembered today as an important religious leader; the second, a man who was at once a victim of the transatlantic slave trade and a participant in it. Both of these historical actors ultimately made important contributions to the development of the diaspora connecting West Africa, Brazil, and other parts of the world.

Francisca da Silva, better remembered by her ritual title, Iyá Nassô, is one of the most celebrated nineteenth-century figures of the Afro-Brazilian religion known as *candomblé*.[2] A priestess of the Yoruba *orisha* (deity) Shango, she was born in Yorubaland, probably around 1770. It is not clear when she arrived in Bahia as a slave, but it was probably sometime before 1810. The title she used, Iyá Nassô, suggests that, while still in Africa, she supervised the religious activities related to Shango worship in the palace of the *alafin* (king) of Oyo. At this point, Oyo had been a major regional military and economic power for well over a century. From the late 1780s, however, Oyo was rocked by a series of internal power struggles, including armed uprisings. It is likely that Iyá Nassô's enslavement occurred during one of these conflicts. She seems to have arrived in Bahia with a son and to have left at least one other child, a boy, behind in Africa. In Salvador, the capital of the province, she was baptized as Francisca while her son received the name Domingos. After obtaining their freedom, both used the surname da Silva, probably their owner's last name.

1 Pierre Verger paved the way in his book *Os libertos: Sete caminhos na liberdade de escravos da Bahia no século XIX* (1992).

2 For a fuller discussion of Francisca da Silva's life, see Castillo and Parés, 2010.

Francisca da Silva first emerges in written documentation in 1822, when she was already a freedwoman with slaves of her own. By 1824, she had formed a relationship with the freedman José Pedro Autran, whom she married according to Catholic rites in 1832. A native of Ilesha, José Pedro Autran had purchased his freedom in 1822.[3] As a member of a prominent black Catholic brotherhood, he had connections to a number of affluent African freed people in Salvador. Like other Africans, especially men, he utilized the Catholic institution of godparenting to establish ties with newly arrived enslaved Africans, particularly those from his own ethnolinguistic group (de Queirós Mattoso, 1986, pp. 114–16; de Oliveira, 1995–1996, pp. 184–87; Castillo, 2011). For example, in 1824 Autran became godfather to a captive baptized as Thomé, who was actually the son Iyá Nassô had left behind in Africa. A decade later, when Thomé's master died, his mother and her husband provided the funds to purchase his freedom.

By this time, the family had attained a degree of economic prosperity and material comfort as owners of two parcels of property and around a dozen enslaved adults, mostly Yoruba-speaking women. Some, such as Marcelina Obatosi, baptized in 1824, were initiated into *orisha* worship and became active participants in the family's religious activities. These practices, like José Pedro's godparenting network, enabled the couple to reconstruct an Afrocentric web of social relations in Bahia. Most devotees of Iyá Nassô's shrines were probably enslaved or freed Yoruba speakers, but there is evidence that other Africans, particularly Gbe speakers and Nupe, also participated.

In January 1835, the household's comfortable life was shattered by the political fallout of a slave revolt known as the Malê Rebellion, which was led by Islamicized Yoruba speakers. In its wake, anti-African, anti-Islamic hysteria swept the city. More than 300 Africans, both enslaved and freed, were imprisoned, including Iyá Nassô's two sons, Domingos and Thomé (Reis, 2003).[4] Iyá Nassô lobbied courageously for her sons' sentences to be commuted to deportation to West Africa. In an 1836 petition to Brazil's Ministry of Justice, she argued that their convictions had resulted from 'false accusations by enemies'. Offering to pay their passage to Africa, she vowed that she would follow them herself, never to return to Brazil, 'not because she had been forced to [leave] by the authorities', but because she 'refused to tolerate being compromised' by those who wished her ill.[5] Late in 1837, Francisca da Silva and her husband left

3 For more on José Pedro Autran, see Parés and Castillo, 2015.

4 For an earlier edition in English, see Reis, 1993.

5 Francisca's petition is transcribed in Reis, 2003, p. 466.

for Africa, accompanied by over a dozen former slaves, many recently freed, including Marcelina Obatosi and her two young children.

The memory of the group's odyssey is preserved in the oral traditions of one of Brazil's oldest *candomblé* temples, Ilê Axé Iyá Nassô Oká, whose shrines were created by Iyá Nassô, probably during her first years as a freedwoman, if not before. According to one version of the story, the group's journey back to Africa ended in the Yoruba city-State of Ketu. However, newly uncovered evidence from the Republic of Benin shows that they went to Ouidah, where they received land from the Dahomean king, Gezo. There, Iyá Nassô's husband became involved in exporting kola nuts, and perhaps other products, to Brazil. He and his wife also established a new religious community, undoubtedly with the participation of her sons and the family's former slaves, some of whom, including Marcelina's children, had been freed only on the condition that they remain with their former owners until the latter's death. Having paid for her freedom, Marcelina was bound by no such restriction. In 1839, she returned to Bahia, where she assumed leadership of Ilê Axé Iyá Nassô Oká. Twenty years later, one of her daughters joined her, suggesting that by then Iyá Nassô and her husband were dead. Today, Ilê Axé Iyá Nassô Oká is one of Brazil's most respected *candomblé* temples. In 1986, it was designated a national historic site.

The subject of our second biography is Francisco Gomes de Andrade, also known by the African name Shetelu, who was one of the founders of the Afro-Brazilian community in Lagos (Mann, 2016). Like Iyá Nassô, he was enslaved during the instability and warfare that accompanied the fall of the Oyo empire. Unlike her, he was not born at the centre of the empire, but in the allied kingdom of Owu on Oyo's southern frontier. While Iyá Nassô was enslaved as an adult, Shetelu was captured as a youth between about 1815 and 1825.

A Brazilian, likely the slave trader Luis Antônio de Andrade, eventually bought Shetelu and had him christened Francisco. Luis Antônio worked in the Brazilian slave trade at Molembo, north of the Congo River, in the 1820s, and at Lagos, then the leading slaving port along the Bight of Benin, in the 1830s and 1840s. Francisco's general absence from Bahian records during the 1820s and 1830s suggests that Luis may have purchased him in West Africa, not Brazil, and that Shetelu's first experience of chattel slavery occurred in Atlantic Africa rather than in the New World.

Clear evidence places Francisco in Lagos during the 1830s, working with his owner in the Atlantic slave trade. While there, Francisco encountered two members of his family from Owu, which had been defeated and destroyed in 1822. One was a younger woman named Ayebomi, who he later said was related

to him through his father, and the other was her mother, Ayiku. Ayebomi too had been enslaved as a very young child along with her older sister Ajatu, possibly at the same time as Shetelu. Ayebomi, however, had not been sold into the Atlantic trade, but rather to a Yoruba-speaking woman in the nearby town of Ijebu-Ode. After several years, she was redeemed and reunited with her mother, by then living in the town of Abeokuta, founded by refugees in 1830. During their unexpected reunion, Shetelu told Ayebomi and her mother that he had seen Ajatu in Brazil, where she had been christened Luisa.

By mid-1844, Francisco had manumitted himself, and travelled back and forth between Lagos and Salvador, in the company of known slave traders on at least one occasion. Identified as a trader in his passport application to leave Brazil in May of that year, he apparently subsequently made his home in Lagos, where, by 1846, he had fathered three children by two different mothers and begun to establish a family. By the early 1850s, Francisco was a leader of the growing community of Brazilian freed people in the town. Ironically, the experience he had gained, connections he had forged, and economic and social resources he had accumulated while living in Lagos as an enslaved Brazilian and working in the slave trade enabled him to play that role. His transatlantic travel, moreover, had allowed him to carry messages between his family members and others on opposite sides of the Atlantic.

That Francisco had three of his children baptized in a collective celebration of that sacrament when the first Roman Catholic priest visited Lagos in the 1860s testifies to his identification as a Brazilian (Da Cunha, 1985, pp. 152–204; Strickrodt, 2004; Parés, 2015). The strong ties he and Luisa Ajatu, who herself returned to Lagos from Bahia in 1854, re-established and maintained with their Owu kin, Ayebomi and Ayiku, as well as other Owu country folk from whom they had been separated by enslavement roughly 30 years before, demonstrate their enduring bonds with their long-dispersed family and destroyed homeland.

At first glance these short biographies of Iyá Nassô and Shetelu appear quite different. The evidence preserved in the surviving sources, written primarily by ecclesiastical and secular authorities, or handed down orally by *orisha* worshippers, inevitably shapes what we know about them. Despite their differences, the biographies illuminate a number of common themes in early nineteenth-century Afro-Bahian history, from the perspective of gender, age, and chronology. Each illuminates, for example, the experience of Yoruba speakers enslaved in the early phase of the calamitous collapse of the Oyo empire, one at the centre of the maelstrom, the other on the southern frontier where the conflict quickly spread. A mature woman at the time she was captured with her son Domingos,

it is not surprising that Iyá Nassô was sold into the Atlantic trade. Her price on the coast would have been significantly higher than in the interior; moreover, her ritual knowledge and authority may have made her a dangerous investment locally. Shetelu's youth and gender, on the other hand, made him well-suited for specialized training and careful grooming as a worker in the transatlantic trade. Both aspects surely helped catch his Brazilian buyer's eye.[6] Ayebomi, a small child at the time of her capture, was not attractive for export and thus entered the African slave market, although her older sister Ajatu was not so fortunate. How the girls' mother escaped being captured is not known.

The biographies of Francisca da Silva and Francisco Gomes de Andrade also demonstrate the diversity of slave experience in Bahia. Sugar production still dominated the province's economy in the first half of the nineteenth century, and many of the enslaved people imported from Africa at that time were set to work in the cane fields and processing mills of the Recôncavo. Even so, large numbers were also employed beyond sugar, including those like José Pedro Autran, employed in Salvador's urban economy, or Francisco Gomes de Andrade, employed in the transatlantic trade. The sites and character of the men's labour profoundly affected their subsequent opportunities. Urban slaves, like those involved in the transatlantic trade, generally had better chances of earning an income and accumulating capital that could be used to buy their freedom, or that of relatives or friends, than did enslaved people who performed agricultural labour on sugar plantations (Klein and Luna, 2010, pp. 78–85, pp. 89–90, pp. 107–112; Graham, 2010, pp. 35–6, 50–3, 67, 79–80, 101–4). These two types of enslaved person also enjoyed superior physical mobility and thus had greater opportunity to remain in touch with loved ones who did not share the same owner, even sometimes across the Atlantic. Although nothing is known about Francisca da Silva's work while enslaved, it is likely that she benefited materially from her religious activities. The lives of Brazilian enslaved people and freed people were characterized by a relentless struggle – to survive poverty and oppression, re-forge community, negotiate spaces of autonomy, and accumulate capital that could be turned to manumission and invested in slaves and other property. The stories of Francisca da Silva, her husband José Pedro Autran and Francisco Gomes de Andrade illustrate the strategies used by enslaved Africans who worked in urban environments or the transatlantic trade to achieve these goals.

6 On the work of enslaved and freed Africans in the slave trade and other commerce between the Bight of Benin and Brazil, see Hicks, 2015, chapters 3, 4.

The biographies show the importance of family, godparenting, slave ownership, ritual practice and initiation, and ethnolinguistic identity in rebuilding lives and worlds violently ruptured by slavery and the transatlantic slave trade. Both Iyá Nassô and Shetelu entered Brazilian slavery with kin and attached great importance to maintaining these and other family relations throughout their lives. Tellingly, Iyá Nassô and José Pedro, who placed Shango worship at the centre of their activities, were careful to give their marriage the sanction of the Catholic Church and thus the protection of the Brazilian State. Francisco Gomes attended to his relationship with Ayebomi and her mother from the time of the trio's reunion in the 1830s until the women's deaths many years later. His example may have helped inspire Luisa Ajatu to return to West Africa and her family a decade after he did.

Francisca da Silva and José Pedro Autran in Brazil and Francisco Gomes de Andrade back on the African coast, all used the Catholic institution of baptism to construct dense networks of relations with slaves and their owners, free infants and their parents. The godparenting networks thus formed bound the parties involved in a web of mutual, if sometimes hierarchical, obligation. In this way, all three extended the number and reach of their patrons, clients and dependents. In nineteenth-century baptisms, the role of the godfather was crucial while that of the godmother was optional. Nevertheless, Francisca da Silva's Catholic union with José Pedro Autran gave her unofficial access to her husband's godchildren.

The acquisition of slaves – much more common among African freed people than among enslaved people themselves – played a major role in the accumulation of property and construction of a network of dependents. The enslaved people belonging to Francisca da Silva and José Pedro Autran not only performed labour and generated income for their owners, but they also served as a cadre of dependents whose existence enhanced their owners' prestige. They were valued, moreover, as devotees of the *orishas*, and they performed necessary tasks in the ritual domain, first in Salvador and later in Ouidah. As mentioned above, one of these enslaved people, Marcelina Obatosi, returned to Bahia as a freed woman to lead the *terreiro* after Iyá Nassô and her family had established themselves in Ouidah. No evidence survives that Francisco Gomes de Andrade owned slaves either in Brazil or West Africa. However, like Francisca and José Pedro, many Bahian freed people took slaves and former slaves back to Africa with them. Many also bought slaves after their return to West Africa and, over time, incorporated some of them into their households and lineages. Francisco may have done likewise in the process of consolidating his position in Lagos during the 1840s.

The majority of enslaved Africans entering Bahia in the first half of the nineteenth century came from the Yoruba-speaking world.[7] It is, therefore, not surprising that Francisca da Silva's and José Pedro Autran's slaves, former slaves, and godchildren were predominantly Nagô. So were the co-workers at the heart of Francisco Gomes de Andrade's social network. The ethnolinguistic concentration of Nagôs in Salvador increased the demand for *orisha* worship of the sort practiced by Iyá Nassô, as it did for the African commodities, beyond enslaved people, that Africans who worked and travelled in the transatlantic trade purveyed. While Nagô slaves and freed people in Bahia inhabited a world in which the State, church, and most free citizens were committed to maintaining a social order based on slavery, and thus to tightly controlling the enslaved population, these Africans did not have to look far for companions who spoke their language, shared their culture, practised their religions (including Islam), and understood their signs and symbols, even when veiled (De Oliveira, 1995–1996). Freed Africans, many Nagô, became deeply threatening to the authorities in the aftermath of the 1835 Malê slave rebellion, leading to the severe punishment of those thought implicated in the uprising and to the introduction of new laws and regulations that repressed Africans more generally.

It was, of course, Francisca da Silva's concern for her sons, Domingos and Thomé, that motivated her, in 1835, to intervene with civil authorities on their behalf and then, supported by José Pedro Autran, to lead members of their household and religious community to emigrate to Ouidah. The political exodus, post-Malê, of Francisca da Silva, José Pedro Autran, and over a thousand other Africans like them, marked a turning point in the history of the African diaspora connecting the littoral of the Bight of Benin with Brazil because it inaugurated a sustained, if uneven, flow of freed people from Brazil to West Africa that would last for the rest of the century. The number of returnees ebbed in the 1840s, when most, like Francisco Gomes de Andrade, were men already working in the transatlantic slave trade. Some of these men built on the political, economic, and social alliances they had forged through their commercial or other activities to open new coastal towns to settlement. The foundation Francisco Gomes de Andrade helped lay at Lagos proved significant less than a decade later when Britain took a fateful step toward its colonization, the slave trade from the port ended, and there was a new commerce in palm oil that would soon make the town the most prosperous and dynamic settlement on the West

7 On the number and origin of slaves imported into Bahia in the nineteenth century, see Eltis, 2004; Reis and Mamigonian, 2004; Ribeiro, 2008.

African coast. From the 1850s, Lagos became a site of renewed immigration on the part of Brazilian freedwomen and children, as well as men (Da Cunha, 1985, pp. 479–91; Strickrodt, 2004; Parés, 2015; Castillo, 2016; Mann, 2007, ch. 3, 4).

The return of freed Africans such as Iyá Nassô and Shetelu to coastal areas of the Bight of Benin transformed the character of the diaspora connecting Africa, Brazil and, ultimately, other parts of the globe. Henceforth, Africa ceased being simply a place of traumatic origin associated with enslavement and trade; it became also a site of memory, cultural and political identity and retrospective longing. The creation of communities of kin, co-religionists, trade partners, and intellectual interlocutors in towns along the littoral of the Bight of Benin and in the interior turned these places into sites of ongoing travel, exchange, engagement and dialogue (see, for example, Matory, 1999). Moreover, the relationship was reciprocal. Just as Africa's children had once been sent to Brazil as slaves, so Afro-Brazil was now sending hers back to Africa, and the circulation continued over decades via the back-and-forth movement of people, commodities, ideas, knowledge and information. A living, Afrocentric, transatlantic community developed. As its members dispersed across generations via their own further migrations, carrying their forebears' history and practices with them, the diaspora itself widened and transformed, and it has now become global. With individual members and affiliated temples scattered across Brazil and also – via migration from Bahia to Ouidah and, in a later generation, to Lagos – along the Bight of Benin, and then with secondary migrations from these places extending the process to England and Australia, the temple founded by Iyá Nassô provides an excellent example of this phenomenon.

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CHAPTER 8

DONA ANA JOAQUINA DOS SANTOS SILVA

A Woman Merchant of Nineteenth Century Luanda

Vanessa S. Oliveira

Historians long ago established the importance of western Central Africa, particularly colonial Angola, in the transatlantic slave trade. However, it is only more recently that they have begun to appreciate the importance of women in this enterprise (Curtin, 1969). Prior to 1970, scholars based their work on primary sources penned by foreigners, especially European men, which created an ethnocentric and male view of African societies (Coquery-Vidrovitch, 1997, p. 3). Scholarly interest in African women then was limited to the study of queens, prostitutes and peasants (Hay, 1988). Meanwhile, the frameworks that influenced the study of African history tended to neglect women and gender as categories of analysis, prioritizing Africa's great States and leaders, as well as class and underdevelopment, as the central problematics (Zeleza, 1997, pp. 81–115).

In recent decades, the number of studies focusing on the participation of women in local and long-distance trade along the western coast of Africa has increased remarkably, challenging the image of African women as mere victims of indigenous and European patriarchal systems, by highlighting their agency in the socioeconomic fabric of African societies.[1] This contribution analyses the

1 See, for example, Brooks, 1976, pp. 19–44, 1997, pp. 295–319, 2003; Havik, 2002, pp. 79–120, 2004; White, 1987, 2011. For western Central Africa, see Candido, 2012*a*, pp. 33–54, 2012*b*, 2014; Curto, 2002*a*, 2002*b,* pp. 185–208, 2003; De Castro Lopo, 1948, pp. 129–138; Lopes Cardoso, 1972, pp. 5–14; Pantoja, 1997, 2001*a*, pp. 45–67, 2001*b*, pp. 35–49, 2008; Wheeler, 1996; see also the case of Dona Joana Gomes Moutinho in Candido, 2013*a*.

trajectory of one of the wealthiest Luanda merchants, Dona Ana Joaquina dos Santos Silva. She was not the only female merchant of her time, but she did become the most well-known due to the extent of her investments.

The variety of roles played by women in African history has largely escaped detection by contemporaneous observers. In the case of colonial Angola, the Portuguese naval officer José Joaquim Lopes de Lima stated in the mid-1840s that men took as many wives as they could support because, 'in this barbaric region only the women and the enslaved cultivate the land and perform all of the rural and domestic tasks: such occupations are deemed unworthy of any free men'. He further commented that 'it is they [the women] who have to support their husbands (or rather their masters) and children' (Lopes de Lima, 1846, p. 198). The British scientist and explorer Joachim John Monteiro, who worked in the colony during the 1850s and 1860s, made a similar assessment in reference to the area of Ambriz and its northern environs, stressing that '[w]omen's work is entirely restricted to cultivating the ground and preparing the food' (Monteiro, 1876, p. 157). Nevertheless, official records provide evidence that women also engaged in local and long distance trade in nineteenth-century Angola, not to mention before.

Current estimates indicate that about 12.5 million Africans were forcibly shipped across the Atlantic Ocean during the era of the transatlantic slave trade.[2] At least 45 per cent are believed to have departed from ports in western Central Africa (Lovejoy, unpublished). Estimates indicate that approximately 2,073,650 captives left Angola between 1801 and 1867, with about 733,000 thought to have embarked at Luanda up to 1850, turning this city into the single, most important Atlantic slaving port until the end of the slave trade in the 1860s (Domingues da Silva, 2013). In 1802, the Luanda population was estimated at some 6,925 inhabitants, including 2,832 enslaved individuals representing 41 per cent of the total population. Among the civilians, some 710 were designated *brancos* (whites), 1,060 *pardos* (of mixed African and European background) and 3,932 *pretos* (blacks). The remaining 1,223 were military, ecclesiastics and civil servants who were most likely *brancos* or *pardos* (Curto and Gervais, 2001, pp. 1–59).

As in the case of other Atlantic ports, the slave trade in Luanda attracted a significant number of foreigners, mainly Portuguese and Brazilian-born men, who sojourned or eventually settled in the colonial capital. Foreign traders adventuring onto the coast of western Central Africa generally relied on local

2 For the most recent estimates on the number of Africans exported across the Atlantic Ocean, see Eltis and Richardson, 2008, pp. 3–68; 2010; and Eltis et al., 2008.

intermediaries who had knowledge of Indigenous languages and cultures to establish commercial networks, which facilitated the exchange of their products for African commodities, including captives. Many of the local intermediaries were women, with whom incoming merchants established commercial and intimate relationships (Brooks, 2003, pp. xxi, 217; Candido, 2013*b*, pp. 136–137). Through these relationships, expatriate males accessed the personal and commercial logistics necessary to newcomers, such as an established household that provided accommodation, food and care during illness, as well as access to trade networks that increased their participation in the transatlantic slave trade. Meanwhile, these women enhanced their prestige by marrying incoming Portuguese and Brazilian traders, who facilitated their access to foreign goods for personal consumption and commercialization. The most successful of these female traders became known in Angola as *donas*, a term that originated from the title granted to noble and royal females in the Iberian Peninsula (Spain and Portugal), which was subsequently adopted in overseas possessions to designate women of high socioeconomic status who adopted the European culture (Da Silva Pereira Oliveira, 1806, pp. 172–173).

Dona Ana Joaquina dos Santos Silva was born in Luanda in 1789, the daughter of Portuguese Junior Officer Joaquim de Santa Ana Nobre dos Santos and a local Luso-African, Dona Teresa de Jesus (Barbosa de Mascarenhas, 2008, pp. 156–157; Lopes Cardoso, 1972, p. 5; Wheeler, 1996, p. 284).[3] She was first married to Portuguese Infantry Major João Rodrigues Martins with whom she had her only daughter, Dona Tereza Luíza de Jesus, born on 4 December 1815.[4] In the early nineteenth century, Martins owned 200 head of cattle, a highly valued commodity in western Central Africa, illustrating that he had become a wealthy man after marrying the most important female merchant in the colony (Pacheco, 1990, p. 181). After the death of her first husband, Dona Ana Joaquina married the Brazilian merchant, Joaquim Ferreira dos Santos Silva, with whom she had no children (Lopes Cardoso, 1972, p. 9). Her second husband engaged in various business activities, often in partnership with his wife. For instance, in the 1840s, the couple sent several sailing vessels to Pernambuco, Rio de Janeiro and the Congo River.[5] Joaquim Ferreira also

3 According to Pacheco (1990, p. 208), Joaquim de Santa Ana Nobre dos Santos was a *pardo* (of mixed European and African background).

4 According to Lopes Cardoso (1972, p. 9), she had two daughters with her first husband. However, the author does not present any source that confirms the existence of a second daughter.

5 Arquivo Nacional de Angola (ANA), Cx. 47, "Termos de Fiança" 1840, pp. 217–220.

became well-off after marriage and, in 1839, he stood as a candidate for the position of *Deputado das Cortes* (Portuguese Court Deputy) alongside other rich male residents (Pacheco, 1990, pp. 37–39).[6] Joaquim Ferreira's date of demise is unknown. His death left Dona Ana Joaquina a widow for the second time. Dona Ana Joaquina signed official documents and wrote letters herself, which indicates that she had had access to some kind of formal education.[7] She lived in a Portuguese-style palace located in Bungo, in the lower part of the town, acquired in 1824, for the appreciable sum of 1,600,000 *réis*.[8] Today, the palace houses the *Tribunal Provincial de Luanda* (Luanda's Provincial Court of Justice).

Dona Ana Joaquina is usually referred to as one of the wealthiest Luanda slavers, alongside male traders such as Augusto Garrido and José Maria Matozo de Andrade Câmara (Clarence-Smith, 1985, p. 49). Alone or with her husbands, she engaged in various business activities throughout the colony and even abroad. She was the owner of at least ten vessels, sailing between several Atlantic destinations, including Benguela, Lisbon, São Tomé, Montevideo, Rio de Janeiro, Pernambuco, Bahia and the Congo River, either on her own account or shipping goods and captives on behalf of other traders.[9] For instance, in 1827, Dona Ana Joaquina sent 449 captives to Pernambuco, in northeast Brazil aboard her ship *Boa União* (Eltis et al., 2008, Voyage Id. 47030). In 1835, her ship *Pérola* crossed the Atlantic with 490 captives and disembarked in Rio de Janeiro, in southeast Brazil (Eltis et al., 2008, Voyage Id. 46265).

In 1836, Portugal prohibited the export of captives from its possessions in Africa. Nevertheless, merchants established in Luanda continued to ship enslaved Africans to Brazil and Cuba from ports south and north of the colonial capital until the 1860s (Ferreira, 1996, pp. 18, 21, 30; 2008, p. 232; Karasch, 1967, p. 47; Alexandre and Dias, 1998, pp. 375–6; De Almeida Santos, 1970, p. 371). Dona Ana Joaquina was part of a group of traders who illegally exported

6 On the Matozo family, see Lopes Cardoso, 1971, pp. 316–319.

7 Brazil was the place where many wealthy families established in Angola sent their offspring to be educated (Candido, 2013b p. 127). The first classes for girls were only established in Luanda in 1845. See Vansina (2001, p. 276). Pacheco (1990, p. 72) references a letter written by Dona Ana Joaquina to the former Governor of Angola, Barão de Santa Comba-Dão when he left to Portugal in 1834.

8 Biblioteca Municipal de Luanda (BML), Códice 37, "Receita da Ciza dos Prédios dessa Cidade," 1809–1833, p. 78.

9 Arquivo Nacional de Angola (ANA), "Termos de Fiança," Cx. 147, pp. 217, 219–220; Arquivo Histórico Ultramarino (AHU), Secretaria de Estado da Marinha e Ultramar (SEMU), Direcção Geral do Ultramar (DGU), Angola, 2a. Sessão, Cx. 6; AHU, BOA, no. 101, 14 August, 1847, p. 4; BOA, no. 102, 21 August, 1847, p. 4; BOA, no. 124, 22 January, 1848, p. 4; BML, Códice 37, "Receita da Ciza dos Prédios dessa Cidade," 1809–33, pp. 76v, 115, 124v.

thousands of enslaved individuals to Brazil (De Castro Henriques, 1997, p. 126–7). A foreign observer claimed that Dona Ana Joaquina ordered the construction of a tunnel that connected the palace where she lived, in the neighbourhood of Bungo, to the beach, through which she exported captives illicitly from Luanda.[10] Although such an enterprise sounds unrealistic, Dona Ana Joaquina did engage in illegal slaving, most likely from her *feitorias* (warehouses) in the ports of Ambriz, Benguela, and Moçâmedes (Alexandre and Dias, 1998, p. 386; Pacheco, 1990, p. 72). For instance, on 11 July 1846, she shipped 490 captives to Bahia, northeast Brazil, aboard her vessel *Maria Segunda* (Eltis et al., 2008, Voyage Id. 900217). On 2 November of the same year, the *Maria Segunda* crossed the Atlantic again, with another 490 captives destined for disembarkation in Bahia (Eltis et al., 2008, Voyage Id. 900218). In 1850, Brazilian authorities captured her vessel *Oriente* near the captaincy of Rio de Janeiro: a total of 200 captives, embarked in the ports of Novo Redondo and Quicombo, south of Luanda, were found on board.[11]

The slave trade, however, was not her only business. Dona Ana Joaquina owned various agricultural properties called *arimos* in the immediate interior of Luanda, where large quantities of beans, maize and manioc flour were produced for household consumption, and to supply caravans, urban markets and sailing vessels.[12] Between 1823 and 1832 alone, Dona Ana Joaquina acquired no fewer than seven *arimos* located in the districts of Dande, Icolo e Bengo, Quilunda and Zenza, which serves as evidence of her anticipation of the economic transition that occurred in the colony in the mid-nineteenth century, when commercial agriculture and trade in tropical products replaced the traffic in captives.[13] In the 1850s, she figured as the largest maize supplier to the *Terreiro Público*, the public market established in Luanda.[14]

With the abolition of the slave trade in 1836, the extraction of raw materials such as ivory, beeswax and gum copal, as well as the production of palm and groundnut oil, orchid weed, coffee and cotton increased greatly in colonial Angola, to supply the European and North American markets. The new "legitimate" commercial activities received incentives from the colonial government and

10 Gil 1854, p. 14. Some authors have reproduced the story as true although there is no proof that such a tunnel ever existed. See Moreira Bastos Feliciano, 2003, p. 30.

11 *British and Foreign State Papers*, Library of the University of Michigan, Vol. 40, pp. 539–40.

12 ANA, Luanda, Avulsos, Cx. 145, "Passaporte para o Interior", 21 September 1849.

13 Biblioteca Municipal de Luanda (BML), Códice 37, "Receita da Ciza dos Prédios dessa Cidade", 1809-33, pp. 76, 88, 99, 99v, 121v, 128v.

14 BML, Códice 055, Vol. II, "Registo de Entradas e Saídas do Milho", 1850–1857.

private investors. Dona Ana Joaquina, for example, invested in the production of sugar cane and *aguardente* (sugar cane brandy), establishing mills in the immediate hinterland of Luanda.[15] During his stay in Angola in the early 1850s, the Portuguese traveller Francisco Travassos Valdez visited the *arimo* Capele in the district of Icolo e Bengo, which belonged to Dona Ana Joaquina (Valdez, 1861, p. 277). On that occasion, the overseer informed him that the agricultural property counted on the labour of some 1,400 enslaved Africans (Valdez, 1861, p. 277). Valdez also observed the existence of a sugar mill established there in 1846 by a Frenchman named Pedro Regueure, whom Dona Ana Joaquina had hired to set up the mill to make sugar and distil *aguardente*. Despite having spent more than 10,000,000 *réis* on this enterprise, Dona Ana Joaquina was not able to reap the expected results. In early 1850, she hired Manoel Farias, a settler from Brazil, who finished the work Regueure had started.[16]

The visit of Governor Adrião Acácio da Silveira Pinto to Dona Ana Joaquina's agricultural property in mid-1850, illustrates the support of the Luanda colonial administration to private investors willing to experiment with commercial agriculture. By then, according to Governor Pinto, 'sugar manufacture was well advanced and Mr Freitas hope[d] to be able to manufacture sugar and alcohol later [that] year'.[17] On 24 May 1852, Carlos José Caldeira, who was in Luanda as part of a commercial expedition, disclosed that Dona Ana Joaquina had been able, the year before, to obtain samples of sugar cane and *aguardente* from her Bengo sugar mill (Caldeira, 1853, p. 211). Most likely, the *aguardente* produced in Dona Ana Joaquina's mills was used to acquire legitimate commodities such as orchid weed, as well as captives illegally exported to Brazil (Alexandre and Dias, 1998, p. 391).

On 6 April 1859, Dona Ana Joaquina headed to Lisbon aboard the Portuguese vessel *D. Pedro,* for treatment of an illness, with eight enslaved individuals in her service.[18] However, she did not make it, dying during the Atlantic route (Freudenthal, 2005, p. 305). Following her death, a long legal dispute took place in Luanda. Dona Ana Joaquina had disinherited her only

15 BOA, no. 582, 22 November, 1856, pp. 2-3; BOA, no. 254, 10 August, 1850, p. 3; Caldeira, 1853, p. 211.

16 *Almanak statístico da província d'Angola e suas dependências para o anno de 1852* (Luanda: Imprensa do Governo, 1851), p. 11; De Almeida Santos, 1990, p. 146.

17 *Boletim Oficial do Governo da Povíncia de Angola* (BOA), no. 254, 10 August 1850, pp. 2–4. Brazilians played an important role in the transfer of technology related to the production of sugar in Angola (Freudenthal, 2005, pp. 180, 261).

18 BOA, no. 706, 9 April 1859, p. 11; Lopes Cardoso, 1972, p. 7.

daughter, Dona Tereza Luíza, and left her wealth to her two grandchildren.[19] Dona Tereza was then married to Elísio Garrido, a marriage she had entered into without the consent of her mother, that being the main reason why she was excluded from Dona Ana Joaquina's last will (Lopes Cardoso, 1972, pp. 9–10). The Garridos were among the wealthiest of Luanda's merchants and were thus in direct competition with Dona Ana Joaquina.[20]

Dona Ana Joaquina's numerous properties were probably acquired through inheritance from her parents and husbands, as well as through her own entrepreneurial activities. In spite of political and economic instability resulting from the end of the slave trade in 1836, Dona Ana Joaquina was able to maintain her position as one of the most successful merchants of her time. The diversity of her investments, as well as her cooperation with the colonial administration, contributed to her long-standing career. For instance, in 1832, she contributed 1,000 *réis* to the Municipal Council of Luanda for the city's cleaning.[21] In 1850, Dona Ana Joaquina was the only female among male merchants to make a donation to benefit the poor foreign settlers established in Moçâmedes, in the south of the colony. On this occasion alone, she contributed the significant sum of 20,000 *réis*.[22]

Women like Dona Ana Joaquina were successful in applying the capital they inherited and the profit of their own entrepreneurial activities in the local and Atlantic markets. Luso-African women in the colony of Angola acquired sailing vessels and exported captives alone or as commercial associates of foreign merchants and husbands. Furthermore, they also owned enslaved individuals who assisted them in their commercial activities and contributed to increasing their prestige in the colonial society. The experiences of female merchants operating in local and long-distance trade contradicts the image of submission and reclusion too often attributed to African women in the past. Female entrepreneurs like Dona Ana Joaquina used every opportunity open to them in a port city connected to the Atlantic economy.

19 BOA, no. 805, 9 March, 1861, p. 5. For further information on her inheritance, see Lopes Cardoso, 1972, pp. 11–13.

20 On the Garrido family in Luanda, see Clarence-Smith, 1985, p. 49.

21 BML, Códice 42–43, "Termos de Correção," 29 December, 1832, p. 19.

22 BOA, no. 230, 23 February, 1850, p. 3–4.

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CHAPTER 9

TESTIMONIES OF SLAVERY & FREEDOM

The North American Slave Narratives

Mary Niall Mitchell

'Marse Bill wus mi'ty tough on his slaves. I wus jes' a boy, but I will niver fergit how he whup'ed his slaves.' So reads the transcribed testimony of Ebenezer Brown, a formerly enslaved person, given in Amite County, Mississippi, United States of America, in the late 1930s (Rawick, 1972, pp. 239–254; Berlin et al., 1998, p. 92). Brown was speaking to an interviewer from the Works Progress Administration (WPA) Federal Writers' Project (FWP), a group charged in the New Deal era with gathering the narratives of the last remaining survivors of chattel slavery in the antebellum South (Rawick, 1972, pp. 239–254; Berlin et al., 1998, p. 92). The thousands of interviews conducted by the FWP, in common with the rest of the canon of North American 'slave narratives', the first-hand accounts of the formerly enslaved, are simultaneously a collective indictment of American racial slavery and a testament to the tenacity of the enslaved. By their specificity, and with collective wisdom, they refute the myth of the benevolent slaveholder and, at the same time, give a voice, a name, a personal history and sometimes even a photographed face to the individuals that survived.

While the slave societies of the Caribbean and Brazil might have held the majority of the enslaved the previous century, the best known published narratives come from the American South and relate the stories of those who escaped slavery before the Civil War; and while there were some 4 million people enslaved in the southern states at the start of the war, the number of book-

length antebellum narratives is relatively small – roughly 200 in all and only one by a woman (Jacobs, 1861). Together with the shorter accounts published before 1865, including interviews and oral histories printed in periodicals, however, scholars now estimate there to be as many as 6,000 surviving narratives of survivors of North American slavery; and combined with the 2,300 or so FWP interviews with formerly enslaved persons in the late 1930s, there is therefore a rich body of evidence on slavery in the United States from the perspective of the enslaved themselves.[1]

Dismissed by most historians until the 1950s as abolitionist propaganda, the nineteenth-century narratives have become indispensable sources for historians of slavery. The early black voices attesting to the cruelties of racial slavery and oppression have also shaped much of the corpus of modern African American literature. Whether the narrators wrote their own accounts, as in the case of Douglass (1845) and Jacobs (1861), or told their story to an interviewer or amanuensis, they were united in their ability to go beyond abolitionist critique and counter proslavery arguments with painful memories of their own personal experience. The most searing passages inevitably involve the loss or abuse of family members, such as Thomas H. Jones' recollection of the powerlessness of his mother watching his sister stripped naked and whipped:

> [I] stood by my mother, who was wringing her hands in an agony of grief, at the cruelties which her tender child was enduring. I do not know what my sister had done for which she was then whipped: but I remember that her body was marked and scarred for weeks after that terrible scourging, and that our parents always after seemed to hold their breath when they spoke of it (Jones, 1854, p. 9).

The best known anti-slavery novel of the nineteenth century, *Uncle Tom's Cabin; or Life Among the Lowly* (Stowe, 1852), would not have been such a tour de force had its author not relied on the documented real-life stories of the fugitives that had escaped slavery and lived to recount what they had endured; indeed, the vast majority of antebellum slave narratives published in the nineteenth century were by fugitives – enslaved men and women who had risked their lives to break free from bondage in the decades before the Civil War. Most had crossed into the free states from the Upper South, as it was a far shorter distance to travel from Maryland or Virginia than it was from the Deep South plantations and cities of Alabama,

1 See Ernest, J., 2007, p. 218 and Still, W., 1872. William Still, a free black man, gathered many such stories through his work with the Underground Railroad, a nineteenth-century network of activists assisting fugitives from slavery in their escape. The largest collection of separately published North American slave narratives, produced by William Andrews, is available at http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/index.html

Georgia or Mississippi. Some had escaped to safety aided by abolitionists: Henry 'Box' Brown, for instance, was assisted by local allies in arranging to have himself shipped in a crate from Richmond, Virginia, to abolitionists in Philadelphia, for example – a journey that took 27 hours (Brown, 1851). Many of the best known nineteenth-century narrators, however, reached freedom on their own or through less organized channels. Frederick Douglass, for instance, fled Maryland via Pennsylvania with the help of a free black woman and journeyed with forged 'free papers' until he reached New York (Douglass, 1845); Harriet Jacobs hid for seven years in her freed grandmother's attic in North Carolina before fleeing to Philadelphia from whence, helped by abolitionists, she managed to reach New York (Jacobs, 1861); and perhaps the most notable fugitives from the Deep South, Ellen and William Craft, escaped from Georgia by train and then steamboat, with Ellen disguised as a sickly white male slaveholder and William as his manservant – the ruse worked, in spite of more than one close call, and they arrived in Philadelphia where they were encouraged by abolitionists to tell their story publicly (Craft, 1860).[2]

After first doing so at abolitionist gatherings, it was through selling their narratives in print that the formerly enslaved were able to raise the money to support themselves and the cause of abolition. The dissemination and preservation of those accounts was made possible by the publishing power of the abolition movement whose radicalization and rapid expansion from when it began in the United States in the 1830s was, in turn, made possible to a large extent by the printing press. William Lloyd Garrison's weekly paper, *The Liberator*, first published in 1831, launched an 'antislavery print culture' that went beyond opposition to slavery based on Christian principles to brand it as a 'peculiar institution' and call for the immediate and unconditional emancipation of the enslaved on moral and democratic grounds (Fisch, 2007, p. 18). By the 1840s, the masthead of *The Liberator*, by then the official organ of the American Anti-Slavery Society, was carrying Garrison's slogan 'no union with slaveholders' and Garrison had declared slavery 'a covenant with death'. Before long there were dozens of abolitionist associations with their own periodicals running interviews with and publishing the narratives of formerly enslaved people (Finkelman, 2000, pp. 231–245).

One driving theme in most antebellum narratives is the narrator's Christian faith, which had helped them to endure the trials of slavery. Their Christianity

2 All the narratives referred to in the above paragraph are available online at http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/index.html

would enable them not only to make common cause with their readers – largely white, Northern, abolitionists with whom they shared a world view that bypassed differences of race and origin – but also to deliver a brilliantly pointed critique of the proslavery arguments of the Southern slaveholders. As one narrator, Henry Bibb, said of the man that had purchased him and his family: 'He looked like a saint […] talked like the best of slaveholding Christians, and acted at home like the devil' (Bibb, 1849, p. 110).

The two published narratives most often referenced and used in the classroom are Frederick Douglass' *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave* (Douglass, 1845) and Harriet Jacobs' *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl* (Jacobs, 1861), which together bring into stark contrast the experiences of men and women under slavery. Douglass' account revolves around three themes: his sudden awareness in childhood, after witnessing his Aunt Hester's brutal whipping, that he had passed through 'the blood-stained gate, the entrance to the hell of slavery' (Douglass, 1845, p. 5); his struggles to become literate; and his battle to assert his manhood in the face of a brutal overseer. Jacobs, on the other hand, sheds light on the particular trials endured by enslaved girls and women, pointing to their vulnerability to the daily sexual abuse: 'If God has bestowed beauty upon her, it will prove her greatest curse. That which commands admiration in the white woman only hastens the degradation of the female slave', her struggles to escape the predations of her master and the ire of her mistress (Jacobs, 1861, p. 46). Another difference between the two narratives is that one narrator (Douglass) relied on individual resistance and the other (Jacobs) on collective opposition to the brutalities of slavery: while Douglass appears to have been a self-propelled protagonist in his struggle to be free, Jacobs, throughout her story, counted on the support of a community of enslaved and free – hence black and white – people to sustain her through her seven years in hiding and, ultimately, her escape to the North.

Perhaps one of the most unique nineteenth-century narratives is that of Solomon Northrup, a free black man who was lured from upstate New York to Washington, DC, then kidnapped and sold into slavery in Louisiana. Northup's narrative, *Twelve Years a Slave,* offers an outsider's account of the first-hand experience of enslavement as an insider and served as a powerful condemnation of the system of chattel slavery when it first appeared in 1853 (Northup, 1853). Although literate, the conditions under which Northup was taken into slavery prevented him from communicating his whereabouts to his family for twelve years, during which time he was mostly held on remote cotton and sugar plantations in central Louisiana, one of the deadliest regions of the South for

enslaved people. Northup survived his years of slavery and eventually succeeded in contacting friends in the North who brought him out of bondage.

Northup's narrative is, in fact, one of the most detailed in terms of factual descriptions of the conditions of the enslaved and the labour regimes imposed upon them in the Deep South:

> I can speak of Slavery only so far as it came under my own observation – only so far as I have known and experienced it in my own person. My object is, to give a candid and truthful statement of facts: to repeat the story of my life, without exaggeration, leaving it for others to determine, whether even the pages of fiction present a picture of more cruel wrong or a severer bondage (Northup, 1853).

Northup became a recognized figure at antislavery gatherings after his return to the North but his narrative was dismissed as too improbable to be true by historians until the mid-twentieth century when the scholars Sue Eakin and Joseph Logsdon published an authenticated version that restored it to its place among the most valuable and insightful accounts of slavery in the antebellum South (Northup et al., 1968). In 2013, it was made into an Oscar-winning film hailed as one of the most accurate ever portrayals of slavery in American cinema (McQueen, 2013).

Scholars have continued to search for and authenticate texts to be added to the canon of autobiographical slave narratives: the historian Jean Fagan Yellin, for instance, published an authenticated 'enlarged edition' of Harriet Jacobs' narrative in 1987, until which time most historians had considered it a fictional account (Jacobs and Yellin, 2009); the literary scholar William Andrews has been the most prolific in terms of finding and compiling book and article-length testimonies by the formerly enslaved and has now made the fruits of his ongoing labours available online (Andrews, 1998); and more recently, the historian David Blight discovered and authenticated two unpublished Civil War period narratives previously unavailable to scholars (Blight, 2007).[3]

The narratives of formerly enslaved persons collected by the FWP, like their nineteenth-century counterparts, reflect the times in which they were produced: the late 1930s, when the South was still segregated and African Americans were regularly threatened with violence. The interviewers sent by the FWP to small towns and cities in search of the survivors of slavery were mostly white and those that they interviewed were elderly and reluctant to speak in detail about

3 For online access to hundreds of published narratives, see the 'North American slave narratives' collection at http://docsouth.unc.edu/neh/

the abuses that they had suffered; and some, as the transcripts make clear, also believed the interviewers to have some control over the government assistance that they received. The fact that many had only been children at the time of the Civil War has been considered by some scholars a weakness in terms of the value of the FWP narratives as a source for studies of slavery. What is more, there were no standardized questions, so while some chose to write up their work as a set of brief narratives, others transcribed the conversations in a dialect that smacked of racism.

The value of the narratives as the testimony of those that had endured slavery, however, is undeniable. James Cape of Texas, for instance, who was over 100 years old at the time of his interview, attested to being the son of Africans, which makes his testimony, gathered from a person so close to African culture, invaluable to historians studying the development of African American cultural and linguistic forms. Although the FWP interviews, unlike the nineteenth-century narratives, relied on the memories of elderly people, learning about the abuses generated by the system of chattel slavery directly from the mouths of the survivors enables us to connect with that not-so-distant past, the power of which can be felt in the testimony of Mingo White, a formerly enslaved person born in South Carolina, who recalled the day that he had been sold to a trader heading for Alabama: 'I was jes' a li'l thang; tooked away from my mammy an' pappy, jes' needed "em mos"' (Rawick, 1972, pp. 413–22; Berlin et al., 1998, p. 161). While some interviews served to preserve folk tales and descriptions of secret parties held by enslaved people in the woods, others recalled the violence visited upon family members, the violation of enslaved women and the indignity of having too little clothing and too little food. The combined memories of formerly enslaved persons recorded by the FWP, which have now been digitized and made available online by the Library of Congress, are arguably the closest link that we have to the experiences of those that endured the slavery and survived to tell their stories (Library of Congress, 1941, vol. 16, p. 193).[4]

Modern scholars continue to mine the narratives of the formerly enslaved for information on a multitude of topics ranging from the various labour and resistance strategies of the enslaved to the workings of the domestic slave trade and how it affected enslaved families; the ways in which gender and age shaped the enslaved person's experience; the creation of local and long-distance information networks among the enslaved; the persistence of cultural forms and

4 Available on the American Memory website at: https://memory.loc.gov/ammem/snhtml/snhome.html

how they have evolved among Africans and their descendants; and even the transformation of cotton cultivation technologies and how the expansion of the cotton industry affected daily life in the South. Without the determination of the formerly enslaved to tell their stories, the narratives would not have existed and we would know far less about the history of American racial slavery, in particular its role in the economic, political and cultural development of the United States.

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CHAPTER 10

OSIFEKUNDE OF IJEBU (YORUBALAND)

*Olatunji Ojo**

This is a preliminary study on the story of an enslaved Ijebu-Yoruba man popularly called Osifekunde but also known to his biographers, scholars, and enslavers variously as Osifekunwede, Osifekun, Osifeko, Osifekode, Osifakorede, Joaquim and Joseph depending on whether these writers, slavers or employers were in what later became Nigeria, Brazil or France. These many names reflect the diversity of Yoruba naming practices and the complex nature of the Yoruba experience and involvement in the Atlantic slave trade. The names capture his identities as an enslaved Ijebu-Yoruba (Osifekunde and its variants), Christian and Catholic in Brazil (Joaquim and perhaps Joaquim Mina and Joaquim Nago, depending on whether he was in Rio de Janeiro or Recife), and a freed African in France (Joseph). More than most Yoruba of his era, Osifekunde's story not only encapsulates but provides rich data on the history, geography, culture and economic activities in the eastern Bight of Benin between the 1780s and 1820 when he was sold to the Americas. His story comes to our attention because of the account of French ethnographer Marie-Armand Pascal d'Avezac de Castera-Macaya, published in Paris in 1845, with additional materials from Peter Lloyd's

* The author wishes to thank Ambassadors Alberto Da Silva and Olabiyi Yai, Professor Femi Ade-Ojo, and Andrew Quesnel for their ideas and references, Fati Deng and Blessing Babalola for research in the French Archives, Victoire Silva and Aplovi D'Almeida for materials on 'Aguda' families in Benin, Margaret Crosby-Arnold for sharing her conference paper and expertise on D'Avzac and blacks in France, and my Ilaje 'canoe mates', Akin Semilore, Godgift Jolowo, and Kola Akinfosile.

study of Ijebu society in the 1950s and 1960s, Olabiyi Yai and Femi Ade Ojo in the 1960s to the 2000s, and Aderivaldo Ramos de Santana, who have analyzed materials from French and Brazilian archives. Finally, I have spent over two decades studying the subject and have visited many of the places he mentioned to better understand him.[1]

Until the eighteenth century, Oyo kingdom was the most powerful Yoruba state. Oyo's strength rested on her size and revenue base, a substantial part of which derived from the slave trade. By the middle of the century, however, Oyo began to decline due to a combination of internal troubles and pressure from its neighbors. For instance, in the seventeenth century Oyo had sold enslaved people through the ports of Ouidah and Porto Novo, both on the Slave Coast. But, in the 1720s, the sudden rise of Dahomey, Oyo's western neighbor and a former vassal, gradually cut off access to these ports. By the 1770s Yoruba traders had relocated eastward to Badagry and, in the 1790s, to Lagos.

The rise of Lagos coupled with new political realities in Central Sudan and northern Yorubaland also redirected trade away from the Oyo heartland into non-Oyo towns. One of the new routes from Central Sudan passed through Ilorin and Owu/Ife to Ijebu lagoon port towns such as Ikorodu and Ikosi from where traders sailed on the lagoon to Lagos or the Niger Delta.[2] With Lagos becoming the most important slave port in West Africa it drew Yorubaland intimately into the slave trade.[3] It spread the frontiers of slavery deeper into Yorubaland and the violence associated with slaving operations. The major market on this route was Apomu, an Ife town where enslaved people were sold to Ijebu traders for cowries, foodstuffs, textiles, and after 1820, firearms.[4] Almost immediately competition for the control of the Apomu began among surrounding states: Ife, Owu, Ijebu, Egba, and Oyo, leading to two wars, the

1 Marie Armand Pascal d'Avezac-Macaya, 1845, "Notice sur le pays et le peuple des Yébous, en Afrique," *Mémoires de la Société Ethnologique* 2, no. 2; Peter C. Lloyd, 1960, "Osifakorede of Ijebu," *ODU: Journal of Yoruba and Related Studies* 8: pp. 59-64; Lloyd, 1967, "Osifekunde of Ijebu," in Philip D. Curtin, ed., *Africa Remembered: Narratives by West Africans from the Era of the Slave Trade*, Madison, University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 217-88; Tunde Oduwobi, 2003, "Some considerations concerning d'Avezac's *Notice sur le pays et le Peuple des Yebous en Afrique*," *Lagos Notes and Records* 9, pp. 106-14; and Aderivaldo Ramos de Santana, 2018, "A extraordinária odisseia do comerciante Ijebu que foi escravo no Brasil e homem livre na França (1820-1842)," *Afro-Ásia* 57, pp. 9-53.

2 H. F. C. Smith, Murray Last and Gambo Gubio, "Ali Eisami Gazirmabe of Bornu" and J. F. Ade-Ajayi, "Samuel Ajayi Crowther of Oyo" in Curtin, *Africa Remembered*, pp. 199-216 and 289-316.

3 See Robin Law, 1983, "Trade and politics behind the Slave Coast: the lagoon traffic and the rise of Lagos, 1500-1800," *Journal of African History* 24, pp. 343-48.

4 Samuel Johnson, 1976 [1921], *The History of the Yorubas from the Earliest to the Beginning of the British Protectorate*, Lagos, CSS Books, pp. 188-189, 206-207.

second of which led to the destruction of Owu and Egba in the 1820s and the collapse of Oyo and Ife over the next decade. Only Ijebu kingdom survived the ravages of the slave trade.

Ijebu was one of the three coastal Yoruba states – others being Awori and Ilaje to the west and east of Ijebu. The name Ijebu, according to traditions, came from Ajebu, one of the early immigrants into a region of dense forest partly inhabited by the aboriginal Idoko. The immigrants defeated their hosts whose remnants now occupy the region astride Ijebu, Ikale, Ilaje and Ondo kingdoms and Makun, Osifekunde's place of birth, one of their ancient towns.[5] Ijebu traders were the primary beneficiaries of the violence in the Yoruba interior and the attendant boom in the slave trade. By the 1810s, because of their strategic location at the terminus of three major trade routes, the Apomu-lagoon road and waterways of Rivers Ogun and Osun, Ijebu traders controlled most of the Yoruba foreign trade. But Ijebu traders did not simply sit on the lagoon waiting for enslaved people from the interior. They also pushed inland to major slave markets, hence the existence of Ijebu wards at Ibadan, Ondo, Ife and Apomu. Thus, more than any other Yoruba district, Ijebu became a trading state whereas agriculture predominated in other areas. Its people are known for their business acumen which dated back a couple of centuries; a child was expected to know the value of money and have the attributes of a trader by age twelve. By the eighteenth century, the Ijebu people had become major actors in the Atlantic trade. They bought war captives in the interior for sale to European traders on the coast in exchange for European merchandise. Osifekunde's story captured changes in Yoruba history from about 1750 to 1820, the evolution of the Yoruba diaspora in the Atlantic world, and an enslaved African's fight for freedom.[5]

Born around 1798 in the coastal Ijebu town of Makun (now Makun-Omi), Osifekunde belonged to an aristocratic family. His grandfather, Osiwo, named after a popular Orisa, *Osi*, was born in Oke Ako, located between Ijebu Ode and the port town of Epe. However, his popularity derived from his role as the royal treasurer or *Ladeke*, a probable corruption of *Aladeken*, now the title of the king of Oke-Ako. If so, Oke Ako, especially from its location, could have started as a market or toll point in the eighteenth century.[6] Osiwo's role in the treasury, market, and the fact that he or members of his family later lived in Epe could also account for his wealth and many wives. A market supervisor

5 See Olatunji Ojo, 2015, "Amazing struggle: Dasalu, global Yoruba networks, and the fight against slavery," *Atlantic Studies* 12 no. 1, pp. 5-25.

6 D'Avesac could have mistranslated the title of *Oloja* (village head/market master) as treasurer.

regulated access to the market, collected fees and fines, and resolved disputes between competing traders. Also, he, like the Yoruba gatekeeper, became rich from receiving market commissions, bribes and trading in his own right.

One of Osiwo's fifteen wives, Ogoua Ade [Ogunade], was a descendant of King Osigade, recognized in Ijebu traditions as the head of the aboriginal (pre-Awujale) Idoko group and ancestor of the succeeding Oliworo (of Iworo) dynasty. Having established many villages and communities in western Ijebuland, Osigade proceeded west to Ijebu-Ode and settled at Ilede (Odo-Egbo), although Iworo remained his administrative capital. Another group of immigrants led by Ogboroganda (or Obanta) (D'Avezac's Obrogoluda), came and defeated Osigade and created the Awujale dynasty. Osifekunde alludes to this tradition when he described Osigade as the predecessor of Beleboua [Gbelegbuwa], the forty-fourth Awujale, who reigned from *c.*1760 to *c.*1790.

One of Ogunade's sons, Adesunlu, was Osifekunde's father. Like many of his contemporaries, Adesunlu was a soldier. But he was also a man of short temper, a character that might have been boosted by his status as an *akeyo* or *omo ola* (prince or noble) who could not be punished harshly for his crimes. Around 1797, in a fit of rage, Adesunlu murdered a fellow soldier at Epe after which he fled with his family to Makun until the case could be resolved. In local Yoruba traditions, a family could be held responsible for any offense committed by any of its members. With Adesunlu in hiding, his father paid compensation to the victim's family. Some years later he committed a similar crime, after which he fled to Benin until the case was again resolved by his elite father.[7] The choice of Makun and Benin is significant. Makun was the border town between Ijebu and Ilaje, while Benin was located further away, suggesting Adesunlu fled to places where he was technically beyond the reach of Ijebu authorities.

In addition to soldiering Adesunlu was also a trader, a profession he did not just inherit from his father. His itinerant commercial journeys took him far and wide: from Ijebu to Lagos in the west, the Niger Delta in the east, and Central Yorubaland in the north. He was a successful man, as evident in his many wives and large family. Adesunlu had seven wives, the first of whom was princess Egghi Ade (Ejiade), who had six children, including Osifekunde. Osifekunde was born while his family lived in exile at Makun. He was the

7 On collective punishment in Yorubaland, see Ojo, 2010*a* "[I]n search of their relations, to set at liberty as many as they had the means: ransoming captives in nineteenth century Yorubaland," *Nordic Journal of African Studies* 19, 1, pp. 58-76 and 2007, "Èmú (Àmúyá): The Yoruba institution of panyarring or seizure for debt," *African Economic History* 35, pp. 31-62.

seventh of his father's nine children. Adesunlu's children were all involved in the family business. For instance, around 1810, around age twelve, Osifekunde joined his father on a three-month commercial journey to the Niger Delta. Their journey followed the lagoon from Ijebu to Ilaje and Ijo, fishing and salt-producing towns, eastward to the Itsekiri town of Warri, and on the river Benin northward to Ughorton.

Following in the footsteps of his father, in June 1820, Osifekunde filled his canoe with an assortment of European merchandise purchased in Lagos and left Makun on a trade mission for Mahin, the easternmost Yoruba town and capital of Ilaje kingdom as well as a meeting point for Yoruba, Edo, Itsekiri and Ijo traders.[8] The plan was to sell the goods and purchase local products such as palm oil, foodstuffs, salt and fish for resale in Ijebu and surrounding markets. This was not an unfamiliar journey for him. He had visited Mahin and beyond many times previously as a boy, trading with his father as far as Benin, Itsekiri and Ijo towns and later in his own capacity.[9]

The journey from Makun to Mahin followed the narrow Lagos channel or lagoon, passed several fishing villages near the Ilaje/Ijebu border to the region of modern Atijere, the first major Ilaje village and eastward to Aboto, Mahin and Ugbo, all inhabited by the Ilaje. Beyond Mahin the route led to Jakpa and Ughorton, the Benin entrepot. This was a frontier region traversing numerous Yoruba-speaking groups such as the Ijebu, Ikale and Ilaje and the Ijo, Itsekiri and Edo of the Niger Delta. Traders crossed political and cultural boundaries in rapid succession. In the seventeenth century the region was under Benin suzerainty having been captured in the previous century. By the eighteenth century however, Benin power was no longer effective, though Ilaje and Ikale towns still paid tribute to Benin chiefs. Furthermore, from about the mid-eighteenth century a wave of Itsekiri and Ijo populations began to push westward toward Yorubaland in search of farmland and fishing grounds as well as places suitable for trade, canoe making and salt production. Thus, at the time of Osifekunde's journey the coastal region of southeastern Yorubaland was in a state of socio-economic and political flux with no single state wielding effective control. The plurality of states,

8 Osifekunde's claim that Mahin was an Ijebu border town is wrong but it alludes to turbulence in coastal Yorubaland in the early nineteenth century and Ijebu trying to annex her neighbors. D'Avezac, *Notice*, p. 30. Santana accepted the claim. See Santana, "Extraordinaria," p. 13.

9 Santana theorizes that Osifekunde "could have sold or exchanged captives for European goods he intended to sell in Mahin." See "Extraordinaria," p. 13. This is doubtful since slave trading was a risky and expensive business with huge outlay in security, weapons, and cash. Existing evidence depicts Osifekunde as a small retailer trading in a small canoe on the Lagos lagoon.

the sparse population, and the popularity of the slave trade in the region made the journey from Makun to the Niger Delta risky. Pirates, mostly Ijo but also including groups drawn from Ijebu and Ilaje villages, were exploiting the relative loneliness of the lagoon and creeks, and the lack of effective governance to prey on traders. By the sixteenth century the Western Niger Delta was known as a pirate den. In 1699, David de van Nyendaal, a Dutch trader who visited the Benin Rivers, referenced the activities of Ijo pirates whom he called the *corsaire d'Usa*. In the 1780s, the French trader and colonist, Jean-François Landolphe made similar comments about violence on the Benin waters amidst fighting between Ijo, Benin and Yoruba traders.[10] In perhaps the best historical study of the Ijo, Ebiegberi Alagoa linked the violence to Ijo outward migration. The influx of Arogbo and Apoi (or western) Ijo into hitherto Benin and Yoruba spheres of influence created chaos as they competed with their hosts for supremacy, and scarce salt making, fishing and canoe building sites. By the eighteenth century some Ijo migrants had advanced west as far as Lagos. Competition for territory and resources led to conflicts.[11] The rise of the Atlantic slave trade in the Niger Delta after 1750 further complicated matters, as key trade ports Warri and Bonny created a huge market for war captives. In effect, piracy became a profitable vocation as bandits seized goods, canoes and sold their captives into slavery. Landolphe recorded an incident in the 1780s when Ijo pirates seized about 200 Yoruba traders.[12]

Human trafficking and the slave trade did not cease with British abolition. In the age of abolition, the lagoon waterway, rivers and numerous creeks in southeastern Yorubaland were particularly suitable for slave traders who needed to conceal their activities from British antislavery patrol boats. For example, several islands on the lagoon were separated from the mainland by long, winding, and shallow waterways and the Atlantic coastline was too shallow for naval vessels to sail close to land or find any landing place between Lagos and River Benin. On the contrary, traders on the lagoon could haul their small canoes over land, sometimes carried by their operators and hidden in the forest should anti-slavery patrols be sighted. The islands and islets also afforded many places for concealment in addition to waterways (parallel to the lagoon) that could be

10 Jacques Quesné, 1823, *Mémoires du Capitaine Landolphe: Contenant l'Histoire de ses Voyages Pendant trente-six ans, aux côtes d'Afrique et aux deux Amériques,* Paris, Bertand, II, pp. 85-88.

11 On Ijo migration, see E. J. Alagoa, 1972, *A History of the Niger Delta: An Historical Interpretation of Ijo Oral Tradition*, Ibadan University Press, pp. 26-42.

12 Quesné, *Mémoires du Capitaine Landolphe*, 1-113 and Pernille Roge, "Britain, Danish and French Colonial Projects on the Coast of West Africa, 1780s and 1790s," in Robert Aldrich and Kirsten McKenzie, eds., 2014, *The Routledge History of Western Empires*, London, Routledge, pp. 72-86.

used without going near Lekki. Therefore, enslaved people were carried with impunity between Lagos and the Niger delta.[13]

Given the high level of insecurity on the route, it is unclear why Osifekunde travelled alone and under darkness, resulting in his seizure by Ijo pirates around 5 a.m. Did he not expect the pirates to be active during that time of day? Perhaps he trusted his familiarity with the terrain and was not expecting the pirates to be active in broad daylight. Whatever his thoughts, it is important to note that slave traders in the Bight of Benin often transported their victims before dawn (analogous to marching offenders blindfolded) to disorient and prevent them from understanding their environment and possible escape routes. Whatever the case, after his seizure Osifekunde was taken to Warri. After four days in captivity he was sold to a slaver who brought him to Brazil, the biggest market for enslaved people from the Bight of Benin after 1800.[14]

Nothing is known about Osifekunde's experience during the middle passage and he offered little about his bondage in Brazil. However, if is true that he left Makun in June 1820 and embarked a Portuguese slaver days later, he could have entered Brazil and specifically Bahia, the usual destination for many enslaved Yoruba. The *Slave Voyages: Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database* shows that anti-slavery patrol operations shortened ship loading, reducing the average voyage completion time to around three months. Voyages were shorter for high-speed vessels and ships trading in regions with extensive slaving fields. An effective local trade organization was an added factor, such that prior to the arrival of a ship, traders would have assembled captives at safe locations. As soon as the vessels docked, captives boarded and the ships departed immediately.[15]

Evidence adduced above on trade itineraries between Brazil and the Bight of Benin indicated that Osifekunde was originally shipped to northeast Brazil. He might have been transported on either of two vessels: the first is the *Boa Hora* (voyage number 46781), belonging to Joaquim Jose de Oliveira. The ship left Bahia for an undisclosed port in the Bight of Benin on March 8, 1820 where it embarked 390 enslaved people and landed 353 in Bahia. The other vessel is the *Americana* (voyage number 900053),

13 William Griffith to Ussher, December 24, 1880, CSO 1/1/8, National Archives, Ibadan. For details, see Ojo, 2010*b*, "The recruitment and marketing of slaves in Ijebu, c.1505-1892" in *Themes in the History of the Ijebu and Remo of Western Nigeria*, ed., Oladipo Olubomehin, Ibadan, Bamon Publishing Company, pp. 1-22 and Ojo, 2020*c*, "'Slavery and the slave trade in Ikale, Yorubaland': A rejoinder," *Lagos Historical Review* 10, pp. 120-44.

14 Davezac, *Notice*, 22 and Lloyd, "Osifekunde," p. 237.

15 Richard Lander, 1830, reprint London, Frank Cass, 1966, *Records of Captain Clapperton's Last Expedition to Africa*, II, pp. 238-40 and Pierre Verger, 1976, *Trade Relations Between the Bight of Benin and Bahia Seventeenth to Nineteenth Century*, Ibadan University Press, pp. 374-76.

belonging to Vicente Moreira Ribeiro and Pedro Gomes Brandão. The ship, like the *Hora*, sailed from Bahia to the Bight of Benin on June 22, 1820, where it boarded 239 Africans and landed 217 in Bahia. The speed between Osifekunde's capture and embarkation showed either ship would have been in the Niger Delta for a couple of days, if not weeks, pending the sale. In Bahia, Osifekunde was among the first batch in the huge wave of Yoruba-speaking people landed there in the early nineteenth century. The movement of these people had begun in the aftermath of the uprising at Ilorin and the outbreak of the wars in Yorubaland in 1817.

From about 1820, enslaved people from Yorubaland, mostly from Oyo, Owu, and areas bordering the kingdom of Dahomey, began to predominate in northeastern Brazil, especially in the province of Bahia, where they were called *Nago*. One reason for the expansion of slavery in Brazil in the early nineteenth century was the growth of coffee and sugarcane plantations in Minas Gerais, Maranhão, and Bahia. By the mid-1830s, they formed the largest cohort of enslaved Africans in the region. The demographic surge partly underpinned a series of Yoruba-led slave revolts, the most significant of which took place in 1835 when a group of mostly Yoruba Muslims led an uprising that killed some planters before the Bahian police suppressed it. In the aftermath of the revolt many enslaved people were arrested and sentenced to punishments ranging from death to imprisonment and flogging. To prevent a re-occurrence the administration also decided to expel liberated Africans, whether they participated in the revolt, or not. The crackdown resulted in a flood of African ex-enslaved people leaving Bahia for West Africa between 1835 and 1850. Others who did not return to Africa left Bahia, sometime later sold in the south to new owners in Rio de Janeiro or momentarily moved by slavers.

For reasons unknown, D'Avezac was silent on Osifekunde's early life in Brazil, a gap that can now be filled with scattered sources in archives and private collections across Africa, France, and Brazil, and from online sources. After landing in Brazil in 1820, D'Avezac claimed he became "the property" of a Rio de Janeiro-based French trader, "Navarre," since identified as Jean-Baptiste Navarre.[16] But this was a later event. It now appears that in the 1820s, Osifekunde, according to Alberto da Silva and Olabiyi Yai, was sold to a Recife-based merchant and slaver, Joaquim José da Costa, whose slaving business tentacles reached the Bight of Benin. In addition to selling enslaved Africans in Brazil, he had investments in ships and crew going to Africa. It was from him Osifekunde received the name Joaquim, as enslaved people,

16 Davezac, *Notice*, p. 22 and Lloyd, "Osifekunde," p. 237. D'Avezac likely used Rio de Janeiro as a generic name for Brazil. Whether this was to shield Brazilian merchants (including French) against accusations of violating the 1815 treaty limiting the slave to places south of the Equator is unknown.

as social minors, customarily assumed the enslavers' names.[17] After da Costa's death in 1831 his family hired one of his trade partners, Navarre, who also worked as a broker and auctioneer, to sell off his property including a small ship, four enslaved people, and the ship's crew. The auction was completed in 1832.[18] Navarre's commission for the job, in addition to cash payment, included Osifekunde, reinforcing the global practice of treating people as wealth, enslaved people as currency, and enslaved adults as large currency bills.[19] Yai, posits the abolitionist debate in 1831 Brazil, spooked the market and created temporary selloffs. In his words, "the family hoped to avert losses from resistance, price decline, bankruptcy, like 1835." Santana thinks the sale was aimed at paying off da Costa's debt.[20]

In Navarre's house, Osifekunde became one of the enslaved people owned by a small group of French expatriates in Recife and Rio de Janeiro. While members of the community all traced their ancestry to France, not all came directly from Europe. A section consisted of descendants of French citizens who had emigrated to Brazil in the sixteenth century, while others were first- or second-generation French refugees from St. Domingue, later Haiti, who had fled the Caribbean island in the wake of the revolution of 1791-1804. Many had lost their property and investments and had family members that had been killed by the revolutionaries. Whatever their origins, the French diaspora in Brazil was dominant in two types of vocations. One consisted of artists, architects, craftsmen, tourists and explorers, and the other, traders seeking to make profit. The former became more visible after 1808, when the Portuguese crown relocated to Rio de Janeiro in the wake of the Napoleonic wars. One of the most popular Frenchmen in this category was Jean-Baptiste Debret, a painter who was active in Brazil in the early nineteenth century, and started off painting portraits of members of the Brazilian aristocracy but soon became concerned with the enslavement of both blacks and the Indigenous people. While residing in Brazil from 1816-1831, Debret documented court rituals and the everyday lives of enslaved people.[21]

17 Discussions with Dr Alberto da Silva at the Enslaving Connections Conference, York University, Toronto, 12-15 October 2000 and Olabiyi Yai, Porto Novo, November and December 2001. Yai establishes connections between Da Costa families in Brazil and Benin Republic. For details, see Silke Strickrodt, *Afro-European Trade in the Atlantic World: the Western Slave Coast c.1550-c.1885* (Woodbridge: James Currey, 2015). Santana has since confirmed the name, see "Extraordinaria," p. 39.

18 Navarre might have been chosen because of his work as a ship consignee with deep contacts inside the French mercantile network. See below.

19 Robert Fogel and Stanley Engerman, 1974, *Time on the Cross: The Economics of American Negro Slavery*, Boston, Little, Brown and Jan Hogendorn, 1999, "Slaves as Money in the Sokoto Caliphate," in Endre Stiansen and Jane Guyer, eds., *Credit, Currencies, and Culture: African Financial Institutions in Historical Perspective*, Stockholm, Nordiska Afrikainstitutet, pp. 56-71.

20 Interview with Olabiyi Yai, Cotonou, 29 December 2001 and Santana, "Extraordinária," p. 32.

21 Jean-Baptiste Debret, 1834-1839, *Voyage Pittoresque et Historique au Brésil*, 3 vols., Paris, Firmin Didot Frères, Imprimeurs de l'Institut de France.

The merchants, by contrast, mostly retailed goods imported from France, such as textiles and other fashion products including shoes, hats and perfume, while they exported cotton, fur, leather, rum, sugar, coffee, and wood. Others were deeply involved in the slave trade. The merchants took advantage of good relations between Brazil and France after both countries signed a treaty in which Brazil opened its market to French traders, while France recognized Brazil's independence. Trade records compiled by Jurgen Schneider reveal that between 1827 and 1834, over 43% of ships engaged in France-Latin America trade came from Brazil, and 39% of ships sailed in the other direction. Le Havre port saw more ships than Bordeaux and Marseilles combined. Schneider and Edouard Delobette credit Le Havre's growth to the rise of a global trade system, a viable commercial class, and strong institutions, spanning the Atlantic.[22] This commercial orientation set the foundation for Osifekunde's journey to France.

In the late 1830s, Navarre, Osifekunde's enslaver, was the local agent of the Quesnel Brothers, a merchant family founded in the eighteenth century by Nicolas Louis Quesnel, a leading Rouen-based merchant family. Nicolas, Philippe Champy asserts, started the firm, *L. Quesnel & Brothers*, in the 1770s trading in textiles and wool between France, Spain, and Portugal. Later, his two sons, François and Edouard Prosper (Oct. 1781-1850) took over the family business, having managed the family wool business in Portugal. The business entered a new phase in the early nineteenth century when Edouard, called *Le Roi* Quesnel, took over the firm. In 1819, he opened a store in Le Havre which his sons Alfred (1807-64) and Gustave (1811-88) later developed into *Maison Quesnel Frères et Cie,* one of the leading firms in Le Havre with interests in cotton and shipping in Europe and the Americas.[23]

As this background suggests, the French in Brazil were not unaccustomed to slavery and enslaved people. As shown above, many were emigrants from Saint

22 Jurgen Schneider, 1989, "Trade relations between France and Latin America, 1810-1850" in Reinhard Lieh (ed.), *America Latina en la epoca de Simon Bolivar: La formacio de las economias nacionales y los intereses economicos europeos 1800–1850*, Berlin, Colloquium Verlag, pp. 426-27 and Edouard Delobette, 2002, "Ces 'Messieurs du Havre': Negociants, Commissionnaires et Armateurs de 1680 à 1830," PhD thesis Université de Caen.

23 Philippe Champy, 2011, "De l'Andelle au Vexin normand: l'implantation d'une dynastie rouennaise du négoce, les Quesnel," *Études Normandes* 60, no. 3, pp. 5-28; Delobette, "Ces 'Messieurs du Havre,'" 2363-64; and "Quesnel", *family correspondence* [Online]," http://correspondancefamiliale.ehess.fr/index.php?4885. Nicolas's other children were Emilie Thérèse (1804-83); Clémentine (1805-40); Aglaé (1806-71) and Mathilde (1809-1907). Joseph Quesnel, his brother Pierre, and uncle, Louis-Auguste founded another branch of the family in the Americas in the 1770s. Joseph, a trader, militia and privateer, had visited Madagascar, Brazil, French Guyana and St. Domingue in 1772. He went to Canada in 1799 by accident and was detained in Halifax by Britain for shipping arms to American revolutionaries. Governor Haldimand gave him safe passage to Montreal after the war. He died in 1809 and his son inherited his firm. Chat with Andrew Quesnel, Niagara, 7 May 2008; www.biographi.ca/en/bio/quesnel_joseph_5E.html and https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/joseph-quesnel-emc

Domingue, having fled the island in the wake of the slave uprising in 1791, to the declaration of Haiti's independence in 1804, and the subsequent attacks on the white population. How many of the emigres came with their enslaved people may never be known. Elsewhere, many of the whites, freed blacks, and mixed raced people who left Saint-Domingue for the United States settled in southern Louisiana. Enslaved Africans who came with their refugee owners became an issue of concern for some southern planters who feared enslaved people who had witnessed and perhaps taken part in the Haitian revolution could ignite similar revolts in the United States.[24] Therefore, in Brazil, whose slave-based economy expanded dramatically to offset falling sugar supply from the Caribbean French immigrants fed Brazilian authorities with information on how to prevent revolts reminiscent of Saint-Domingue/Haiti.[25] Indeed, it might not be farfetched to assume some of them had slave ancestries or had black relatives given the popularity of sexual interactions between French men in Brazil and Saint-Domingue and their female black female enslaved people and employees.

Born between 1797 and 1800, Navarre first settled in Rio de Janeiro before moving to Recife in the northeast, though he maintained business interests in the southern city and might have paid periodic visits there.[26] If Osifekunde had travelled with his new enslaver to Rio de Janeiro in the 1830s he would have seen a cultural shift, having left behind northeast Brazil where many enslaved Africans, especially in Pernambuco and Recife, were Yoruba (Nago) and Gbe (Fon/Jeje), to Southern Brazil dominated by enslaved Central Africans collectively called *Kongo* in the Americas. As a result, his ethnic identity also would have changed from *Nago* to *Mina,* a Portuguese/Brazilian term for the region and people between Cote D'Ivoire and the Niger Delta. With British abolition of the slave trade in 1807 and the near cessation of slave exports from the Gold Coast, *Mina* began to refer primarily to the Bight of Benin and specifically to Yoruba and Gbe-speaking

24 David B. Davis, 2001, "Impact of the French and Haitian revolutions," in David P. Geggus, ed., *The Impact of the Haitian Revolution in the Atlantic World*, Columbia, SC, University of South Carolina Press, pp. 3-9.

25 See João J. Reis, and Falvio dos Santos Gomes, "Repercussions of the Haitian Revolution in Brazil, 1791-1850" in David P. Geggus and Norman Fiering, eds., 2009, *The World of the Haitian Revolution*, Indianapolis, Indiana University Press, pp. 284-314.

26 Even though an online search came up with a date of 1799, Prof. Femi Ade-Ojo (not a relation), a collaborator with Pierre Verger as well as Santana gave a birth date of 1797. Ojo added that Navarre was born to a Creole mother which he thought drew him to Osifekunde. Santana only cited the French heritage. See https://www.familysearch.org/search/tree/results?count=20&exactSearching=true&q.givenName=jean%20baptiste%20navarre&q.sex=Male&q.surname=Navarre; interview with Ade-Ojo at the "Back to Africa conference," Johannesburg, South Africa 14-15 July 2008 and Washington and Baltimore from 2011-2013; and Santana, "Extraordinaria," p. 29. I also thank Ade-Ojo for showing me his draft essay "Afro-Brazilians, Afro-French, and Luso-French Blacks in nineteenth century France."

people.[27] Despite their small numbers, enslaved *Mina* remained visible in Rio de Janeiro. They brought to southeast Brazil a keen sense of community partly reinforced by their small number but also their devotion to African belief systems, especially *vodoun* and *orisa*, and for the Yoruba, their familiarity with urban life. In the cities, Mina enslaved people worked for their owners and for themselves. They combined domestic and public duties such as hawking food, water and textiles. Others were masons, craftsmen, hairdressers, cobblers and porters transporting goods and human beings in hammocks and palanquins. They saved their profits to redeem themselves and families, marriage and the acquisition of property. After 1835, some spent their earnings on a return journey to Africa.

In 1837 Navarre's family, including Osifekunde, left Brazil for France. D'Avezac indicates that Osifekunde was unfree when he came to France, raising questions about Navarre's assumptions about the journey and of French laws regarding slavery.[28] Whatever his status, there seemed to be no legal obstacle to bringing enslaved people to France, contrary to d'Avezac's assertion that Osifekunde was free upon landing on French soil. Although in August 1791, the French National Assembly banned slavery thereby granting freedom to any slave who landed in France, by 1802, however, the French had overcome their flirtation with emancipation and were back in the business of slavery. The shortage of sugar in Paris that resulted from the Saint-Domingue revolution in the 1790s and

27 'Kongo' memorializes the old Kongo kingdom, a leading state in early modern Central Africa while Mina originally applied to the gold mining village of El Mina (Elmina (the mine)). On 'Kongo' and 'Mina' identities, see Mariza de Carvalho Soares, "From Gbe to Yoruba: Ethnic Change and the Mina Nation in Rio de Janeiro," in Matt D. Childs and Toyin Falola, eds., 2004, *The Yoruba Diaspora in the Atlantic World*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 2004, pp. 231-47); Douglas Chambers, "Eboe, Kongo, Mandingo: African Ethnic Groups and the Development of Regional Slave Societies in Mainland North America," International Seminar, "The History of the Atlantic World," Harvard University, 3-11 September 1996; Linda Heywood, ed. 2002, *Central Africans and Cultural Transformations in the American Diaspora*, Cambridge University Press; Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, "African Ethnicities and the Meanings of Mina," in Paul Lovejoy and David Trotman, 2003, *Trans-Atlantic Dimensions of Ethnicity in the African Diaspora*, London, Continuum, pp. 65-81; and Robin Law, 2005, "Ethnicities of Enslaved Africans in the Diaspora: On the Meanings of "Mina" (Again)," *History in Africa* 32, pp. 247-67.

28 Osifekunde and Navarre sailed to France on the Camelia, a 356-ton ship with a crew of 19 men under Captain Guilbert, consigned by Edouard Quesnel and Brothers. Prof. Yai (citing Pierrre Verger's notes) and Ade-Ojo first identified the ships which took Osifekunde to and from France. French shipping records offer more details. The *Camélia* departed Le Havre for Pernambuco on December 19, 1836, and returned to France on 21 June 1837. See 6 P 7_9 - *Armement et désarmement des bâtiments* (1836-1840)" https://www.archivesdepartementales76.net/ark:/50278/80949e131ed1ad3e237d3b3122b8cdbd/dao/0/1?id=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.archivesdepartementales76.net%2Fark%3A%2F50278%2F80949e131ed1ad3e237d3b3122b8cdbd%2Fcanvas%2F0%2F3&vx=1912.45&vy=-1445.21&vr=0&vz=2.25147. Yai thought Navarre brought Osifekunde to look after his children. But there could be an added factor. The Muslim/Nago revolt of 1835 caused chaos in northeastern Brazil and forced slavers to rethink their priorities. Moreover, Navarre was going on a long journey, hence planned accordingly. Also see D'Avezac, "Notice," p. 22 and Santana, "Extraordinaria," p. 36.

the establishment of Haiti in 1804 precipitated riots that brought the French revolution crashing down from its high ideals of universal emancipation. Also, the Paris Convention of 1794 did not outlaw the slave trade, and under Napoleon, slavery was reintroduced. This policy reversal is captured by the Slave Voyages which registered at least 664 French-flagged ships engaged in the slave trade between 1800 and 1840. Although the regime of Louis Philippe (1830-48) revived the ban on slavery and criminalized the slave trade in 1830, abolitionism in France, as Lawrence Jennings has argued, was weak.[29] The *Voyages* identified thirteen French slaving vessels after 1830, not to count those engaged in the indentured labor emigration scheme. The French Abolition Society, established in 1834, pursued a policy of gradual emancipation over the next decade.[30]

Whatever the arrangement with Navarre, Osifekunde appeared to have changed his mind in Paris as he did not return to Brazil with his enslaver and was left to fend for himself. Was the enslaver ignorant of French laws and did he not expect Osifekunde to claim his freedom? Did he abandon Osifekunde in Paris? Did Osifekunde become a freedom seeker by escaping as the family prepared to return to Brazil in 1839? D'Avezac claimed that Osifekunde became a "free" man and changed his name to "Joseph",[31] hence Europeanizing his name and dropping "Joaquim," an aspect of his Brazilian and servile identity, and giving himself a degree of anonymity, self-worth, and also making it difficult for Navarre to find him. Was he indeed free when many French continued to believe in slavery, engage in the slave trade, and had overseas slave estates?[32] And how much obscurity had he, living in France when his French was sub-par, as we will see below?

Perhaps because he was old (at around 40 years) and certainly due to incompetence in the French language, Osifekunde had a chequered work history in France. He worked for more than one employer, including the owner of a rooming house where he had stayed with his enslaver.[33] It did not take long before Osifekunde began to regret his decision and have second thoughts about his freedom. First, the French winter was too cold, unlike the tropical weather he knew in Africa and Brazil. D'Avezac said, "the winter [of 1839/40] brought back his homesickness."[34] There was a long stretch of cold seasons

29 Lawrence C. Jennings, 2000, *French Anti-Slavery: The Movement for the Abolition of Slavery in France, 1802-1848*, Cambridge University Press.

30 Jennings, *French Anti-Slavery*, p. 47.

31 D'Avezac, *Notice*, p. 23 and Lloyd, "Osifekunde," p. 237.

32 See Sue Peabody and Tyler Stovall, eds. 2003, *The Color of Liberty: Histories of Race in France*, Durham, NC, Duke University Press.

33 D'Avezac, *Notice*, p. 23 and Lloyd, "Osifekunde," p. 237. The rooming house might belong to the Quesnel Brothers whose vast housing estates are well documented. See Champy, "De l'Andelle au Vexin normand," pp. 10-14.

34 D'Avezac, *Notice*, p. 23 and Lloyd, "Osifekunde," p. 237.

during the second half of the 1830s. The period 1837 to 1839 was the coldest during the 1830s and compared only to 1830, described as the coldest since the mid-fifteenth century.[35] He also had not been in France long enough to learn French. D'Avezac noted he communicated with Osifekunde in Creole Portuguese, yet their conversation was slow and prolonged, suggesting he spoke a Creole version of Brazilian Portuguese, his second language. A poor level of French would have made it more difficult for him to socialize, build relationships, and maintain employment, and would have increased his loneliness and misery. The fact that he changed jobs during his short stay could indicate his difficulty in communicating. As he was already about 40 years old, he must have been discouraged that the situation would not improve quickly. Finally, he had a family; including a son, in Brazil that he was attached to and desired to see.

In 1839, two years after Osifekunde had arrived in France, and needing assistance to return to Brazil, he was brought to the attention of Marie-Armand Pascal d'Avezac de Castera-Macaya (1800-1875), a French geographer, ethnologist, and the chief archivist of the Ministry of the Navy ("*garde des archives de la marine et des colonies*"), Vice President of the Ethnology Society of Paris and a senior member of the French Geographical Society. Between 1833 and 1866, d'Avezac de Castera-Macaya served variously as Secretary, Vice president and later President of the Geographical Society. During the first half of the nineteenth century the Society was in a state of renaissance as members developed more interest in the history of exploration and mapping, ultimately developing cartography into a specialized subfield of geography. D'Avezac was an academic researcher more than a humanitarian, and very interested in Africa. When he met Osifekunde, d'Avezac was writing a book on African geography and perhaps had begun a later book on Brazil, two of his numerous publications.[36] He

35 On the cold weather and Osifekunde, D'Avezac wrote: "*L'hiver renouvela sa nostaligie; il revint me demander son repatriement*…" (My italics). See D'Avezac, "Notice," pp. 22-23 and Lloyd, "Osifekunde," p. 237. On April 8, 2011, a blogger posted this on "The History of European climate: "Sept-Nov 1829: cold; winter 1830: coldest in the past 300 years; summer 1830: cool; July 1832: cold; July-August 1833: very cold; May 1835: cold; August 1835: cold; October-November 1836: cold; Spring 1837: incredibly cold; winter 1838: freezing; summer/autumn 1840: cold." See https://community.netweather.tv/topic/69134-history-of-european-climate/ and https://forum.netweather.tv/topic/69134-history-of-european-climate/. The French author, Amantine Lucile Aurore Dupin (aka George Sand) authored her romantic and travel novel *Un Hiver a Majorque* (1841/42), based on her life during the Winter of 1837-1838. She lamented how the frosty winter disrupted her travels, made her husband's tuberculosis attack worse, and forced them to cut short their holidays. See Dupin, "*Un Hiver a Majorque*" pp. 55, 81, 84 (La Bibliothèque électronique du Québec Collection *À tous les vents* 49, version 1.2). https://beq.ebooksgratuits.com/vents/sand-majorque.pdf

36 D'Avezac, Eugene de Froberville, Frederic Lacroix, Ferdinand Hoefer, Jacques MacCarthy and Victor Charlier, 1848, *Îles de l'Afrique*, Paris, Firmin Didot Frères. D'Avezac's works include *Esquisse Générale de l'Afrique et Afrique Ancienne* (Paris, Firmin Didot Frères, 1844); *Considérations Géographiques Sur L'histoire Du Brésil* (Paris, L. Martinet, 1857). Also see Martin S. Staum, 2003, *Labeling People: French Scholars on Society, Race, and Empire, 1815-1848*, Montreal, McGill-Queen's University Press.

had read extensively on Africa and spoken with people in European Geographical Societies. However, at the time most of the published accounts, especially on the eastern Bight of Benin from Lagos to the Benin Rivers, focussed on the coastal district with very little information on the interior. Thus, when he met Osifekunde, he must have been pleased to see someone knowledgeable about the coastline and the hinterland but also Yorubaland, which until then had been poorly documented. But D'Avezac was also an ethnographer and orientalist who needed more data than the average geographer. He was interested in Africans and their culture. D'Avezac might have other curiosities as well—about his own family history. He was the great grandson of Pierre Valentin Davezac de Castera, a French bureaucrat turned successful plantation owner in Saint-Domingue in the late eighteenth century. Even more interesting is the fact that his wife, Marie Terese Genevieve Durand, whom he met on the island, was also the daughter of a rich mixed family of planters.[37] Several members of these families fled the Caribbean in the wake of the Saint-Dominque revolution.

For some time, D'Avezac convinced Osifekunde to remain in France and not return to Brazil, where he could be punished as a runaway slave. He promised to find him a new employer and arrange his return to Africa. It is significant that leaders of the British Niger Expedition set to depart Britain for the Nigerian Hinterland in 1841 refused to enlist Osifekunde as an interpreter. Probably they thought that he had spent too much in the diaspora to remember much about his homeland or because coming from a coastal state he would have no knowledge of the interior. Moreover, the expedition did not need him, having arranged to recruit African sailors (Kru men of Liberia) and translators in Sierra Leone. The recruits included two Yoruba speakers — Samuel Crowther and Thomas King — both of whom spoke English and were teachers, translators, and agents of the Church Missionary Society, the former described as "an intelligent and well-educated native."[38] Finally, the expedition was still months away, if not a year, whereas Osifekunde needed urgent remedy. Also, it

37 See Margaret Crosby-Arnold, "Hidden Legacy of Mixed Relations: Marie Armand Pascal d'Avezac-Macaya's Fascination with Osifekunde Reconsidered," paper presented at the African Studies Association Meeting, Chicago, November 17, 2017.

38 The expedition commissioned Rev. James Schön, a German CMS pastor and linguist to recruit African language speakers in Sierra Leone and he found twelve including his assistant, Samuel Crowther. See J. Frederick Schön and Samuel Crowther, 1970 [1842], *Journals of Rev. James Frederick Schön and Mr. Samuel Crowther who accompanied the Expedition up the Niger in 1841*, London, Frank Cass, pp. iv-vi, 2-3 and William Allen and T. Thomson, 1841, *A Narrative of the Expedition sent by Her Majesty's Government to the River Niger, in 1841 under the command of Captain H. D. Trotter,* 2 vols., London, R. Bentley, vol. I, pp. 77-79. Crowther became the first African Bishop while the expedition chose King to head a proposed British colony in the Niger confluence. Before the mission, Crowther worked with Hannah Killam and Rev. Raban on their books on Yoruba language published in 1827 and 1830-32 respectively while working on a Yoruba dictionary and (with Thomas King) a translation of the Bible. See John Raban, 1830-1832, *A Vocabulary of the Eyo, or Aku, a Dialect of West Africa*, London, CMS; Crowther, 1843, *Vocabulary of the Yoruba Language*, London, Seeley, and Ajayi, 1960, "How Yorùbá was reduced to writing," *ODU* vol. 8, pp. 49-58.

would have required sending Osifekunde to Britain, which would have been totally new to him. If he found Paris tough, London would have been more difficult.

But Osifekunde was not passive in deciding his own fate. D'Avezac had convinced Captain John Washington of the British Navy, who was familiar with the experiences of enslaved Africans in the Americas and with British activities in West Africa, to arrange his repatriation. But when the opportunity came for him to be sent to Sierra Leone, he refused the offer.[39] While scholars have focussed on the excuse that he wanted to return to his son in Brazil, it was worth considering the great distance between Sierra Leone and Yorubaland and the chance of his re-enslavement. Santana cited the war of Iperu as a potential obstacle, but it was not, since it was fought in 1833.[40] Moreover, Osifekunde's town, Makun-Omi, on the lagoon was nearly 120 kilometres away from the battle zone and protected by water. Any military attack on Makun must be by a naval force, which Iperu belligerents never had. The risk lay elsewhere. Only slave ships sailed between Freetown and Lagos, leaving any traveller leaving Lagos for Makun vulnerable on the lagoon. Another possibility was the connection to the British indentured scheme which began around 1838, and forced many liberated Africans from Sierra Leone to the Americas in a slavery-like regime.[41]

At the same time, D'Avezac's primary concern was to extract as much information about Yorubaland as possible, so it was no surprise that between spring 1839 and late summer 1840 Osifekunde had to divide his time between working as a domestic for a French wholesale merchant, Jean-Pierre Firmin Barthélemy Vendryès (1776-1848) of Sablonville, in a Parisian suburb, and sitting down with D'Avezac for many hours of interviews.[42] Be that as it may,

39 John Washington, 1838, "Some Account of Mohammedu-Sisëi, a Mandingo, of Nyáni-Marú on the Gambia," *Journal of the Royal Geographical Society* vol. 8, pp. 448-54; Washington to Lord Glenelg, July 23, 1838, CO295/123, The National Archives of United Kingdom (TNA) and D'Avezac, *Notice*, p. 23.

40 Santana, "Extraordinaria," p. 44.

41 French opinion on British slavery was diverse but there was a general opposition, based on national pride, to the British navy searching French ships for evidence of slave trading while Britain was promoting the indentured scheme. See Jennings, 1969, *French Anti-Slavery*; Johnson Asiegbu, *Slavery and the Politics of Liberation, 1787–1861: A Study of Liberated African Emigration and British Anti-Slavery Policy*, London, Longman; Monica Schuler, 1980, *'Alas, Alas, Kongo': A Social History of Indentured African Immigration into Jamaica, 1841–1865*, Baltimore, The Johns Hopkins University Press; and Rosanne M. Adderley, 2006, *'New Negroes from Africa': Slave Trade Abolition and Free African Settlement in the Nineteenth-Century Caribbean*, Bloomington, Indiana University Press.

42 D'Avezac, *Notice*, p. 22. D'Avezac identified him as "M[onsieur] Vendryes, the elder;" court papers as "B[arthelemy] Vendryes" and Ade-Ojo and Yai as Jean Barthlomew Vendryes. For his full name as "Jean-Pierre Firmin Barthélemy Vendryès," see death notice announced in Paris by his wife, Adelaide Victoire Holtz, on 23 January 1849. See "Death Inventory," Archive Nationale (AN) MC/ET/XXII/368; AD.75 Cote: VD6/74/196/1- (Paris, France) - *électorales* 1800–1803, Archives de Paris. Cf. https://www.geneanet.org/registres/view/116444/105; Arnaud Vendryes, "La famille Vendryes dans Les Antilles," *GHC Bulletin* 2 (Feb. 1989): 8-9 and "Roman Catholic Baptisms 1805-1807:" which had him as the godfather at a nephew's baptism but listed as "currently in France". See https://www.ghcaraibe.org/bul/ghc002/p0009.html; http://www.jamaicanfamilysearch.com/Members/cb1805j.htm

D'Avezac failed to consider how his quest for information about Ijebu society did not take into consideration Osifekunde's vulnerabilities. Furthermore, while working under Vendryes, he (Vendryes) was in court seeking indemnity for lost property in Saint-Dominque under the principles of French national laws, private property, and national (and we might add racial) pride. Simultaneously, some of his investments in Brazil had been liquidated by two military officers claiming to be shareholders in a joint firm, though Vendryes said these men were no more than agents or trustees.[43] Were these signs that Vendryes was financially broke? Having been 'sold' once in a business liquidation scheme could Osifekunde risk been sold again? Can we guess what Vendryes was saying about 'blacks' in his private space while lamenting his fate in the hands of black rulers in Haiti? Under these circumstances, in 1840, the informant disappeared—D'Avezac presumed he escaped back to Brazil. He was right. First, Osifekunde left Paris for Le Havre *en route* to Brazil.

Before he left, however, he had provided extremely rich data on Ijebu society and people which D'Avezac, who later organized and published the account in 1845 as the *Notice sur le pays et le peuple des Yébous en Afrique*. While the first theme of the *Notice* concentrates on topography, physical geography and natural history, the second section on the people discusses issues ranging from morals and physiology to childhood, education, industry, philosophy, political organization, body markings, marriage, food, medicine, burial rites, music, architecture, employment, commerce, the numerical system, calendar, religion, and clothing. His memoir addressed an account of the early years of the Yoruba wars, dynastic ties, diplomacy and issues of war and peace.[44]

In January 1841, Osifekunde boarded a Brazil-bound passenger boat, *Renard*, a 210-ton ship, belonging to or consigned by a trading house under the name *Grandin* and commanded by Captain Hadewick (later recorded as Hachwyoty or Haelewyelof?

43 On Vendryes's legal issues and full name, see B. Vendryes, *De l'Indemnite de Saint-Domingue considérée sous le rapport du droit des gens, du droit public des français et de la dignité nationale*, Paris, Dec. 1839*a*; B. Vendryes, *Observations circonstanciées en réponse à chacune des critiques de détail faites, au nom de M. de Montmarie, contre le compte général de gestion et liquidation au Brésil de la Société dite «du Brésil»*, Paris, Vinchon, 1839*c*; and *Mémoire pour M. B. Vendryes, directeur à Paris de la Société dite du Brésil contre M. le lieutenant-général Montmarie et le lieutenant-colonel Roise, actionnaires se disant mandataires, mais étant de fait cessionnaires à titre gratuit des autres actionnaires*, Paris, Vinchon, 1839*b.* See https://catalogue.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/cb315553411 and https://gallica.bnf.fr/ark:/12148/bpt6k5785639c/f6.item.texteImage#

44 A close reading of *Notice* shows D'Avezac did not understand certain things the informant told him which the writer confessed to while discussing his methodology. See discussions below.

(letters illegible).[45] The journey was not without incident. The *Renard* was partially damaged by a storm off the coast of England, immobilized, and had to be towed back to Le Havre.[46] In March, Osifekunde joined another cargo ship, the *Camélia* —the same one that brought him to France in 1837.[47] It is curious that Osifekunde's journey back to Brazil was with one Joseph Burle, a Recife-based French merchant with family ties to Navarre. According to Santana, Burle and Navarre's wives were sisters. If so, was Burle sent to lure Osifekunde back to Brazil or did Osifekunde choose to join a 'family member' on his return? Nearly fifteen months to the date of his return to Recife, Osifekunde was dead. On July 24, 1842, a group of men kidnapped him and took him to a secret hideout where they shaved his head, a usual punishment for newly enslaved people in many parts of Africa and for freedom seekers in the Americas. The group murdered him.[48] It is unclear if his murder was a delayed punishment for having escaped in France three years earlier or if he was trying to help some enslaved people to freedom. What seems certain is that since his murder not only took place on Navarre's property, seven years after one of the greatest slave uprisings in Brazil,[49] the killers, suspected to include powerful citizens in society, might be warning potential "rebellious" enslaved people to be cautious.

45 The ship was scheduled to leave Le Havre for Bahia on 4 December 1840. After the accident, another departure date of 25-30 December was fixed but later changed to "indefinite suspension." A final entry on 14 January 1841 confirmed a cancellation for a trip to leave for Pernambuco, with a note that the broker, Mervile had 'previous experience with Bahia.' On *Renard*, see 6 P 7_34 - Armement et désarmement des bâtiments (1838-1845) https://www.archivesdepartementales76.net/ark:/50278/ec9dfab0e8a0c0a63a4cedac6c3c2f7e/dao/0/1/idsearch:RECH_4c37a2fbb671f192399117dff4c70e26?id=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.archivesdepartementales76.net%2Fark%3A%2F50278%2Fec9dfab0e8a0c0a63a4cedac6c3c2f7e%2Fcanvas%2F0%2F56&vx=3773.64&vy=-2360.92&vr=0&vz=7.21861. Santana gave the Captain's name as "Halewick." See "Extraordinaria," p. 47. Yai and Santana think the ship belonged to *Ferrère et Morlot* based in Le Havre and owned by Jean-Jacques-Theodore Ferrère (1803-) and his in-law, Charles Morlot, both members of French business and political lobbies from the late 1820s and later headed the business club. On Ferrère and Morlot, see Schneider, "Trade relations," pp. 423-437; Pierre Ardaillou, "Les négociants et armateurs du Havre au XIXe siècle (1815-1919): une élite libérale," *Actes du 124 Congrès national des sociétés historiques et scientifiques*, Paris, CTHS, 2002 [1999], pp. 239-57; Ardaillou, *Les Republicans du Havre au XIX Siecle (1815-1889)*, Presses Universitaires de Rouen et du Havre, 1999 and Delobette, "Ces 'Messieurs du Havre,'" 2363.

46 Discussions with Ade-Ojo and Yai. Also see Santana, "Extraordinaria," p. 47.

47 For the return journey the ship left Le Havre on March 5, 1841. See "6 P 7_34 - Armement et désarmement des bâtiments (1838-1845)" https://www.archivesdepartementales76.net/ark:/50278/ec9dfab0e8a0c0a63a4cedac6c3c2f7e/dao/0/1/idsearch:RECH_4c37a2fbb671f192399117dff4c70e26?id=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.archivesdepartementales76.net%2Fark%3A%2F50278%2Fec9dfab0e8a0c0a63a4cedac6c3c2f7e%2Fcanvas%2F0%2F1&vx=1880.55&vy=-2148.35&vr=0&vz=3.69559. Business records show the Quesnels handing trans-Atlantic cargo and passenger ships including *l'Athalie, Le Bresilien, Veloce, Anne Louise, Vauban, L'Amerique, Fenelon, Francois I, Henry IV, Jean Baptiste, La Fontaine, Louis XIV, Mercury, Montezuma* and others. Some of their passenger ships to North America are listed by https://stevemorse.org/swiggum/swiggum.php?fleetkind=exact&fleetmax=&fleeturlkind=exact&fleeturlmax=&shipkind=contains&shipmax=catania&sailedkind=between&sailedmin=&sailedmax=&pagesize=50&offset=15851

48 Santana, "A extraordinária odisseia," p. 49.

49 João José Reis, 2003, *Rebelião Escrava no Brasil: A História do Levante dos Malês em 1835*, 2ª ed., São Paulo, Companhia das Letras.

Osifekunde's memoir is one of the earliest detailed attempts at documenting Yoruba language and ethnography. Thus, the work has great literary and historical value, particularly its contributions and insights on the development of literacy in Yorubaland, and the role of educated clerks and interpreters. Although d'Avezac-Macaya's suggestion that Osifekunde was not competent in French is suspicious, and perhaps refers to Parisian French and not a Creolized version which he needed and must have spoken to function as a domestic worker and shopkeeper between 1839 and 1840. What he lacked in French he made up for with his relatively fair command of Creole Portuguese and Yoruba, especially the Ijebu dialect. His extensive travels in the eastern Bight of Benin would suggest familiarity with Yoruba dialects, like Egba, Awori, Oyo and Ilaje and non-Yoruba languages like Ijo, Edo and Itsekiri required for trade in the Benin Rivers. Knowledge of more than a language and dialects would have served him well in Brazil and Europe. The only difference was that he went to Europe around age 40, making the acquisition of another language challenging.

Of related significance was his role in the development of Yoruba studies and writing. Studies on the reduction of Yoruba into writing have cited the works of British diplomats and traders such as George Robertson, Thomas Bowdich, Hugh Clapperton, and Richard Lander, who compiled lists of Yoruba words, numerals and place names between 1807 and 1830 and specifically the efforts by the Church Missionary Society in Sierra Leone to document and teach Yoruba after 1830. Osifekunde's work was more detailed. He also provided one of the earliest sources on the Owu war which triggered a political explosion in southern Yorubaland and identified reasons for the war, where it took place, the combatants, and impacts. He said the war began and was winding down before his enslavement in 1820, confirming Robin Law's thesis that the war was fought from *c.*1817-1822.[50] He was right about the brotherhood of Ife and Ijebu kings, alluding to the military alliance between them during the wars and the long-held belief that the Yoruba descended from Ile-Ife. However, his point that Ijebu defeated and annexed Owu must have been second-hand information for him because Owu fell after he had been sold to the Americas. He probably heard this news from other enslaved Yorubas.

Also, contrary to D'Avezac, that Osifekunde did not tell him about the location of Owu kingdom where many of the enslaved Yoruba embarked around 1820 originated, the memoir shows clearly that he did; but the writer,

50 Law, 1973, "The Owu war in Yoruba history," *Journal of Historical Society of Nigeria*, vol. 7, pp. 141-47.

perhaps because of language difficulties, did not understand him. Perhaps Osifekunde disliked D'Avezac's method of asking the same question multiple times, implying the informant was lying. This is an illustration. On trade routes around Ijebu, Osifekunde mapped out a major route in southern Yorubaland:

> a very long day's journey (c.15 miles) brings one to Eremo [Remo], a dependency of Ijebu. Its first town is Ikbore [Igbore], then two long days' march to Oko, and two more long days to Ikrekou [Ikereku], … in … Remo. Still farther, four or five hours are enough to reach Ekbomoso, an Oyo town three days from Oukbo [Ijebu Igbo]. Three days beyond Ekbomoso is Ekboumou [Apomu], an important market town which belongs to the brother of the king of Ijebu.[51]

However, Peter Lloyd thinks "Ekbomoso" was "an Oyo town" and a corruption of Ogbomoso, a northern Yoruba town.[52] But this interpretation contradicts Osifekunde's statement that "Ekbomoso" was in the south between Ijebu Igbo and Apomu. D'Avezac interviewed Osifekunde repeatedly to verify his data and rule out internal contradictions. Therefore it is reasonable to think either D'Avezac or his publisher misconstrued Osifekunde's recollections by changing 'h' to 'b,' hence rendering 'Echomosho' as Ekbomoso. It is doubtful if Osifekunde, a well-travelled trader, would confuse a town thirty miles north of Ijebu with another located more than a hundred miles away. It also seems implausible that, as a trader, he would not have mentioned such large market towns like Ede, Ibadan, and Iwo, along the Ijebu-Ogbomoso road, if his reference was to Ogbomoso. Moreover, he saw the early days of the Owu wars in which Ijebu fighters were involved and likely met enslaved Owus during his two decades in Brazil (1820-1837).

Furthermore, Lloyd also ignores Osifekunde's claim that "Ekbomoso" was only four to five hours (i.e. 10-13 miles) beyond Ikereku and near River Osun. The shortest distance between Remo and Ogbomoso and Ogbomoso and Osun was 90 and 40 miles respectively. These details put the town (Ecomosho) near the Ijebu, Owu and Ife border.[53] It is unclear if Lloyd's mistake came from D'Avezac's understanding of the Yoruba drainage system: "Many ... rivers water and fertilize [Ijebu]. The most important is the Ochou [Oshun], which comes

51 D'Avezac-Macaya, *Notice*, p. 36. Igbore, Oko, and Ikereku were Egba and not Remo towns. Osifekunde took these routes during trade itineraries, so his estimates of time and space must take account of stoppages in market towns. For details, see Ojo, 2017, "The slave ship *Manuelita* and the story of a Yoruba community, 1833-1834," *Tèmpo* 23, no. 2, pp. 360-82.

52 Lloyd, "Osifekunde," pp. 246-50.

53 A ship brought nearly 400 Africans called "Ecomoso" to Cuba in 1834. See Ojo, "The slave ship."

from … the Oyo country, where it is called "Ichery." It is already a large stream at Ecomosho and too large to be forded at "Oukbo." It crosses Remo and empties into the lagoon at Ikorodu." Lloyd is right that the "description of the courses of major rivers is very muddled. It is the Ogun which rises in Oyo and enters the lagoon near Ikorodu. River Osun rises beyond Osogbo, passing twenty miles east of Ibadan to reach the lagoon near Epe."[54] However, one might blame D'Avezac for not understanding what Osifekunde, an Ijebu-Yoruba speaker, said in Creole Portuguese and perhaps with a blend of French Creole. Otherwise he could have imposed a personal geographical interpretation from existing works on rivers around Lagos. The reference was not to one river but two – Ogun and Osun. River Osun rises in Ekiti and runs westward to Osogbo where it turns south to flow by Ikire and Ijebu Igbo, before joining the lagoon at Epe. On the other hand, River Ogun rises in northern Oyo and flows through Abeokuta before entering the lagoon at Ikorodu. The claim that Osun entered the lagoon at Ikorodu misunderstood Osifekunde's account. His reference was to a stream with the same name emptying into River Ogun at Iseri village, west of Ikorodu and north of Lagos. No wonder many people around Lagos also refer to Ogun as Iseri as well as Osun.[55]

Finally, Osifekunde's memoir underlines the Yoruba factor in the slave trade, Atlantic familial, social and business networks, the travails of bondage, agency of enslaved people in the abolitionist era, and the limitations of freedom. It also shines light on the complicated relations between slavers and enslaved people, the birth of global Yoruba history, and the African, American, and European circulations of enslaved Yorubas.

54 Lloyd, "Osifekunde," pp. 246-50.

55 D'Avesac, "Notice," pp. 9-10, 37-39.

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CHAPTER 11

NADIR AGHA

The Life of a Black Eunuch, A Journey from Abyssinia to the Ottoman Palace (c.1870 to 1957)

Özgül Özdemir

Note on sources

Nadir Agha dictated his memoir. It was taken down by a headman of the neighbourhood in which he lived. The memoir was preserved by a family that had some links with a professor who had bought Nadir Agha's pavilion. One member of this family transcribed the text into the Turkish alphabet and another, who had once met Nadir Agha during his childhood years, published it in two parts in 1998 in a Turkish magazine, without any critical edition.[1] Apart from the memoirs, we also have two interviews, one of which was conducted shortly before Nadir Agha's death in 1957 and the other in 1934.[2] Finally, the archival documents and other memoirs of his contemporaries provide a tool for examining various aspects of his life.

Unlike in the United States of America, where various slave narratives are available,[3] we are virtually left in the dark concerning Ottoman slave narratives.[4]

1 Throughout the article, I will use Nadir Agha's memoir as the main source of his narrative, but I will cite other works if other versions are available (Ertuğ, 1998*a* pp. 7–15; Ertuğ, 1998*b*, pp. 6–14).

2 See Unknown author 1957, henceforth referenced as *Hayat,* 1957, pp. 6–7; Çapanoğlu, 1934, pp. 19, 21, 29.

3 Paul Lovejoy states in the case of slave narratives in the Americas, 'What has survived and in what form varied enormously. We are fortunate that hundreds, perhaps several thousands of such accounts have survived, some very short and some fully developed biographies, often autobiographical' (2011, p. 93).

4 Studies in Egypt and the Islamic Middle East have recently begun to amend this omission through literary strategies as well as innovative methodologies (Toledano, 2007; Toledano, 1993; Erdem, 2010; Troutt Powell, 2012; Troutt Powell, 2006).

Nadir Agha's struggle for survival, which began in Africa and continued in the Ottoman palace, contributes a particular story and aids our understanding of slavery under the Ottoman Empire. Furthermore, studies of eunuchs and *musâḥib* (royal companions) represent another lacuna, requiring further attention by Ottomanists (Toledano, 1984).[5] The pioneer of slavery studies in the Ottoman Empire, Ehud R. Toledano, underscores the research potential of biographies despite their filtered nature. He underscores the importance of these accounts as windows into the lives of the enslaved. For instance, their lives in Africa and their capture still represent gaps in studies of enslavement under the Ottoman Empire, which need to be researched and explored (Toledano, 2007, p. 57).

Nadir Agha's voyage into the land of the Ottomans

Nadir Agha was probably born in the 1870s in Abyssinia, in a region known as Galla-land.[6] Richard Pankhurst, expert in the study of Ethiopia, notes that exports of slaves from the Ethiopian region in the early nineteenth century have been estimated at no less than 25,000 per year (1964, p. 228). He cites Blondeel who, quoting official figures, states that there were 600 slaves exported from Ethiopia, 'mainly Gallas, of whom […] about 100 would be eunuchs' (Pankhurst, 1964, p. 224). As with many other enslaved Africans, Nadir Agha's original Abyssinian name is unknown. He was named Nadir by his first mistress (see below), who gave him the same name as her previous eunuch. A description of his childhood indicates that he had one elder brother and an elder sister who took care of him when he was very young.[7] The description goes on to state that he lost his father at the age of six or seven in a raid from which he himself emerged with severe injuries. (His mother had passed away earlier.) A while later, he was kidnapped by a slave raider. He escaped from the latter's house only to fall into the hands of a slave trader a second time round, aged eight or nine. The slave trader would carry him into the land of the Ottomans. Before

5 For a biography of a chief harem eunuch, see Hathaway 2005. For short and descriptive biographies of thirty-seven African eunuchs of the imperial harem (1574–1752) (Resmi Efenndi, 2000).

6 In the first part of his memoir, Agha states that his native land is *Galle*, part of Abyssinia, and that his birthplace is a county town named *Gümebadula.* In his last interview, however, he states that he is from a village named *Limnu*, located in the southernmost corner of Abyssinia. According to Mahir Şaul, Nadir Agha belonged to an ethnic group named the Oromo, one of the Cushitic-speaking groups of people with physiognomic variations ranging from Hamitic to Nilotic (Ertuğ, 1998a, p. 7; *Hayat,* 1957, p. 6; Şaul, 2015, p. 10).

7 On the other hand, in the interview, he states he had two sisters younger than him (*Hayat,* 1957, p. 6).

arriving in the Ottoman Empire, he went through a 'middle passage' in the hands of his first mistress. While travelling with the raiders, the numbers of kidnapped Africans increased by stages until the arrival at the port. Without knowing the exact duration of this journey, he explains that it lasted days and nights through jungles and salt lakes.[8] When the children got tired, the raiders put them on mules and, when they arrived at the salt lakes, the children were made to wear sandals and cover their mouths with masks. This journey through the salt lakes took place during the night, and they rested under a canvas during the day. Nadir Agha adds that the raiders selected isolated places intentionally since they were afraid of being captured by commanders who were obliged to follow slave raiders.[9] Toledano states that the 'longer, more difficult routes taken by the slave dealers in order to avoid foreign observers and Ottoman officials increased the suffering of the slaves and raised the death toll' (1982, p. 11). During their journey, they were fed rice in small quantities, one cup for two children. Nadir Agha states that he could never forget this. After they arrived in Djibouti, where he witnessed the tide,[10] Nadir Agha states that they sailed towards the port of Jidda.[11] During the journey, the children had to stay in the stowage where they suffered from seasickness. After their arrival, they travelled on camelback towards the centre of Mecca, a journey that lasted 18 hours. Nadir underscores the fact that slave traders could walk calmly since slavery usually went uncontrolled there. In the market of Mecca, the trader could not find a customer for him because he looked too thin and weak, so the trader fed him with oil, but to little avail. Eventually, he was purchased by an upper class lady who named him after her former slave whom she had sent off to the Ottoman palace before his arrival. Toledano informs us that 'Women of the upper-class were also involved privately in the lucrative and highly selective trade in eunuchs' (1982, p. 59), and she was probably one of them. During the next three years, Nadir was taught Arabic in the house of this woman.

8 It is likely that he crossed lake Abbe (Abhe Bad) on his way from his hometown to Djibouti, since the lake is located in the middle of the journey and was, most likely, used as a slaving route.

9 Most probably, the raiders were afraid of being caught, given the general prohibition of the black slave trade in 1857. But Erdem also notes that, despite the ŞeriI, injunctions and new legislation of the reform era, kidnapping, especially on a small-scale, individual level, continued in the Empire so long as there was a demand for slaves (1996, pp. 47,107).

10 One can acknowledge that the tides in Djibouti are common natural events.

11 As Toledano states, 'Jidda was then a Red Sea slaving port and one of the main gateways to the Hijaz and the holy cities of Mecca and Medina' (2007, p. 117).

An Ottoman sharif named Avnüreffik[12] then sent him to the palace upon the request of the Sultan Abdülhamid II who had asked for Abyssinian eunuchs.[13] They sailed towards Istanbul. The journey lasted months since they stopped at different ports in order to recruit soldiers, finally arriving at the port of Sirkeci in Istanbul. This second passage through the Mediterranean took place on board a ship named *Kamil Paşa.*[14] They went hungry because they ran out of provisions. When they arrived in Istanbul, it was snowing and they could not stop themselves from eating snowflakes. Nadir Agha states that his entrance into the palace was not incidental. The reason behind the Sultan's demand for Ethiopian eunuchs related to events involving two Sudanese eunuchs and the death of one of them.[15] According to Nadir Agha, after this event, the Sultan only wanted to acquire slaves who did not know any Turkish so that they could not communicate with the other slaves of the palace. Nadir Agha must have been castrated at some point during this part of the journey into enslavement but he does not mention it either in his memoir or in the interviews.[16]

His childhood memories concerning his homeland

In the part of his memoirs concerning his homeland, Nadir Agha mentions the local cuisine, the way of dressing and bartering items in the neighbourhood in which he grew up. He states that the most delicious food of his hometown was fresh corn wrapped in banana leaves, called *kimbo* in his native language.[17] To the modern reader's surprise, Nadir Agha underscores the value of salt as a barter item. This practice of bartering lasted right into the twentieth century in remote areas of Ethiopia.[18] He also describes how hair styles differentiated

12 Avnüreffik became the Sharif of Mecca between 1882 and 1905 (Kuneralp, 1999, p. 20).

13 The sharifs' role in slave trading in Mecca must have been a common phenomenon. See, for example, a case discussed by Toledano: 'Those who purchased the boy made him a eunuch and brought him to Jidda, where he was purchased by Ömer Nasıf Efendi, agent to the late Sharif of Mecca, who sent him to Istanbul to Ali Paşa, probably the famous grand vizier' (2007, p. 105).

14 Some confirmation is available on this ship but it would be interesting to add reports written during its journey, if suchlike existed.

15 In my archival research, I came across documents concerning this event that took place in 1888. A young eunuch named Firuz was killed by an older eunuch named Nedim, who was later executed as a result of the offence. See the documents: BOA: Y..A.. RES, 45, 2; MV, 37, 7; DH.MKT,1546,117

16 For the dreadful details of castration, death rates and post-castration conditions, see Hathaway, pp. 18–23.

17 To get an idea, see *tamele* (*tamal* in Spanish), but I have not come across the word *kimbo* in Internet searches.

18 http://encyclopedia-of-money.blogspot.com.tr/2011/10/salt-currency.html

women as unmarried or married since teenage girls were obliged to shave the hair on top of their head, leaving the outer fringes unshaven. The shaven hair was allowed to grow only after they had matured and married. The first growth of this shaven hair after marriage was called *Endermamit* or *Fesesay*. The hair that had not been shaved, that is, the outer fringe, was either braided or combed. This practice, called *sadula*, is apparently typical of the *Amharas* and *Tigreans*.[19] This discussion confirms Mahir Şaul's assumption that Nadir Agha came from Oromia Zone of Ethiopia (2015, p. 10). Nadir Agha concludes his narrative by describing jungles in which wild coffee and lemon trees grew. His narrative provides insights into his native land. This aspect of slavery is still unknown in the studies of slavery in the Middle East. We should note, nevertheless, that this material requires a thorough knowledge of African history including the history of specific regions and periods, which would indeed enrich studies of slavery in the Ottoman Empire and elsewhere.

His life in the palace (1889–1909)

Although the information about his arrival at the palace varies, we can be sure that it took place in 1889.[20] Nadir Agha mentions his puzzlement when he encountered the Sultan Abdülhamid, who spoke to him in Arabic, paying the most attention to him, among the six eunuchs. On the order of the Sultan, he and the other eunuchs received training in comportment and religion, and earned 500 *kuruş* (piastres)[21] for their service. However, Nadir Agha notes that they did not receive higher education or qualifications, which were considered dangerous. However, both from different sources and from his own narrative, we can conclude that he was very bright. He gained the appreciation of the Sultan for having found a piece of information on the illness of the Sultan's son from an encyclopaedia. Sultan Abdülhamid's daughter, in her memoir, also writes about Nadir Agha's skills. For instance, he was the only one who was able to drive a car, which had come from Paris for the Sultan. Nadir Agha also used

19 http://ethiopedia.blogspot.com.tr/2008/07/ethiopian-hair-styles.html

20 In his memoir, Nadir Agha, as was mentioned, states that he came to the palace immediately after the killing of a young Sudanese eunuch by an elder one, in 1888. Right after, he mentions that his initial days in the palace coincided with the visit of German Emperor Wilhelm II, in 1889. However, in his interview and in the Memoirs of Sultan Abdülhamid's daughter, the year is given as 1885. Nevertheless, I consider the date to be 1889 since the document from the archives states the year as 1889 (Junne, 2016; Toledano, 1984).

21 The exchange value of 100 piastres in 1889 was equal to 110.25 pounds sterling. See *Le Moniteur Oriental,* (Constantinople), 5 Janvier 1889.

the motorized pedal boat in the pond in the garden of Yıldız Palace (Yılmaz, 2002, p. 98). Archival documents also list medals that he received during his service, even one given by the Shah of Iran.[22]

Another interesting story he tells us is that Menelik II sent the general Maşaşa, his delegate, to Istanbul,[23] which gave Nadir Agha an opportunity to search for his family. This had long been his greatest desire. In his interview, he states that:

> Sultan Abdülhamid II himself introduced me to the personal delegate of Menelik II at Yıldız Palace, saying: "I will introduce you to your countryman. He will ask you for a favour which I also would like you to accommodate" (Hayat, 1957, p. 6).

General Maşaşa, having a direct interest in the request, took notes based on Nadir Agha's information on his hometown. After a while, when both the Sultan Abdülhamid and Nadir Agha thought that the general Maşaşa had forgotten them, they received a letter from him written in French, and two long bags and a wooden box. In the letter, it is written that in spite of all their efforts and wishes, they were only able to inform him that his family had moved from southern Ethiopia to Kenya at some point. Together with the letter, they also sent two elephant tusks and gold bullion. After sharing this anecdote, Nadir Agha sadly states that, at that point, he lost all hope of finding his family.

In the second part of his memoir, rather than mentioning himself, he presents his observations about events occurring around him. He acknowledges the Sultan's political stand from his own perspective. It should be noted that one common point throughout his narrative is that he views himself as a loyal subject of his master and remembers the latter with great respect. An apologetic attitude regarding enslavement in Islamic societies has not been an uncommon phenomenon. In his narrative, it would not be wrong to speculate that Nadir Agha creates his own defensive position by creating a tie of loyalty with his former master since '*reattachment* was no less important to enslaved Africans, who were brutally detached from their kin groups on the continent and transplanted into an alien milieu, socially and culturally so different from the environment they had grown up in' (Toledano, 2007, p. 31). While evaluating his narrative we should keep in mind that that these people were deracinated and kinless and needed to imagine ties in order to cope with trauma of their enslavement.

22 BOA: İ.TAL, 96, 58; İ.TAl, 135, 79; İ.TAL, 208,11; İ.TAL, 227, 36,

23 The visit must have taken place in 1907 since I found a document in the archive concerning the expenditures of his stay in Pera Palace. (BOA-BEO/3184/238773 and BOA- BEO/3232/242326)

A free life outside the palace walls (1909–1957)

Look at this weird destiny that my path has taken from the Palace to a hovel (*Hayat,* 1957, p. 7).

With the dethronement of Abdülhamid II, Nadir Agha found himself in prison. In the words of Hakan Erdem:

> The dispersal of the Imperial Harem and the punishment of the ex-Sultan's slaves, who were regarded as the tools of his absolutism, began simultaneously. The eunuchs of the Palace were imprisoned. One of them, the Chief *Musâhib* (companion), Cevher Aga, was accused of being one of the founders of the obscure Muhammedan League (*Cemiyet-iMuhammediye*) which had incited the mutiny. He was publicly executed and his fortune was confiscated by the Treasury. The Third *Musâhib*, Nadir Agha, saved his life only by admitting that he had bribed the soldiers to mutiny, and by showing the whereabouts of some of Abdülhamid's valuables to the Macedonians (Erdem, 1996, p. 148).

As in the case of Cevher and Nadir Agha, the proximity of the eunuchs to the members of the Ottoman dynasty put them in a position of both great power and great vulnerability since they had the ear of the Sultan and controlled the information flow. According to Nadir, Cevher Agha, who was always interested in receiving *jurnals* (information), fell prey to this habit of his. Nadir Agha also agrees with the daughter of Abdülhamid that Cevher Agha was the target of the personal enmity of the *jurnalcı* (a sort of collector of information) who used to submit his *jurnals* to Abdülhamid through Cevher and who, afterwards, wanted to get rid of him. After 33 days of imprisonment, Nadir Agha stepped into his new life without any idea of what to do next. His own words are worth quoting at length:

> During the first days, I was very perplexed. After spending so much time within the walls of the Palace, it perplexed me to suddenly face life. I did not know what to do. I did not have money. However, a friend of mine owed me some money, to the tune of 700 *kuruş*. I got it back, it was considered to be an instance of good fortune but it was difficult for someone who had spent 27 years inside the Palace (Hayat, 1957, p. 7).

Regaining his freedom all of a sudden, he, who did not have any experience thereof, must have felt like a fish out of water. With the 700 *kuruş* he had, he bought 40 Crimean cows and started a dairy farm. In this part of the interview, he says: 'Look at this weird destiny that my path has taken from the Palace to a hovel' (*Hayat,* 1957, p. 7). In his narrative, he does not talk about the

horrors of slavery. Nor does he talk about the beauty of gaining freedom. We can assume that he still suffered from the stain of slavery even after gaining his freedom. In his narrative, it is hard to discern any conscious appreciation on his part concerning the contrast between slavery and freedom. Freedom seems to have brought him only another form of obscurity after his enslavement. Being a eunuch and black, the integration of Nadir Agha as a freed slave into the community could not be taken for granted. According to Madeline Zilfi, 'black eunuchs, who presided over the gender-segregated security of the imperial harem and of the palace's upper-class imitators, saw little advantage in emancipation' (2010, p. 129). In one of the interviews, titled *What does Nadir Agha, Abdülhamid's closest man, have to say about his former master?* (Çapanoğlu, 1934, p. 29), the interviewer uses Nadir Agha's past as a eunuch to fashion a derogatory style for his piece, making jokes about castration and slavery. In the same interview, when the interviewer asks him his age, Nadir Agha answers that he did not pay the road tax that year, which means that he was 65 years old in 1934. He passed away in 1957 at the age of 88. According to Jane Hathaway, 'a eunuch who survived the castration operation had a good chance of living into his eighties or even nineties' (2005, p. 21). During his long life, he experienced terrible events including, to name but a few, losing his father in one of the raids, falling into the hands of slave traders and undergoing castration, which were all part of the evils of slavery. It is hard to understand his real feeling about the institution, which he does not mention during his narration and interviews. Nevertheless, he survived slavery and won the affection of the Sultan Abdülhamid by impressing the latter with his knowledge. With the dispersal of the imperial harem, all eunuchs found themselves 'free' all of a sudden and many faced a difficult predicament, as newspapers of the period indicate (Kandemir, 1936, pp. 66–70; 1950, pp. 432–433, 438). Nadir Agha was one of the 'luckiest' ones, as he had his own pavilion and a servant to serve him at home. He was also the only one, to our knowledge, who left behind memoirs. The positive aspects of his life story have prompted some historians to view either Ottoman or Islamic forms of slavery as more or less benign because of a sociocultural understanding that provided slaves with the opportunity to rise to a high social status. Against those interpretations, his life story shows that Ottoman slavery was also injurious, having deprived Nadir Agha not only of his freedom and dignity but also exposed him to all sorts of physical and psychological violence.

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CHAPTER 12

NICHOLAS SAID OF BORNO

American Civil War Veteran

Mohammed Bashir Salau

Introduction

Nicholas Said (originally known as Mohammed Ali ibn Sa'id) published his autobiography in 1873. Previous studies have recognized the significance of this autobiography, presenting it as an African Muslim/American Muslim slave narrative or the work of a 'Carolinian immigrant'. Departing from earlier approaches, this study highlights the vivid details of slavery in Africa described in the autobiography, and suggests that Said's life experiences and his observations on slavery constitute an important contribution to the historiography of the subject. Also, this study indicates that the narrative was more than that of an African Muslim/American Muslim slave or a 'Carolinian immigrant'.

Nicholas Said was initially known only through a ten-page article that appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly* in 1867 (Unknown author, 1867; Austin, 1984, 1997). Although Allan D. Austin and others who commented on that article wrongly assumed that Said did not produce a full-length book during his lifetime (Tabish et al., 2005, pp. 214-218), it became clear by 2001 that he had, in fact, published an autobiography in 1873 (Said, 1873). This particular 224-page narrative, on which I draw primarily in this study, was written largely to showcase the accomplishment of an African and to inspire other Africans to similarly undertake 'systematic efforts in the direction of mental culture and

improvement' (Said, 1873, p. v). It includes a preface and thirteen chapters dealing with different topics. Also included in the book is a supplementary chapter on Bladen Springs in Alabama.

Although published in the United States of America, Said's narrative differs in two major respects from others published there. First, Said was not enslaved in the United States. This case was not altogether unique; Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua had not been a slave in the United States but rather in Brazil and escaped from slavery in New York, publishing his narrative in Detroit (Law and Lovejoy, 2007). Unlike Baquaqua's narrative, however, Said's account details the author's experiences of slavery in Africa and the Middle East. Second, unlike most ex-slave narratives published in the United States, Said's autobiography was by an African-born former slave rather than by a person born into slavery in the Americas.

Said's narrative was written in English exclusively in the first person, making it clear that he, unlike Baquaqua and other former slaves, did not need an editor or mediator to have his story told. The narrative is virtually free from grammatical deficiencies and other problems, which reflects his amazing command of language. Said presents the voice of a slave as well as that of an African critic of slavery. He describes his African homeland, his enslavement, his unsuccessful attempts to return to West Africa, his early career as a valet and his evolution as a lecturer and teacher in several institutions in the United States. In addition to these remarkable achievements, the book excels in providing the reader with vivid details of slavery in Africa. He is strangely silent, however, on his emancipation, which must have taken place in Istanbul, before he travelled to Russia.

Precious Muhammad rediscovered Said's full autobiography in 2000, which now allows an analysis of its place within the literature on Muslim American and African American histories (Muhammad, 2001). Muhammad argues that Said, who associated with some of the most influential Americans of his time, offers a good example of an African with a distinctly Islamic heritage who taught many Christians in the Deep South. She also observes the significance of the fact that he was never a slave in the United States but, instead, witnessed the aftermath of slavery, after the Civil War, experiencing the post-slavery society of the United States.

While Muhammad's discussion is important, she provides little further analysis. Indeed, she does not authenticate the details of Said's account or add to the documentation on Said's life.[1] Other scholars now refer to the autobiography as

1 Furthermore, she does not compare the *Atlantic Monthly* article with his book-length autobiography.

well as the *Atlantic Monthly* article (these works include Al-Ahari, 2006, pp. 7–36, 99–189; Dabovic, 2012; Horn, 2012; Lixl, 2009, pp. 123–127). However, only Paul E. Lovejoy has attempted to examine the context of Said's life more fully (Lovejoy, 2017). For instance, most of the scholarship concentrates on presenting Said's autobiography as an African Muslim or American Muslim slave narrative or as the work of a 'Carolinian immigrant', but, in so doing, they mainly rehash what is already known and only reproduce the text (see, for instance, Lixl, 2009). Thus, little is said about the contributions of Said's life experiences to the historiography of slavery in Africa and elsewhere. Because Said's article in the *Atlantic Monthly* says relatively little about slavery, similar problems are evident in the earlier work of Austin and others who mainly draw on this particular material.[2] Departing from this approach, I suggest that Said's observations on slavery in his autobiography (1873) constitute an important contribution to the historiography of the subject, and that his narrative was more than that of an African Muslim or American Muslim slave and was not that of a 'Carolinian immigrant'.

Said's life in Africa

Said was born in Kukawa, the capital city of Borno, possibly in 1831, and certainly not later than 1836. At the time of his birth, the Seifawa dynasty, politically dominant in Borno and Kanem since the fifteenth century, had collapsed. The demise of this dynasty was tied to the jihad of Usman dan Fodio, which started in Hausaland in 1804. From about 1806, inspired by the jihad, the Fulani of Borno organized revolts against the Seifawa dynasty. Ultimately, they overran Birnin Gazargamo, the capital, and established emirates at Hadejia and Katagum territory that had once been in western Borno. Following the increasing influence of the Fulani, the besieged Seifawa dynasty turned to Muhammad al-Amin al-Kanemi, a prominent Muslim cleric who had a significant following, for support. Al-Kanemi, on agreeing to help the Seifawa, eventually restrained the Fulani revolt although, in the context of the clash between the Fulani and the Seifawa, many people were enslaved. Ultimately, al-Kanemi emerged as the virtual ruler of Borno (Cohen, 1967, pp. 20–29; Brenner, 1973). Some reflection on the circumstances surrounding the emergence of Muhammad al-Kanemi as the ruler of Borno and on the reign of his son and successor, Shehu Umar, appears in Said's narrative and, on close examination, his account proves remarkably accurate.

2 Besides Austin's work, other studies that primarily draw on this source include Diouf, 1998 and Gomez, 2005.

The political history of Borno indicates that the State often recruited officers from among slaves and that each slave officer was given the title of Kachella. Al-Kanemi, after assuming power as the de facto ruler of Borno, further empowered those holding the position of Kachella, so that many of them became powerful military generals, controlling regiments consisting of thousands of followers (Bovill, 1966, vol. 3, p. 321; Cohen, 1967, pp. 20–29; Fisher, 2001, pp. 245–56). Said's report suggests that his father was one of the most powerful Kachella in early nineteenth-century Borno, but the fact that his father held this specific political title also indicates his slave status. In addition to internal evidence from Said's narrative, extant primary and secondary sources confirm that his father, Kachella Barka Gana was a devout Muslim as well as a royal slave appointed by al-Kanemi. According to these sources, although Barka Gana was wealthy and a capable military commander, he was dispossessed of his position and wealth when al-Kanemi became displeased with him in the 1820s, at the time British Ambassador Dixon Denham visited Borno. Barka Gana was, nevertheless, reinstated to that position after the intervention of al-Kanemi's companions (Brenner, 1973, pp. 45–46, 100–101, 245–46.).

Said tells us that his father was 'the son of the ruling chief of Molgoy, a small country south of, and tributary to Bornou' (Said, 1873, p. 9). Ethnographic studies indicate that Molgoy is another name for the non-Muslim Margi people who inhabited small vassal chieftaincies on the southern frontier of Borno (Askell, 1912, pp. 134, 144–140; Barth, 1857–1859, vol. 2, pp. 104–105). Despite his origins in a non-Muslim society, Said's father became a Muslim, held an important political title during the reign of al-Kanemi and had four wives. The Muslim identity is also confirmed by Said's name. In addition, Said refers to his father as Barka Gana, which is a Kanuri name given to someone who is named after someone else in the family, usually a grandfather or uncle. It really means 'younger' and, hence, 'little' in terms of age not height. Furthermore, the name does not itself indicate that his father was a slave, as was suggested in an earlier study (Kirk-Greene, Newman, 1971, pp. 39, 104).

In effect, Said's father was a royal slave, while his mother, Dalia, is said to have been a freeborn daughter of a Mandara chief. The rulers of Mandara and many of their followers had embraced Islam prior to the nineteenth century and, despite occasional friction with Borno, they formed an anti-Fulani alliance with al-Kanemi. Thus, Said's mother hailed from a Muslim-dominated region, and her Muslim name, Dalia,[3] confirms her religion. Said tells us that his mother's marriage to his father was arranged and that she had 19 children including himself.

3 Dalia is an Arabic name meaning 'gentle' or 'flower'.

Said spent most of his childhood in Kukawa with his parents. In his narrative, he describes the customs, economic activities, geographical and political conditions in Kukawa and other parts of Borno and, in the process, confirms what we know about Borno in those years. In addition, he tells us that, as a child, he interacted with the sons of influential people, enjoyed hunting and took part in sham battles. It is clear that his childhood coincided with many important events. After the death of his father, Said continued his Islamic education in a leading school in Kukawa, under one Malam Katory. Furthermore, he indicates that it was during his third year in Malam Katory's school that he was enslaved.

As noted elsewhere, however, questions arise about one significant detail in his account. Who was the European whom he said he saw in Kukawa in the early 1850s, the British diplomat, Heinrich Barth, as he claimed, or someone else? In his autobiography, he indicates that he met Barth in London, which may be true, but in any event, he clearly knew who Barth was when he published his autobiography in 1873. Barth was not exactly a household name at the time and hence a question arises as to how Said had access to Barth's publications in English, which had only appeared in the United States in 1859 (Lovejoy, 2017). Was Said influenced by Barth's account of his homeland? Further study is required here.

Said's life as a slave

Prior to Said's enslavement, long-distance commerce involving the movement of commodities toward the Atlantic and Mediterranean coasts had been an important part of the economy of central Sudan, including Borno. Tuareg and other merchants responsible for the movement of these commodities across the Sahara were also slave traders, and historical sources reveal that slaves were acquired in war and sometimes through kidnapping.[4] This was Said's fate. One day when Said and his friends were hunting near Lake Chad, Tuareg raiders kidnapped him and some of his friends. As Said notes, while he may have already been technically a slave because of the official status of his father, on that day, he became a slave subjected to the slave trade.

Said never returned to Borno subsequently and never saw his mother again, although he apparently had the opportunity to do so. The Tuareg raiders moved

4 For further details on long-distance trade and central Sudan see, for instance, Adamu, 1978 and Lovejoy and Baier, 1975.

him and other captives to Katsina where he was purchased by a merchant named Abd-el-Kader. From Katsina, Abd-el-Kader and his entourage, including Said, joined a caravan that was headed for North Africa. They passed along one of the six famous trans-Saharan trade routes, the route from Bilma through Murzuk to Tripoli, which Barth and Dorugu describe in their separate accounts (Barth, 1857–1859, vol. I, pp. 150–488 and vol. III, pp. 626–630; Kirk-Greene and Newman, 1971). At Murzuk, Said was purchased by Abdy Aga, a Turkish officer in Ibrahim Pasha's army. He lived briefly with his new master before he was relocated to Tripoli to serve Hadji Daoud, Abdy Aga's father. As a slave, Said accompanied Hadji Daoud to Mecca and Medina, visiting many historic cities including Alexandria, Cairo, Khartoum, Massawa and Muscat. Unfortunately, Hadji Daoud's assets in Tripoli were consumed by fire while he was on pilgrimage, or Said's life would undoubtedly have taken a different course than the one that lay before him. Probably, he would have remained in North Africa. Instead, Hadji Daoud sold Said to an agent who took him to Izmir (Smyrna), where he was sold to one Fuad Pacha, who took him to Istanbul. After some time – Said says about nine months – Fuad Pacha passed him on to his brother-in-law, Reschid Pacha, who in turn, ultimately, presented him to the Russian ambassador, Alexandr Sergeyevich, Prince Menshikov (1787–1867). After gaining custody of Said, Menshikov sent him to St. Petersburg in Russia, although Said also claims that he first went to Odessa on the Black Sea. Since slavery no longer existed in Russia (Hellie, 1982), Menshikov must have freed him before he arrived in St. Petersburg.

In his years as a slave, Said was employed in various capacities including those of tobacco pipe cleaner, travel companion, and shop boy and assistant. However, he also reports that slaves could be used in various capacities, and that eunuchs and concubines were common in Istanbul as they were in Borno. Although Said and his masters were Muslims during the period of his enslavement, not all his masters treated him kindly. In violation of Islamic law, the Tuareg raiders who enslaved him treated him like they would have 'wild beasts' (Said, 1873, p. 42). Abd-el-Kader is reported to have beaten him on many occasions, although he is also said to have offered him incentives and otherwise treated him mildly, especially when he revealed that he was Barka Gana's son. Said tells us that he was treated with extreme kindness by Hadji Daoud and his other Turkish masters.

As Said notes, slaves resisted enslavement and negotiated conditions of servitude in many ways. He recounts a story of slaves who escaped from Tuareg merchants, and he mentions other slaves who sought freedom. Also, he tells us that he tried various strategies either to end his enslavement or to soften

its harshness. For instance, he recounts how he sought better treatment and attempted to regain his freedom through ransoming (or by mentioning that he was Barka Gana's son) and how, on one occasion, he begged to be sold to another master. Similarly, he tells us that, as a slave in Islamic societies, he remained a devout Muslim.

Said as a freeman

Although Said remained in Menshikov's household after he was freed, his maltreatment by other servants compelled him to accept the position of valet with Prince Nicholas Vassilievitch Troubetzkoy (1828–1900). While he worked for Troubetzkoy, he travelled to many cities in Russia, Austria, Italy, France, Germany, Switzerland and Great Britain. Although Said's narrative provides descriptions of some of the cities he visited in Europe and also offers information about diverse issues, including details regarding his master's household and prison conditions in Rome, he offers relatively little detail regarding his relationship with women and on women in general, and it is not always possible to verify what Said experienced and what he read about or heard.

Troubetzkoy was a pious Christian and required the conversion of Said to the Russian Orthodox Church. Following his baptism in 1855, he was given the name Nicholas and was given more privileges in Troubetzkoy's household. Said was particularly adept at learning languages, as demonstrated during his upbringing in Borno and his time in the Ottoman Empire. Under Troubetzkoy, he learned French and also claimed that he had learned the Armenian language while in Russia. Overall, as a slave and a freeman, Said acquired at least eleven languages, including English, the last language he learned and the one in which he composed his autobiography and his account in the *Atlantic Monthly*. He also gained considerable knowledge about Europe and North America and adapted quickly to alien cultures. These qualities suggest that he was indeed a cosmopolitan person.

In the period following his enslavement, Said often wished to return to his homeland. Although he eventually convinced Troubetzkoy to allow him to visit Borno for a year, in 1859, his wish to return to his homeland was never realized. Indeed, Said was diverted from returning by Isaac Jacobus Rochussen (1829–1907), who hired him to accompany him and his newly wedded wife to North America and the Caribbean.

Visiting North America did not undermine his desire to travel to Africa. However, after visiting various parts of the Caribbean and leaving New York for

Canada, he was swindled out of £300 and left penniless by his employers. In this context, he was forced to relocate to Detroit based on the support and advice of one Reverend D. T. Johnston. In Detroit, Said became a teacher, and in 1863, he enlisted in the all-black 55th Massachusetts Regiment that fought in the Civil War, indicating his solidarity with those committed to ending slavery. It is clear that he falsified several dates after the early 1860s, to suppress his stint in the 55th Regiment, probably because of the danger of reprisals from the Ku Klux Klan. Thanks to Civil War records and newspaper stories, however, we know about his experiences in the United States during the Civil War and the period of Reconstruction that followed.

After the Civil War, Said taught school in Charleston and then elsewhere in Georgia for two years before moving to the region of St. Stephens in Alabama, where he established his own school for black children. In his account, Said tells us that he embraced Swedenborgianism, apparently in Charleston, without revealing who introduced him to this fringe Christian sect of Swedish origin. In Alabama, Said also devoted much time to writing essays and may have started or even completed his autobiography. In 1882, Said was living in Brownsville, Tennessee, but he either died there or dropped out of sight that same year.

Said's narrative is silent on his experiences in the Union Army and on many other issues, but it does reflect his African origins, his enslavement, and his endurance during the desert crossing. Also, his account focuses on his educational mission as well as his quest for promoting liberty and returning to Africa. Given its broad scope, we can see that the narrative is much more than a slave narrative. Said's life helps to elaborate on the contention that African-born slaves sometimes adapted to dramatic changes and new experiences.

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CHAPTER 13

FROM SLAVERY TO FREEDOM

The Interesting Narrative of Gustavus Vassa, the African (aka Olaudah Equiano)

Chika Unigwe

Gustavus Vassa was born circa 1742 in an Igbo village in the Bight of Biafra, in what is now known as Nigeria. Vassa names his birthplace as Essaka. There have been various unsuccessful attempts by scholars to identify its precise location. A nation, by his account, of rich soil, dancers, musicians and poets. He was named in the hope that he would be a man of importance. In Igbo culture, the name a child is given bears the hopes that the parents place on his shoulders. Names are, in a way, potentially prophetic. A popular Igbo proverb says that *a guo onye afa, chi analu*, which translates to, 'when a child is named, the gods hear'. The implication is that the gods then lead the child towards a fulfilment of his name. He writes of this, 'our children were named from some event, some circumstance, or fancied foreboding at the time of their birth' (Equiano, 2004, p. 55).

At birth, he was named Olaudah Equiano. Although scholars have suggested various possible spellings of Equiano, all of them starting with the letter 'E', I would argue, however, that considering what he says the meaning of his name is and the fact that Vassa consistently uses 'E' for the Igbo 'I', for instance, when he writes 'Eboe' for 'I(g)bo', it is likely to be Ikwueanu: 'when you speak, people will listen'. 'Olaudah', according to him, translates to 'vicissitude or fortunate, also one favoured, and having a loud voice and well spoken' (Equiano, p. 55). His father was a titled man, an Embrenche who had many children, some of whom

died in childhood. 'Embrenche' is most likely an adulterated spelling of *onye (g) buru ichi*, that is, one with *ichi* marks. Vassa was the youngest son.

Gustavus Vassa always used the name 'Vassa', rather than 'Equiano'. It was also the name he passed on to his children. It is therefore the name he preferred to go by. He probably used his birth name as well as his legal name on his autobiography to lend more credence and authenticity to his story. It is my belief that he also might have made the very deliberate choice to also use his birth name on the cover of his autobiography because he was narrating events that began when he was still called Olaudah Equiano. It is my conjecture, therefore, that this was a conscious conflation of the two names so that readers see the evolution of the young African boy, taken from home, who not only learned to read and write, but also bought his freedom, joined an expedition to the North Pole, helped a prominent scientist with his experiments and became a Christian and an Englishman. If his readers never forget for one second that Equiano was also Vassa, might they not be more inclined to reject slave trade?

When he was about 12 years old, Vassa was home alone with his only sister when they were kidnapped by a gang of three local slave traders. Because of the spate of kidnappings, when the grownups went to work on the farms, children were left behind to mind the compounds and raise an alarm if they sighted kidnappers. Vassa had escaped an initial kidnapping attempt. Soon, Vassa and his sister were separated, sold on to different masters. Vassa never saw his sister again. After months of travelling in his own country and going through multiple masters, Vassa was brought to the sea coast where he saw a slave ship for the very first time. He describes this in his autobiography:

> Thus I continued to travel. Sometimes by land, sometimes by water…till, at the end of six or seven months after I had been kidnapped, I arrived at the sea coast… The first object which saluted my eyes when I arrived on the coast was the sea, and a slave ship, which was then riding at anchor, and waiting for its cargo. These filled me with astonishment, which was soon converted into terror when I was carried on board. I was immediately handled and tossed up to see if I were sound…and I was now persuaded that I had gotten into a world of bad spirits…. When I…saw…a multitude of black people…chained together, every one of their countenances expressing dejection and sorrow, I no longer doubted my fate… (Equiano, pp. 69–70).

He left Africa probably via the slave port of Bonny, circa 1754. He was named Michael on board the slave ship. Vassa documents in detail the horrors of the Middle Passage: the brutal conditions of the slaves on board the slave ship, the trepidation which accompanied them during the crossing and the

perception of himself and his unfortunate mates that the white men on board were cannibals who meant to eat them:

> I was soon put down under the decks, and there I received such a salutation in my nostrils as I had never experienced in my life: so that, with the loathsomeness of the stench, and crying together, I became so sick and low that I was not able to eat, nor had I the least desire to taste anything. I now wished for the last friend, death, to relieve me… (Equiano, pp. 69–70).

As a political document, such a detailed, visceral description of life on board the slave ship in Vassa's autobiography was very useful in eliciting sympathy, and Vassa was well aware of this.

He crossed the Atlantic to Barbados and then to Virginia, where he was renamed Jacob. After a few days in Virginia, he was bought by Michael Henry Pascal, a British naval captain, for £40. Captain Pascal took him to England around early 1755. His new master renamed him Gustavus Vassa, the name he would come to bear for the rest of his life. It is worth noting, as Lovejoy has argued, that Vassa recounts in his autobiography that he initially rejected the name given to him by Pascal, that he in fact refused to answer to the name because he was unwilling to let go of the name Jacob. Lovejoy speculates, convincingly, that Vassa's protestation could only have been in hindsight, as Vassa could only have understood the significance of the Biblical name Jacob years later, and could also only have understood the significance of being named after Gustav Vasa, the King of Sweden, who was, at the time, a national hero (Lovejoy, 2012, pp. 164-184). Lovejoy notes:

> The idea that he was literally beaten into acceptance of this name is worth pausing over [...] It was an immodest way by which he informed his readers that he had only reluctantly accepted his fate [...] Vassa was obviously giving himself agency, even if his resistance was suppressed, but surely he projected his later knowledge of his namesake as an implicit recognition of his own authority. Vassa appears to have attached significance to his assigned name because it drew on public knowledge of the Swedish monarchy, although in 1755 at the time he was allegedly protesting, he could not possibly have known this, any more than he would have known that Jacob climbed a ladder and confronted God (Lovejoy, p. 168).

It is possible that Vassa – by recounting the story of both names and by choosing to use Vassa even when he could revert to his birth name – was deliberately creating an image of himself as one destined to lead. Jacob, after all, is considered the father of Israel and Gustav Vasa, the father of Sweden. A popular Igbo name is Afamefuna, which translates to 'may my name never

be lost'. Stripping an Igbo man of his name is stripping him of not just his identity but also of his destiny. Vassa would have been aware of this. This could also explain his alleged protestation of being stripped of his second slave name, Jacob. A name with a destiny that is much more aligned to Vassa's birth name than Michael, his first slave name. What is worth noting here, too, is the implied parallel Vassa seems to draw between himself and another Biblical hero, Moses, in the incident with Governor Macnamara. It is obvious that he believes that he is a leader of men.

Vassa served Captain Pascal until December 1762, during which time he lived with the Guerins, Pascal's cousins. He was sent to school, was christened at Westminster and took part in naval campaigns in Canada and the Mediterranean. He was baptized Gustavus Vassa in St Margaret's Church, Westminster, in February 1759. Miss Guerin, one of the two Guerin sisters with whom he spent some time in Blackheath, London, was his godmother. Serving Pascal opened up opportunities for Vassa which would otherwise have been closed to him had he been a plantation slave. This period also gave Vassa a lifelong love of England.

Captain Pascal then sold Vassa to Captain James Doran. Captain Pascal also kept all of Vassa's prize money and wages, except for six pence during the war. He had also always implied that he would free Vassa, and had often told Vassa that he would instruct him in business. Captain Doran took Vassa to Montserrat and sold him on to Robert King, the island's most prominent merchant. Vassa was sold to King in May 1763. King paid Vassa 10 to 16 pence a week for up to 16 hours of hard labour. King had many boats which went about the island collecting merchandise to be shipped. Vassa rowed boats and helped to load merchandise, among other tasks. He also occasionally worked for King as a clerk, a personal valet and his horse groom. Vassa, ever enterprising and using opportunities available to him, put his wages towards trading. King was prevailed upon by the captain of one of his ships, the Nancy, to let Vassa sail with them and help on board. On these trips, Vassa bought products from Montserrat to sell abroad and brought back products on his return to sell in Montserrat. In 1766, he had saved enough to buy his freedom for the exact amount he had been sold: £40. His manumission was signed on 10 July 1766. As a free man, he was employed by King to continue sailing with his vessel for thirty-six shillings a month. They sailed from Montserrat to Saint Eustatius and then to Savannah, Georgia. On the return trip, the captain passed away and, as his mate was ill, Vassa replaced the captain, bringing the Nancy back safely to Montserrat.

While at sea, Vassa missed London. He returned to the city in March 1767 and became apprenticed to a hairdresser in Coventry Court, Haymarket. He trained from September 1767 to February 1768. At the same time, he also took lessons in French horn blowing and in arithmetic. In 1768, he began working as a hairdresser for Dr Charles Irving, a scientist, and was paid £12 per annum, a sum that was not sufficient for him to live on. He also worked as Dr Irving's assistant. Dr Irving had developed a method for converting sea water into fresh water. In May 1768, Vassa, in order to make more money and to satisfy his peripatetic itch, went to work as a hairdresser on board a ship sailing to Italy and Turkey. He returned in 1770 and hired himself out again in April 1771, as a steward on board another ship headed for the West Indies. Vassa hired himself out again on his return as a steward on a ship headed to Nevis and Jamaica in December 1771. In August 1772, he returned and went to work again for Dr Irving until May 1773. Unable to keep away from the lure of the sea, in 1773, he joined the expedition to the North Pole under the command of Constantine John Phipps. He returned after four months and, in the spring of 1774, sought employment again as a steward on board a ship. Vassa also recommended an acquaintance, John Annis, as cook. When Annis' former owner kidnapped him from the ship, Vassa came into contact with the English abolitionist, Granville Sharp, whom he hoped would help him to free Annis. Their attempt was unsuccessful, but Vassa was now in touch with one of the most important abolitionists of the day. In 1775, Vassa was employed by Dr Irving to work as an overseer on his new plantation colony on the Mosquito Coast of Central America. Vassa remained in this position until June 1776, when he felt the urge to return to London. After Vassa left Dr Irving's employ, Irving hired a white overseer whose cruelty caused the slaves to attempt an escape; an attempt which ended in all of them drowning.

His seafaring days over, Vassa would begin to dedicate his life to the abolitionist movement. He worked as a servant for Governor Macnamara who recommended him to the Lord Bishop of London, to be ordained and sent as a missionary to Africa to convert his countrymen. By this time, Equiano had become a dedicated Christian and had made several attempts to convert his fellow servants in the employ of the Governor. Like Moses in the Bible, Vassa was raised in exile; and like Moses, he was chosen to go back and free his people. Again, like Moses, Vassa did not immediately accept. Whereas Moses finally accepted because his brother Aaron would be his 'voice', as Moses was not eloquent, Vassa agreed to go because he would be ordained. I propose that Vassa's recounting of this story and the way he does it was a deliberate literary device to draw attention to the image of himself

as an ordained liberator. This would have been useful in fortifying his moral authority as an advocate of the eradication of slave trade. Despite the governor's exhortations, the bishop declined to ordain Vassa. However, in 1786, Vassa became involved with the Sierra Leone resettlement project. The government planned to send freed slaves to Sierra Leone to live and work. Vassa was the Commissary of Provisions and Stores for the Black Poor going to Sierra Leone. Vassa was sacked from his commissary position for bringing the corruption and immorality of the officers leading the naval expedition to the attention of the commissioners of the navy. The expedition failed due to the mismanagement Vassa had highlighted. He was eventually paid £50 for his services. In 1787, he co-formed the 'Sons of Africa', a group of black abolitionists who campaigned for an end to slavery through public speaking, writing anti-slavery letters, and by communicating and cooperating with other prominent (white) abolitionists of the period, such as Wilberforce, Sharpe and Clarkson. In 1788, Vassa led a delegation to the House of Commons to support William Dolben's Slave Limitations Act, a bill that sought to improve conditions on slave ships, by putting a limit on the number of slaves any one ship could carry.

The next year, Vassa published his autobiography: *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself.* It became an important tool for the abolitionist movement and contributed immensely to the British Slave Trade Act of 1807 which abolished African slave trade. Vassa's autobiography was one of the earliest slave narratives. It gives us a harrowing, intimate, first-person account of the horrors of the Middle Passage and of slavery itself. It was an instant bestseller, was translated into different languages and made Vassa a wealthy man. Vassa left almost £1,000, a considerable sum in those days, in his will to his surviving daughter, Joanna Vassa, to inherit at 21 years of age.

In 1792, Vassa married Susannah Cullen, an English woman from Cambridgeshire. The couple probably met in 1789, while Vassa was selling and promoting his book, of which Susannah was a subscriber. They married in St Andrew's Church, Soham, Cambridgeshire, in April, and the happy occasion was announced in the Cambridge Chronicle and Journal. After the wedding, Susannah accompanied Vassa on his book tours and meetings with fellow abolitionists. They had two daughters, Anna Maria (b.1793) and Joanna (b.1795). Susannah died in 1796 after a protracted illness, both Anna Maria (21 July) and Vassa (31 March) died in 1797, and Joanna (later Mrs Bromley) in 1857. There is very little known of Vassa's family life. Vassa's death was announced in the local and national press. 'Tireless campaigning and extensive campaigning had taken their toll' (Osborne, 2007, p. 8). His burial place is still unknown.

The veracity of Vassa's account of his early life has been called into question by certain scholars, notable among whom is Vincent Carretta. Carretta argues – among other things – that Vassa's place of birth is listed as South Carolina on his baptismal record and on his naval record. He accuses Vassa of making up an African history and an African name. Yet other scholars, including Lovejoy, have counter-argued that there is enough evidence in his narrative to prove that Vassa did indeed come from Africa when he claimed he did. Lovejoy points out, among other things, that Vassa was circumcised at a time when circumcision was not practised in Anglo-America, and mentions the practice at least five times in a book directed at an audience that would have found the practice repugnant. Vassa, also always identified as African in all his letters to newspapers. Vassa was aware of the limitations of his memory and makes this admission in his autobiography, acknowledging that his recollections were helped by information he got from other Igbo people he encountered. One would expect that if he were only pretending to be African, that he would not have openly and willingly admitted to this. Yet, he is detailed in his recounting of the particular rituals and traditions of his own people.

His approximation of Igbo terms is close enough to still be understood centuries later, and he refers to 'mahogany-coloured men from the south-west of us: we call them *Oye-Eboe*' (Equiano, p. 51). Certain Igbo communities around the present-day Delta/Riverine area refer to the Igbo of the south-east as *O(n) ye Igbo*. Vassa's transcribed Igbo also sounds like the dialect spoken in those areas. The men who calculated time in his place of birth were called *ah-affoe-way-cah*. I have not yet found the word this is supposed to replace. However, in Igbo, *afo/aho* is 'year'. In certain Delta Igbo dialects, *wa* translates to 'they' and *kah* to 'foretold' or 'said'.

In Vassa's childhood, men from certain south-eastern Igbo communities painted their bodies red with camwood. Furthermore, Vassa also documents the names of the masters he served and the dates he served them, details that would have been easily verifiable in his days, I imagine. Moreover, these speculations were also rife in Vassa's lifetime, meant as he saw it to discredit his work and prevent the sale of his Narrative (Equiano, p. 255). Lovejoy notes that:

> The attack on Vassa's credibility as a witness to slavery, the form it took and the timing on 25 April 1792, were a commentary on the abolition movement. The Danish edict had been enacted on 16 March, and while it did not end the Danish involvement in the slave trade for another decade, it inspired Wilberforce's renewed motion to abolish the slave trade (Lovejoy, p. 174).

In a later edition of his autobiography, in 1792, Vassa calls as witnesses, 'respectable persons of character who knew me when I first arrived in England, and could speak no language but that of Africa' (Equiano, p. 251). Those persons were presumably still alive and could attest to the truth of his story. The fact that these speculations persist today, and the fact that they are rigorously defended are testament to Vassa's enduring legacy as a historical figure and as a writer.

Despite the speculations, Vassa's story and his written work remain an important window into the social, cultural and economic life of the Igbo society before European colonization, and his accounts of the horrors of the slave trade made a substantial contribution towards its abolition. *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, Written by Himself* remains as important today as it was when first published.

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CHAPTER 14

FRAGMENTS OF THE LIFE HISTORY OF FUSENG-BE

A Temne Woman Sold in Freetown, Sierra Leone in the Early Nineteenth Century

Suzanne Schwarz

Fuseng-be was among a number of adults and children sold illegally as slaves in the abolitionist colony of Sierra Leone in the early nineteenth century. References in colonial administrative records make it possible to trace aspects of the life history of this young Temne woman who was born in an area less than 80 kilometres to the north-east of Freetown in the early 1790s. Although Fuseng-be did not write a narrative of her experiences, her story is told in court records in Freetown after she lodged a complaint about her ill-treatment with an official at Fort Thornton in 1809.

Fuseng-be, alias Betsey (also Fee Seng be, alias Betsey), was a young Temne woman of approximately 16 years of age, who was sold in Freetown, Sierra Leone, in 1808. Her sale took place less than four weeks after the settlement had been transferred to British Crown control on 1 January 1808. Her estimated age suggests that she was born in 1792. This was the same year that over 1,100 Black Loyalist settlers from Nova Scotia arrived in Sierra Leone to start a new life free from slavery. As a result of a complaint, Fuseng-be, lodged with a Justice of the Peace at Fort Thornton in January 1809, the newly-appointed governor, Thomas Perronet Thompson, instigated an enquiry into her illegal purchase by one of these Nova Scotian settlers. The circumstances of her sale were examined in the newly formed Vice-Admiralty Court and reported in the colony's newspaper. In the course of proceedings, testimony given by various deponents revealed rare biographical information on aspects of Fuseng-be's

life. This evidence can go some way towards helping us to understand Fuseng-be's experiences of slavery through her own eyes, although aspects of her story were also recounted by European court officials and witnesses. Through the fragments of surviving evidence, it is possible to reconstruct a picture of a young African woman separated from her home and kin through enslavement, but who developed a range of strategies to secure her own release from slavery.

The case of Fuseng-be has a wider significance; the sale and use of Africans as slave labour in the abolitionist colony of Sierra Leone was a recurrent problem for the authorities in the late eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In 1791, the directors of the Sierra Leone Company explained in their first published report that they would not 'deal in slaves themselves, nor allow of any slave trade on their ground'. Abolitionist promoters considered that they had the right to prohibit the sale of Africans within this area of territory, as they claimed that the land occupied by the settlement had been sold, rather than leased, to them by neighbouring Temne leaders. Their intention was not only to halt the export of Africans on slave ships, but also to ensure that Africans were not held as slaves within territory claimed by the settlement. In orders sent out to their employees in West Africa, the directors stated that 'we wish you not to permit any one to continue to be a Slave in our district'. This intended slave-free zone was impossible to maintain in practice. The purchase of Temne and Sherbro people brought into Freetown from neighbouring areas can be traced during the period of administration by the Sierra Leone Company, between 1791 and 1807, as well as during the period of British Crown control from 1808 onwards. Freetown was established in the midst of an area on the Upper Guinea coast supplying Africans for export in the transatlantic slave trade, and was located in close proximity to the slave fort at Bunce Island. Ships carrying Africans for sale into the transatlantic slave trade regularly sailed past Freetown in the period up to 1807. The town was visited by local slave merchants, including the Eurafrican traders William Cleveland and Betsy Heard, who sometimes brought their own slaves into the colony. Regulations introduced in the colony concerning slavery were at odds with local African practice on the sale and usage of labour. These differences were a source of ongoing tension, particularly when Africans from neighbouring areas sought asylum in Freetown and refused to return to their masters.

By the time Fuseng-be made her way up the hill to Fort Thornton on 9 January 1809, she had been living in the household of Warwick Francis, her master, for almost a year. When she arrived at the Fort, she complained to John Donald McGregor that she had been ill-treated by her master's wife. With the injuries she had sustained, the walk uphill would have been arduous. McGregor

reported how 'two of her toes were very near off, and very offensive'. Finding a suitable time when she could leave her master's house unnoticed and make her way to Fort Thornton would have required some careful planning by Fuseng-be. She may have picked up intelligence or rumours in the colony that Governor Thompson was interested in rooting out cases of slave sales, and took the risk of leaving her master in the hope that she would receive a favourable hearing. She complained that, despite her injuries, she was 'obliged to go to wash at the brook, carry water, beat rice, and do all other work about the house'. Her appeal to government and court officials for redress was a type of strategy used widely by other enslaved women in different settings in East and West Africa.

The case of 'Fee Seng be, alias Betsey', was brought before the Vice-Admiralty Court on 4 September 1809. During the proceedings, attention was focused on the circumstances in which this 'Native of Africa' had been sold. It was established that Francis had purchased her at his house in Freetown on 28 January 1808 from a local trader named Peters, a regular visitor to the colony. It emerged that Fuseng-be had already changed hands twice before being brought into the colony. Peters informed Francis that he had purchased Fuseng-be from a trader named 'Young Smart' at a place called 'Rolullom', and that Young Smart had in turn purchased her from her father. The reason for her sale is not explained in this account, although sales of family members to repay debts or to alleviate poverty were among a range of possible reasons for enslavement. If Fuseng-be had remained in the hands of one of these African traders, her case would not have come to the attention of officials in Freetown, as slave sales in the hinterland were still legal. Settlers who left the colony could still own and sell slaves outside its boundaries, but colonial officials were prepared to step in if any of these individuals (as in the case of Fuseng-be) were brought to live within the boundaries of the colony or were purchased by settlers in the British colony.

Francis haggled over the sum demanded by Peters for Fuseng-be and eventually succeeded in bargaining her price down from $120 to $100. As a result of this purchase, Fuseng-be was taken into the household of this man, aged approximately 51 years, who had been a slave on a plantation in South Carolina. He was one of the Black Loyalists who had fought for the British in the American War of Independence, and who had migrated to Sierra Leone after a period of re-settlement in Nova Scotia. It is likely that Warwick Francis was the same person listed in the Book of Negroes in 1783 as 'Warwick, 26, stout fellow [...] Formerly Slave to Aaron Jellet, Charlestown, So[uth] Carolina; left him five years ago'. This description is consistent with evidence Francis gave to Paul Cuffe in 1812 about the cruelty inflicted on slaves by Jellet. Francis's

experience of enslavement in the southern states of America is also confirmed by the reports he gave of cases of cruelty on another South Carolina plantation by John Draten [Drayton].

In the course of investigations, Fuseng-be's status was described using terms with varying meanings. When McGregor asked Fuseng-be if she was an apprentice to Francis, she answered that 'she was his servant'. The fact that the conversation was conducted through the means of an interpreter may, however, have generated confusion as there were important differences between how Africans viewed slavery and 'British attitudes about slavery and pawnships, indentures, apprenticeships and subordinate status within its own settlement'. When summoned before McGregor, Francis gave contradictory accounts of the woman's status within his household. He initially claimed she was an apprentice bound to him for eleven years. It was in the interest of Francis, a settler who held various civic and religious positions in the settlement, to protect his reputation by claiming he had not intended to use her as a slave. When he was asked to explain his actions to the magistrate, he claimed that it was pity that had motivated him to buy her. By reporting that Peters had told him that she would be sold to a slave ship if no one purchased her, Francis attempted to claim humanitarian motives for his actions. He intimated that, by purchasing Fuseng-be, he had saved her from a far worse fate. He asserted that he intended to 'put her on his farm to raise fowls and ducks', an explanation suggesting a milder and less demanding form of servitude. Francis may have thought that this explanation would find favour with colonial officials, interested in promoting agricultural pursuits. Yet, Fuseng-be's account of her role to McGregor reveals that she had been used to carry out a range of menial and laborious household tasks. Francis also tried to lessen his culpability by stating that it was her father who had sold her in the first instance. He claimed that his actions in acquiring Fuseng-be had been approved by Acting Governor Thomas Ludlam, and he produced a paper certificate signed by Ludlam to support his claim. This printed certificate granted permission to Francis to keep Fuseng-be, alias Betsey, as a house servant for seven years. The stark internal contradiction in testimony given by Francis, however, was his admission that he had purchased Fuseng-be for his own use. It was reported in the *African Herald* on 18 November 1809, that when McGregor advised Francis to let Fuseng-be return to her own country, he said he 'could not do this, because he had bought the girl and paid for her'.

The sale of Fuseng-be was not an isolated incident of Africans being purchased for use in the colony. After Thompson took up office, eight other purchases were reported in the colony's newspaper, the *African Herald*, in November and December 1809. Four of these cases involved the purchase

of females between 1805 and 1808: three girls were bought in neighbouring areas and transferred into the colony, and another girl was purchased from a Portuguese slave ship and taken into the colony. George Nicol, a European carpenter formerly employed by the Sierra Leone Company, admitted in August 1808 that he had arranged for the purchase of a 'native girl' of about seven years of age. He had instructed a person named Dominique Garel to purchase a young girl from Pedro Naimbanna (also known as Bartholomew Naimbanna), and he paid $60 for the girl in March 1806. Following his acquisition of the girl, he re-named her Nancy and took her to his house. In explaining the circumstances of Nancy's purchase, Nicol's testimony also revealed how Nancy's mother had changed hands several times among settlers in Freetown. Nancy's mother had been given to a Frenchman named Berault in partial repayment of a debt, and Berault had given her to Sophia Small, a Nova Scotian shopkeeper in Freetown. Thereafter, Small passed the woman on to George Nicol, suggesting that each saw some value in her labour. Nicol explained that Nancy's mother was old and decrepit, and he implied he had shown compassion by agreeing to her request to purchase her daughter so that they could live together. In common with Francis, Nicol thereby tried to shift some of the moral responsibility for her purchase by claiming that it was the girl's family who had initially made her available for purchase. In defending his actions, Nicol claimed that he had acted 'ignorantly, blindly, and for lack of better knowledge'. This explanation lacks credibility, however, as the same newspaper article reported how he had purchased another girl from a Portuguese slave ship for $100. This girl, aged around 11 years, was described as a 'Native of the Bijuga islands' (Bissagos or Bijagós Islands). His track record of purchases also included the payment of $100 for a boy named Yabo in June 1805. Yabo, one of 'two Mandingoes' who had been brought to Freetown by a European trader named Lee, recounted how he was 'stolen in the night, and not taken in any war'. His account suggests, therefore, that he was enslaved in a manner illegal under local African law, through kidnapping.

Even fewer biographical details are available for two girls purchased by Captain Smith in Sherbro, to the south of Freetown, in 1805. The report in the *African Herald* on 2 December 1809 indicated that one of the girls, named Phoebe, was aged approximately eight years and was sold for around $50 or $60. Smith subsequently acquired a twelve-year old girl named Bessy by swapping her for a boy of 11 years of age whom he had already purchased for $80. No further biographical details are available for each of these girls. Fragmentary references in colonial records point to the presence of other girls in Freetown being held in coerced labour relationships.

Thompson did not baulk at using the term 'slave' to describe Fuseng-be's status. In the judgment he handed down in the Vice-Admiralty Court, he pronounced that she had been 'illegally sold or disposed of as a slave in this colony, and as such to be adjudged forfeited to His Majesty'. As a result, her name was entered in the Register of Liberated Africans (held at the Sierra Leone National Archives), and she was ascribed the unique identity number of 100. Fuseng-be was grouped together in the Register with enslaved Africans who had been released from the American ships *Baltimore* and *Eliza* in March 1808. Her circumstances of enslavement were different from those of the 148 men, women and children with whom she was listed under the category of 'Slaves Seized in the Colony' in the Register. As she had been trafficked internally, Fuseng-be did not share the same experiences as those Africans who had been sold into the export trade from Africa. In contrast to the others with whom she had been listed, she had not been embarked on a slave ship, transported in the Middle Passage and intercepted partway through the journey by a Royal Navy vessel. Even so, Thompson's use of the legal processes of the Vice-Admiralty Court to deal with her case meant that she was classified as a 'Captured Negro' or 'Liberated African'. As such, she could be disposed of using the same methods adopted for other 'Captured Negroes', including apprenticeship.

Two months after his purchase of Fuseng-be, Francis acquired another two African girls to add to his supply of household labour. He took two girls named Creasa and Sasia from among the Africans disembarked from the *Baltimore* and the *Eliza*. He paid $20 for each girl, and this must have seemed a good deal compared to the amount he had paid for Fuseng-be just two months earlier. The manner in which Ludlam dispersed the Africans among the settlers reflected administrative confusion about what should happen after their release. He may have envisaged that the settlers would take responsibility for the training and education of the Africans in the form of apprenticeship but, judging by the testimony from officials and settlers in Freetown, this payment of $20 a head created the impression that they had been sold to them as property. The two girls were no doubt placed in Francis's household, and it is possible that they provided companionship for Fuseng-be.

It is unclear how long Fuseng-be remained in the household of Warwick Francis. Although McGregor had initially advised Francis that he should allow her to return to her home, she was formally allocated as an apprentice to him following the adjudication of her case by the Vice-Admiralty Court in 1809. In effect, her appeal for help to the colonial authorities had failed. Admittedly, it was her mistress whom she had accused of cruelty, but allocating Fuseng-be

to Warwick Francis did not remove the possibility of continued use and abuse of her in the household by this mistress. These circumstances may explain her absence from a listing three years later, which attempted to track the movements of 1,991 Captured Negroes released between 1808 and 1811. The 'List of Captured Negroes on Hand December 31st 1810 and of those Received, Enlisted, Apprenticed, Disposed of to December 31st 1812', held in the United Kingdom's National Archives at Kew, did not record her death. The absence of information in her entry was interpreted by the colonial authorities to mean that she was among those who had 'deserted to Native Towns in the back parts of the Country'. If so, her flight from the colony was a form of resistance to her conditions in Francis's household, although another explanation for her absence from the colony was the possibility that she had been re-sold in the hinterland of Freetown.

Only a partial reconstruction of Fuseng-be's biography is possible, and the trail of evidence comes to a halt when she was approximately 20 years old. There is scant evidence on which to comment regarding her life before the sequence of three sales commencing late in 1807 or early in 1808. Whilst the testimony in court mentions her father, there is no extant account of her wider family relationships and the nature of her upbringing. How she lived her life after the court case cannot be retraced from the available documentation. Her case is, nonetheless, extremely revealing. Unable to speak English, she still managed to glean knowledge of her rights within an abolitionist colony and contact a British military official to make her case for freedom, or at least amelioration of her treatment. She retained the use of her African name when she contacted McGregor in 1809, even though her new master had given her the name of Betsey following her arrival in Freetown.

Her name was recorded in a variety of different ways in the Register of Liberated Africans and other colonial documentation, and included Fuseng-be (the most frequently used version), Fee Seng Be, Fusengbe, and Fuseng-bé. The variations in spelling, use of a hyphen and an accent in different versions, suggest that those recording her name were unfamiliar with its African linguistic origins, and attempted to record it phonetically. After interviewing her through the use of an interpreter, John Donald McGregor reported that he believed she was 'of the Timmaney tribe'. This is consistent with the deposition of Warwick Francis, who reported that the trader Peters had brought 'a Timmaney girl named Fuseng be into this Colony'. As her father lived at 'Rolullom', it is likely that this was also Fuseng-be's place of birth. This settlement was located two days' travel from Rokon on the Rokel river, indicating that Fuseng-be

was brought into Freetown from a distance of approximately 70 kilometres to the north-east. This is not dissimilar to the distance of approximately 100 kilometres over which Africans destined for export in the southern Sierra Leone trade were moved in the early nineteenth century.

Fuseng-be's case highlights a number of apparent ambiguities and contradictions in relationships which developed in Freetown, despite the fact that the declared purpose of the settlement was to eschew all forms of slave trading and slavery. Although Francis had first-hand experience of slave systems in the Americas, he was still prepared to buy a young African woman and haggle over her monetary value. As Kristin Mann notes in the case of Brazil, one of the first purchases made by men and women who had acquired their freedom was that of an enslaved African. Francis may similarly have seen this as an 'important marker of freedom', as well as a source of labour to increase his own wealth. Judging by Fuseng-be's testimony, she was treated harshly and bore the scars of her mistreatment. This is all the more striking as Francis gave evidence to Paul Cuffe in 1812, testifying to the appalling cruelties that he had seen inflicted on enslaved men and women in America. This was not an isolated incident of cruelty. Accusations were made against other settlers and officials who had acquired coerced or dependent labourers from among groups of enslaved Africans released by Royal Navy patrols from 1808 onwards. Nancy, a young girl released from an American vessel by HMS *Derwent* in March 1808, lodged a complaint against Susannah Caulker, a Nova Scotian woman who had taken her as an apprentice. In her testimony, reported in the *African Herald* on 29 July 1809, Nancy reported that she had left Caulker's household because 'she beat her'. In her testimony to the court, Nancy explained that after being beaten with a switch on her back, she was made to lie on the ground whilst her mistress rubbed pepper into her broken skin.

Fuseng-be's experiences confirmed Governor Thompson's view that officials of the Sierra Leone Company (including Ludlam) had concealed the existence of slavery in the colony by using terms such as apprenticeship and redemption in place of 'slavery and purchase'. Alimaamy Dalu Mohammedu Dumbuya (also known as Dala Modu), a Muslim trader who had been expelled from his settlement at Dalamodiya on the outskirts of Freetown for slave trading, was drawn into this debate on the existence of slavery in the colony. In testimony given before Governor Thompson in 1809, he stated that there were slaves living in Freetown. He explained that he had offered to show Ludlam 'country provement [i.e. proof] by pointing out the Slaves', if all the inhabitants were turned out of their houses. Ludlam did not take him up on this offer.

As Freetown was a settlement of fewer than two thousand people in 1807, it would have been difficult for Francis to conceal the presence of Fuseng-be in his household. Francis may have considered that concealment was unnecessary, beyond claiming that she was a servant or an apprentice. One of the complaints made by Dala Modu was that Ludlam turned a blind eye whenever settlers were found to hold slaves, but his own actions were subject to detailed scrutiny.

Evidence discussed in the Vice-Admiralty Court in 1809 drew attention to a wider problem of internal slave sales. This internal marketing of individuals was a long-running problem, which proved difficult for the colonial authorities to police and prevent. Settlers who purchased Africans in early nineteenth-century Freetown typically misrepresented their status to the colonial authorities by claiming that they were apprentices, servants in their households or children who had been sent to live with them for a period of education. Governor Thompson attempted to track the presence of Africans in households and the reasons for their presence through regulations introduced in October 1808. As the population of Freetown expanded rapidly with the influx of Liberated Africans, however, it became even more difficult to verify whether adults and children were employed legitimately as servants or trafficked as enslaved labour. In 1853, more than four decades after the case of Fuseng-be had been adjudicated by the Vice-Admiralty Court, a Commission of Enquiry traced more than one hundred cases of adults and children purchased as slaves and brought into the colony. Females were in particular demand, with 68 of the 117 reported cases relating to women and girls. Manjah or Charlotte, 15 or 16 years of age, was a few years younger than Fuseng-be when she gave evidence about her experiences of enslavement in August 1853. In common with Fuseng-be, she had been sold a number of times to different masters before being taken into Freetown in 1848. She reported how she was cruelly treated by her mistress who was 'always be telling me that I was her slave – that if she should kill or sell me, no one would ask or harm her for it'. In common with Fuseng-be, she resisted her circumstances of enslavement by taking the opportunity to approach a colonial official and plead for her release and protection under the laws of the colony.

Fuseng-be's case demonstrates how settlers in Freetown were attempting to extend their wealth and status through building up property in people, even in the heart of an abolitionist colony. Conversely, Fuseng-be's response to her sale in Freetown demonstrates how individuals purchased and treated as slaves were prepared to deploy a range of strategies to secure their freedom.

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CHAPTER 15

FROM CAPTIVES TO HEROES

Liberated Africans in Calabar, 1850–1920

David Lishilinimle Imbua

Calabar was a major hub of the Atlantic slave trade on the West African coast. Indeed, 3,000 to 5,000 enslaved persons were exported annually at the height of the trade and it ranked fifth in total exports of the enslaved, behind Luanda and Benguela in Angola, Bonny in Nigeria and Ouidah in Benin (Behrendt et al., 2010, pp. 48, 56). Merchants in Liverpool, Bristol and, to a lesser extent, London provided the bulk of the credit advances fostering the increase in slave ships from Calabar in the eighteenth century (Lovejoy and Richardson, 1999, p. 338); and even the local population had grown dependent: 'the prosperity of Efik villages and lineage groups rose and fell in tandem with British slaving ports and merchant partnerships' (Behrendt and Graham, 2003, p. 54). As the slave trade was the mainstay of Calabar's economy in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Calabar elites made every effort to circumvent British abolitionist legislation: in 1805, a Calabar chief and slave trader named Egbo Young Eyamba threatened to kill the British explorer Henry Nicholls if he said he was a supporter of William Wilberforce (Hallet, 1964, p. 198). Owing to the Calabar elites' uncooperative attitude towards the abolition movement, 162 cargoes of captives left port between October 1820 and July 1821 (Latham, 1973, p. 20). However, the presence of British anti-slavery squadrons, which caught several ships loaded with captives leaving port from Calabar between 1830 and 1840, made the slave trade more

risky and less profitable (Latham, 1973, p. 22), which more or less compelled the kings of Calabar to sign antislave-trade treaties with the Royal Navy, on 6 December 1841. Those treaties virtually brought the slave trade at Calabar to an end, and when a French slaver, backed by a gunboat, subsequently tried to force the Efik to supply him with slaves in 1842, they steadfastly refused (Latham, 1973, p. 22).

An absolute dependence on palm oil as a major trade commodity rather than an adjunct to the slave trade was unsatisfactory to the Calabar elites, who saw that Calabar was in desperate need of resourceful people to sustain it and brighten its fortunes, irrespective of their ethnicity and nationality (Imbua, 2009, p. 195), and wrote a series of letters calling for European missionaries. For the Calabar elites of the mid-nineteenth century understood the power of civilization and technology in religious terms and believed missionaries to have the keys to unlock Calabar's potential; and they were convinced, as is evident in their letters, that they would bring the knowledge and skills required to cultivate the cash crops such as cotton, coffee and sugar produced in the Americas with slave labour (Waddell, 1863, pp. 663–665). When missionaries arrived and settled in, the Efik soon realized that they had neither the resources nor the technical skills to facilitate Calabar's economic transition. Some Efik elites, in frustration, contemplated expelling them but were deterred by a fear of reprisals by the British consul, who was on the side of the missionaries and sent a gunboat to oblige the Efik either to cooperate with or at least tolerate them.

In the circumstances, the Calabar elites turned their attention to Sierra Leone, where an apprenticeship programme was equipping 'liberated Africans' with knowledge and skills in trade, teaching, tailoring, carpentry, photography, printing, welding and bakery, among other things; if those people came and participated in the economy, that could arrest the decline. Fortunately for Calabar, the liberated Africans of Sierra Leone, compelled by the inclement weather conditions and geography, and the hatred they received there from earlier settlers, were seeking homes in other British 'spheres of influence' along the coast of West Africa, places where they would be protected as British subjects and thus realize the promise of freedom. Some were 'slaves sold from Calabar in bypast times, and hearing that a mission was established in the country, they returned to end their days where they had been in childhood' (Goldie, 1901, p. 189). When the missionary William Anderson and his wife passed through Sierra Leone en route to Calabar in January 1849, some fifty to sixty liberated Africans offered to follow them (Marwick, 1897, p. 195). The number migrating to Calabar then increased from 1852, when the African Steamship Company was

chartered by the British Government to convey goods, passengers and mail from Europe to the West African coast (Dike, 1956, p. 114).

In May 1853, a three-man delegation led by the Reverend Edward Jones was sent from Sierra Leone to the Niger delta region of Nigeria to negotiate the return of *emancipadoes* from the region who had been sold into slavery (Goldie, 1901, p. 166). In Igboland and Bonny, the Reverend Jones' proposal was met with hostility and the people there were fiercely opposed to the reintegration of formerly enslaved persons and their offspring into society (Ayandele, 1974, p. 12).

The situation was very different in Calabar, where King Eyo Honesty II gave his full backing to the scheme, saying: 'Let them come I will be glad to see them and give them land. I will look on them as white men because they have learnt white men fashion. Let them come and teach my people. Nobody will trouble them' (Dike, 1956, p. 67). King Eyo's position rested on his conviction that the education and training received by the liberated Africans – or 'recaptives' – in Sierra Leone placed them ahead of other people anywhere else in Africa. He told the Reverend Hope Waddell, rather prophetically, that those who would rule the world would not be enslaved persons or palm oil traders but those who *saby book* (who knew the Bible). Another Calabar chief concurred, saying that: 'Book be great thing; it pass everything far; it make man's head fine; it settle all palaver' (Waddell, 1863, p. 410).

Eyo, whose influence was such that Calabar people regarded him as 'their god on earth' (Goldie, 1901, p. 173), pursued the project with vigour and, with the assistance of the Presbyterian Church, seven families arrived in Calabar from Freetown in 1854. Among them was an elderly man who had been sold away 40 years earlier by Duke Ephraim, who ruled Calabar from 1814 to 1834 (Waddell, 1863, p. 532). Comparing themselves to the biblical character Joseph, not many of the returnees bore a grudge against the people that had sold them into slavery. One, a Mrs Macaulay, told those who were amazed at her passion and kindness towards the elderly woman that had sold her at the age of 15 in Duke Town, Nigeria, that: 'it be good thing she be sent so, for then she hear the big thing that Jesus do for poor sinners' (Goldie, 1901, p. 190).

As King Eyo and his supporters had expected, the liberated Africans from Freetown did help to stimulate growth in the major sectors of Calabar's economy in significant ways. As intellectuals with an African background, they possessed knowledge of great value for the proper development of society. Latham (1973) asserts that it was in the education sector that the liberated Africans made their greatest contribution to the development of Calabar. Highly creative, innovative

and possessed of enormous energy, they were uncompromising in their focus on the goals of a good society and strongly opposed to any exploitation of Africans by Europeans in Calabar;[1] and not many of the arguments used by the Calabar elites in countering allegations brought against them by European traders would have been as astonishingly effective as they were without the presence of liberated Africans who were abreast of British trade and race relations policies. Owing to space constraints, it is the exploits of the liberated Africans of Calabar in trade between 1850 and 1920 that are highlighted here as their key contribution.

The principal element in Calabar's external interactions was commerce. Prior to the arrival of the liberated Africans, the European supercargoes had exploited local merchants and taken over the trade in the Calabar area, fixing the prices of both imported goods and African produce, determining whether the quality was good or bad and, in the process, reducing the African middlemen to the position of observers. All that changed with the relentless struggle of the liberated Africans against the practice of fixing low prices for the African produce and charging exorbitant prices for European goods. The Calabar palm oil traders profited from the new regime in that they were given higher prices for the oil than the miserable rates that the supercargoes – the European palm oil traders – would have paid (Nair, 1972, p. 117). Moreover, the liberated Africans of Calabar 'consistently encouraged the chiefs and other African merchants of note to send their palm produce directly to England, where it would fetch a higher price' (Ume, 1980, p. 96).

Realizing that the liberated Africans were liberating them from exploitation, the Calabar merchants quickly turned their backs on the supercargoes. King Eyo personally refused to honour the 'trust' that he had accepted from the supercargoes and sold his oil instead to the liberated Africans.[2] Infuriated by the tensions caused by that development, the supercargoes viewed the liberated Africans with intense hostility, branding them 'interlopers' – intruders and illegal traders – and asserting their claim to the oil for which they had paid trust, demanding that it not be sold to any other buyers. The Calabar merchants encouraged liberated Africans to undermine the unjust trust system and buy

1 As told to author by the elder Efiong U. Aye, aged over 96 years, in an oral interview conducted at 11 Ikot Effanga Road, Calabar, on 13 April 2011.

2 The 'trust' was an arrangement under which a European trader supplied goods on credit to Calabar trading partners in return for the future delivery of produce of an equivalent value. For further details, see Noah (1980, pp. 87–90).

their oil without fear of molestation (Noah, 1980, p. 90); and, as supporters of the British policy of economic liberalism and free trade, the liberated Africans challenged the self-proclaimed monopoly of the supercargoes insisting that Calabar and its resources belonged to Britain and that, as such, British citizens should not have competitors in the Calabar trade. As a last resort, the supercargoes began to confiscate goods subject to a trust arrangement to keep the local merchants perpetually in debt. On 1 November 1855, a Captain Joseph Cuthbertson of Liverpool seized sixteen puncheons of palm oil awaiting shipment on the seafront that belonged to a Peter Nicholls – a liberated African from the Cross River region who had been sold into slavery but was rescued by a Royal Navy patrol and then settled in Sierra Leone – on the claim that he had given trust to King Eyo (Noah, 1980, p. 94; Latham, 1973, p. 60); in 1856, another Liverpool supercargo, Edward Davis, seized the oil of a Daniel Hedd, claiming that it had been bought in Calabar, which as a 'trust river', belonged to the English (Dike, 1956, p. 119); and in January 1857, a 'Mr Hearn seized oil belonging to James Haddison' (Latham, 1973, p. 61). Fundamentally, the supercargoes argued, Calabar merchants must liquidate their existing trust debts before selling to the newcomers. The Efik, however, supported by liberated Africans, insisted that while the trust must eventually be honoured, there was no time limit by which the debts must be paid and that they could, in the meantime, sell to whomsoever they wished (Ibid.).

In 1856, the supercargoes were reported by the liberated Africans to the British Foreign Office, which stated in its response that since Britain espoused the principle of free trade, it would invariably support the rights of all those engaged in such trade in Calabar. Lord Clarendon, the Foreign Secretary, stressing that the British Government would continue to 'take a warm interest in the welfare and safety' of liberated Africans, frowned on the fact that despite doing the very things that his Government expected of them, namely promoting civilization and commerce, they were confronted with the 'jealous hostility of British traders'. The supercargoes were instructed not to interfere with the legitimate activities of any man previously seized and sold in the market like a puncheon of oil. A law officer at the Foreign Office argued that:

> The whole policy of [Her Majesty's Government] in this matter (for which it has made and still makes great sacrifices) is thus effectually thwarted and defeated, and Africans tho' Liberated from actual slavery, are prevented from returning to their native country with any security, or from engaging in the staple trade of West Africa, a state of things which [Her Majesty's] Government cannot be expected to tolerate, especially formally brought under its notice, and going on as it were under

> the shadow of its flag, a British man of war, a British Consul, missionaries, and merchants being on the spot (Nair, 1972).

Rather than obeying the Foreign Office directives, the supercargoes resorted to bribing the consul, Thomas J. Hutchinson, whose actions, typically of a corrupted administrator, were at variance with his instructions from the Foreign Office to protect the liberated Africans. Things came to a head in 1859, when Hutchinson sent two liberated Africans back to Sierra Leone for a variety of offences and requested the governor of the colony, Stephen Hill, not to freely permit any returnee to reside within the consular area (Nair, 1972, p. 125). The liberated Africans saw the danger and immediately reported Hutchinson to the Foreign Office for receiving bribes from a Michael and William Hearn, stating that his actions were utterly subversive to all principles of equity and morality. Hutchinson was found guilty and, branded 'a very imperfectly qualified individual' for the important position of a consul superintending the activities of all races in Calabar, was replaced as British Consul for the Bight of Biafra by Richard F. Burton (Nair, 1972, pp. 133–34).

The actions of the Foreign Office served to curb the excesses of the supercargoes. The liberated Africans, as masters of their own destiny and more secure in their position, encouraged more of their kind to migrate from Sierra Leone to Calabar. As their numbers increased, especially after the collapse of the palm oil trade in 1862, so did their influence in trade and politics, and they would occasionally be known to play the local chiefs, missionaries and supercargoes off against each another (Latham, 1973, p. 107). Before long, the liberated Africans attained economic and social positions that attracted the envy of even the Efik, their allies in the struggle with the supercargoes. Efik men charged that they were haughty, arrogant and proud and that they were taking their women – Efik women preferred to form a relationship and even marry liberated Africans because of their apparent wealth and social status (Nair, 1972, p. 123). The liberated Africans had been able, in a surprisingly short period of time, to obliterate the stigma attached to the formerly enslaved and become the pride of every woman seeking a successful husband.

Liberated Africans played an indispensable role in expediting the expansion of British influence in the Cross River region at a time when the British lacked the staff, revenue and knowledge of the hinterland to strengthen it. Men of personal integrity, with a mastery of the local languages and ability to fluently communicate in English, their willingness to play that role came as some relief to the British officials afraid of penetrating into the interior with its debilitating climate and the

dreaded fever. Their activities in securing treaties with the rulers in the Bight of Biafra enabled Britain to emerge from the scramble for territory with two-thirds of what is now Nigeria (Wyse, 1985, p. 126); and some would consequently participate in the colonial administration in the Cross River region. As a rule, they always returned to trading at the end of their colonial service:

> Among Sierra Leoneans, Beccles Davies and Arthur Williamson O'Dwyer had started business in Calabar, after their retirement from the colonial service in Southern Nigeria. Beccles Davies was a produce merchant. O'Dwyer opened his stores on the Marina in Duke Town, where he sold dress materials, assorted fancy and fashion goods and stocked hardware, glass and chinaware. The third Sierra Leonean was a tailor named Claudius Benjamin Jones, who headed the tailoring department of Hope Waddell Institute. Claudius later started as a general merchant in 1900 and sold clothing, shoes, provisions, and stationery (Macmillan, 1968, p. 188).

Arthur Williamson O'Dwyer's glass store on Marina Road earned him the admiration of an Austrian glassware maker and he was employed as its principal agent. He was also the first patent medicine dealer in Calabar and became the first commissioned agent and auctioneer handling the disposal of all property that was 'axed' in Calabar. By 1919, his business had expanded greatly and was partly managed by his son, Gage Hall O'Dwyer, who would go on to become the founder and first president of the African Chamber of Commerce, established in 1941 as a counterpoise to the European Association of African Merchants (Udoka, 1991, p. 306). Similarly, Claudius B. Jones, in addition to his Hawkins Street store, owned other properties – including the land on present-day Egerton Street where the Vicon Pharmacy now stands – and became a well-established figure in real estate investment. Jones was also a newspaper vendor who helped to keep people in Calabar abreast of developments in other parts of the world. As to Beccles Davies, he was a major exporter of African produce who contributed tremendously to the economic development of Calabar.[3]

One of the most celebrated of the liberated Africans of Calabar was a P. J. C. Thomas, who owned the largest non-European trading enterprise in the city. His company, S. Thomas and Company, strongly disapproved of the consumption of alcohol by its workers, as it took their welfare seriously, and operated a compulsory savings scheme to give them the capital to set up a small business on their retirement from the company. Thomas himself has been described as:

3 Oral interview with Asuquo Effiong, aged over 78 years, conducted at 58, Big Qua Town Road, Calabar, on 19 June 2013.

> [A] philanthropist and lover of his kind […] S. Thomas and Company invested in the society and their workers. The company took the welfare of workers seriously and provided for rainy days. Even reckless persons who worked for S. Thomas and Company had something to fall back on in difficult times. (Interview with Asuquo Effiong, 19 June 2013).

Macmillan (1968) goes further:

> Superlative encomiums can, with every justification, be given freely to this important and prominent firm that upheld the best traditions of commercial procedure and rectitude, conducted on lines harmonizing with commercial welfare and equality of opportunity for every ambitious member of its staff of nearly fifty clerks (Macmillan, 1968, p. 95).

Another, equally outstanding, liberated African was Samuel Herbert Pearse, who is remembered by the elder Efiong U. Aye as having been 'an enormous towering trader in colonial Calabar'.[4]

Liberated Africans also made a significant contribution in assisting the people of Calabar in the alleviation of the health problems that they faced. The leading figure in that regard was T. B. Duncan, a trained pharmacist who, instead of taking up employment at the Calabar African Hospital, decided to remain in private practice in order to attend to sick Africans. His medical prowess endeared him to the indigenes, who knew him only as 'Doctor' and, as a token of appreciation, a plot of land was donated to him on present-day Beecroft Street (Udoka, 1991, p. 309). The investments of African expatriates in the medical sector in Calabar enabled the Africans denied medical attention at European hospitals or unable to afford the charges at a hospital for Africans built by the Europeans, to still have access to medical care and helped to reduce local mortality rates.

Apart from the traders and those active in the field of medicine, other enterprising and industrious liberated Africans in Calabar were artisans and became pioneering figures in vocations such as bakery, blacksmithing, carpentry, cinematography and photography, electrical and mechanical work, printing, tailoring and welding. They dominated those trades from the mid-nineteenth century until around the turn of the century when the Calabar indigenes that they had trained began to establish their own businesses. It is on record that:

> The major mechanical workshops, bakery factories, photographic studios and furniture industries and metal construction workshops in the region owe their existence to

4 From an oral interview conducted on 19 March 2009.

> this group of investors [who] really transferred technical skills (technology) to the region. The acquisition of those technologies, coupled with the managerial skills which they also acquired during their period of apprenticeship enabled the indigenes to establish and efficiently manage their own business establishment (Udoka, 1991, pp. 311–312).

By the close of the revolutionary nineteenth century, the liberated Africans were held in high esteem and revered as heroes by the multiracial population that had converged on Calabar. In addition to changing the socioeconomic landscape of the city, they had also reshaped the character of race relations; and symbolically, they had demonstrated the ability of Africans to reach the highest point of human endeavour, as well as their adaptability in making the most of any given opportunity.

The memory of the legendary liberated Africans is perpetuated in the names of streets in the Calabar metropolis: O'Dwyer Street, off Target Road, commemorating Arthur Williamson O'Dwyer, whose achievements have continued to fascinate generations of Calabar people; Duncan Street, which runs from Edibe Edibe Road to Ballantyne Street, commemorating T. B. Duncan, who had shown so much compassion for Africans in Calabar; and Beckles Davies Street, which runs from Bassey Duke Street to Target Road, immortalizing Beckles Davies. Interestingly, those streets have not been affected by the recurrent renaming of streets in Calabar, which speaks volumes for the deep affection of people of Calabar for the liberated Africans from Sierra Leone. In view of the astonishing accomplishments of Calabar's liberated Africans in the nineteenth century, more of them should be immortalized so that their significant legacies, vision and foresight remain embedded in the public consciousness. It is truly hard for the people of Calabar to talk of the liberated Africans without feeling an enormous debt of gratitude for their exploits in the area between the mid-nineteenth and early twentieth centuries.

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CHAPTER 16

THE WHITNEY PLANTATION (HABITATION HAYDEL)

of the German Coast of Louisiana (1750–1860)

Ibrahima Seck

Introduction

The Whitney Plantation is located near Wallace on the west bank of the Mississippi River in St. John the Baptist Parish, Louisiana. Ambroise Heidel (1702 to *circa* 1770), the founder of this plantation, emigrated from Germany to Louisiana in 1721. He was one of thousands of German settlers brought to Louisiana by the French West India Company. They settled along the Mississippi River above New Orleans on the corridor eventually known as the *Côte des Allemands* (the German Coast). Ambroise Heidel became a modest farmer, beginning his career with a single pig as his livestock. In 1752, he bought the original tract of land of this plantation and became wealthy by planting indigo and rice. His son, Jean Jacques Haydel Sr., made the transition from indigo to sugar cane in the early nineteenth century. The Haydel family continued to run the plantation until 1860. In 1867 Bradish Johnson, a businessman born in Louisiana and raised in New York, bought the plantation and later renamed it after his grandson, Harry Whitney. Until then, the plantation had been called Habitation Haydel. Ownership of the land changed many times. From 1990 to 1999, the Formosa Chemicals and Fibre Corporation owned the property and intended to build the world's largest rayon factory there. However, the rayon business declined and Whitney was sold to its current owners, the Cummings family of New Orleans.

Servants indentured to the French West India Company under three-year contracts were brought to Louisiana. French officials also deported convicts and underprivileged people to Louisiana, but this policy soon began to threaten the social and political stability of the kingdom. The enslavement of Native Americans in their homeland proved to be inefficient and was eventually abolished. Africa became the readiest source of forced labour with the skills necessary to develop the subtropical lands of the Gulf Coast. The melding of the microhistory of Whitney plantation and the German Coast with the macrohistorical forces that shaped the evolution of plantation slavery and slave societies in the American South shows how specific African and American spaces were connected, spurring economic development and giving rise to the celebrated Afro-Creole culture of Louisiana. The history of the slave trade is not merely the history of deportation into the Americas of able-bodied people who could better tolerate the subtropical climate; more importantly, it is about the transfer of skills that had been used on African soil for many centuries. Beyond generating wealth and prosperity for the masters, enslaved Africans contributed to the emergence of a unique culture whose role in shaping American identity can no longer be ignored.

Atlantic crossings to the German Coast and Habitation Haydel

French colonization of Louisiana started in May 1699 when Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville established the colony of Biloxi on the Gulf Coast. The colony was very slow to develop because the colonists had to deal with an unfamiliar environment, diseases, a lack of food and attacks by the Native Americans. When the colony was ceded to John Law's Compagnie d'Occident (Company of the West) in 1717, the French population of Louisiana consisted of only four hundred men, women and children (Hall, 1992, p. 5). Finding French volunteers was a real challenge and thousands of German farmers were recruited by the Company to set up farms in the wilderness of Louisiana. In 1719, the Compagnie d'Occident was reorganized to become the Compagnie perpétuelle des Indes (Perpetual Company of the Indies) and its domain was extended to French trade in Asia. The previous year, the Company had gained control of the Concession of Senegal and had established its headquarters on the islands of Saint-Louis and Gorée. In theory, this created a monopoly on the West African coastal trade from Cap Blanc, Mauritania, to Sierra Leone

(Delcourt, 1952, p. 65). The decision was made to develop the remote colony of Louisiana by importing captives mainly from this area. The *Aurore*, the first slave ship to arrive in Louisiana from Africa, left Saint-Malo in July 1718 and was soon followed by the *Duc du Maine*.

Before the arrival of African captives, French officials also resorted to penal colonies in order to address the scarcity of volunteer settlers for the colony. A royal ordinance issued on 10 November 1718 allowed the deportation to the Americas of *faux-sauniers* and *fraudeurs de tabac* (salt and tobacco smugglers), deserting soldiers, so-called vagabonds, young people of all social backgrounds, and prostitutes held at the Salpêtrière Hospital in Paris. This ordinance was soon enforced, and judges were instructed to order the deportation of those sentenced to the galleys for vagrancy, including unemployed people from Paris. A special police force was created and the Company rewarded its officers for each arrest. The *bandouliers du Mississippi,* as they were commonly known, arrested people of all ages, including provincials who had come to Paris for business and labourers falsely accused of begging. They robbed their captives and released those who were willing to pay a ransom. The kingdom was soon shaken by major riots and mutinies during which many *bandouliers* were killed or injured by furious mobs. Finally, the king of France passed a law forbidding the deportation of French citizens. Within three years, the Company had sent more than 7,000 people to Louisiana, including 1,278 deportees, 2,462 indentured servants attached to the large concessions, 302 Company labourers and 977 soldiers. Most of these people died, as the January 1726 general census of the colony's population listed only 2,228 white people (Giraud, 1966, pp. 47–48, pp. 252–276). Peace was restored and the price for the stability of France and the development of the colony was paid by thousands of enslaved Africans.

Nearly 6,000 Africans were brought to French Louisiana, where they were put to work along with indentured servants and enslaved Native Americans. Most were shipped from Senegambia, the Bight of Benin and Central Africa (Hall, 1992, p. 60). The majority of the slave force came from Senegambia throughout the colonial period, especially during the French regime when Louisiana and the Concession of Senegal were both under the control of the French West India Company. Under Spanish rule, Louisiana witnessed significant economic expansion associated with increased imports of African captives. In 1795, the colony was home to nearly 20,000 enslaved individuals, of whom most had been born in Africa and 14 per cent lived on the German Coast (Hall, 1992, p. 279; Blume, 1990, p. 87). The origins of the Africans enslaved at Habitation Haydel perfectly reflect the patterns of the slave trade between Africa and Louisiana.

The African names documented included Senegal (Wolof), Poullard (Fulbe), Nard (Moor), Mandingo, Bambara, Soso (Susu), Temne, Kanga, Kiamba (Chamba), Mina, Igbo, Edo and Congo. Another name was Guinea, which could have designated any portion of the west coast of Africa (see Table). The 1819 inventory of Habitation Haydel listed 61 enslaved persons, 19 of them born in Africa. Of these, 12 were from Senegambia (63.1 per cent), 21 per cent were from the Bight of Benin and 15.7 per cent were from Central Africa. In the case of Senegambia, this distribution is close to the calculations made using the transatlantic slave trade database, which estimates the proportion contributed by Senegambia (Sierra Leone included) to the 22,000 Africans landed in Louisiana from 1719 to 1860 at 64.5 per cent (Eltis and Richardson, 2010, p. 220).

In March 1807, the United States Congress adopted a law forbidding the importation of enslaved people into the United States, effective from 1 January 1808. The domestic slave trade eventually displaced nearly a million people from the Upper South to the Lower South, and New Orleans became the largest slave market in the nation. Enslaved people were exported from Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North Carolina, Kentucky, Tennessee, Missouri and the District of Columbia. In Virginia, the largest supplier, slave breeding became a very lucrative business (Johnson, 1999; Sublette and Sublette, 2016). After the Louisiana Purchase, labels such as *nègre américain* (American Negro) and *négresse américaine* (American Negress) became common on German Coast plantation inventories and referred to those who came from the East Coast of the United States. Some were identified by the state or city of origin, such as *nègre de Virginie* (Virginia Negro) or *nègre de Baltimore* (Baltimore Negro). Enslaved people born in Louisiana were invariably called 'Creoles' and those of Afro-Indian descent were called 'griffes'.

Documenting slavery on the German Coast is a relatively easy task. Under the French *Code noir* (Black Code), the baptism of enslaved people was mandatory and deaths were recorded in the sacramental registers of the Catholic Church. This tradition was retained under Spanish rule (1769–1803) and after the Louisiana Purchase. However, the primary sources used for the study of the Haydel plantation are mostly courthouse records. These are located in different parishes on the German Coast, the Louisiana State Archives in Baton Rouge, the New Orleans Public Library and the Notarial Archives of Orleans Parish. Throughout the antebellum period, the documents were written mostly in French. Although documents were produced in Spanish and English, French remained the principal language used for official documents before the American

Civil War. The history of slavery is well documented, mainly through records of succession, sales of enslaved people and manumission. Succession records list sales and contain inventories describing landed properties and buildings, the enslaved people attached to them, tools and animals, and the old and new crops stored in granaries or standing in the fields. While these are snapshots taken in circumstances such as the death or bankruptcy of landowners, the evolution of the economic and social situation of the plantation can easily be chronicled over several inventories. Further information can be found from trials, mostly of enslaved persons who had escaped but also those accused of murder, theft and certain minor offences. Some cases related to enslaved persons who had taken part in revolts, the largest of which had broken out on the German Coast in January 1811. All these documents meticulously recorded the skills, diseases and personal behaviour of the enslaved individuals. Their names and nicknames, the names of their masters and their birthplaces – or their 'nations' for those born in Africa – were also scrupulously documented.

The enslaved Africans and their descendants cleared the land and planted corn, rice and vegetables. They also cultivated crops of indigo and the *indigotiers* (indigo makers) ran processing facilities. They later grew sugar cane and enslaved sugar masters ran the mills. They built levees to protect dwellings and crops. They also served as sawyers, carpenters, masons and smiths; raised horses, oxen, mules, cows, sheep, swine and poultry; worked as cooks; and performed all kinds of duties that made life easy and enjoyable for their masters. The enslaved people responded to the violent system by running away and sometimes by using violence back against their masters and overseers. According to Le Page du Pratz (1758, p. 334), a manager of the king's plantation, many of the Africans brought to Louisiana in the early years of the French regime killed themselves, sometimes by drowning themselves, or fled, roaming around the sea in the hope of returning home. However, revolt and *marronage* were not the only means of resistance. Social control was enforced mainly through physical pain inflicted on the enslaved. Their bodies were beaten, but cultural resistance prevented their spirits from being broken and their ties to their lost homes from being totally destroyed. They resisted through songs, both secular and sacred. Enslaved people sang while performing collective duties and individual tasks, and the very fields of their labour were the bedrocks of blues, zydeco, jazz and rock and roll. Their sacred songs accompanied the rise of the Black Church and their secret rituals in the swamps eventually gave rise to the Black Masking Indians and the Voodoo queens of New Orleans.

The women played a crucial role in the transmission of culture since they worked in kitchens, served as midwives and nursed the sick using medicinal plants. They breastfed the babies and raised all the children on the plantations, including those of the masters. They taught them the Creole language and introduced them to the wonders and evils of the world through storytelling. Africa was recreated through the cultivation of food crops such as okra and black-eyed peas and the preparation of dishes such as gumbo, couscous, jambalaya and smothered okra. Food is an important part of a community's identity. For people living in exile, what can evoke memories of home better than the smell and taste of familiar food? For Carney and Rosomoff, 'food is vested with symbolic ties to homelands left or lost and gives material expression to the way exiles commemorate the past and shape new identities amid alien cultures, diets, and languages' (Carney and Rosomoff, 2009, p. 185). The connection with Africa was also kept alive through storytelling and characters such as *Compère Bouki* (a Wolof story about a hyena), *Compère Lapin* (Brer Rabbit), *Compère Dahomey* and *Ti Négresse Congo* (the Tar Baby) have been passed down through the ages and are still remembered along the bayous of south-west Louisiana, where Senegal, Poullard and Ebow (Igbo) have been retained as family names. Among the Wolof of Senegal, a tale always ends with *fa la lè*èb *jogee tabbi gèèj* (from that time the story went on and travelled overseas). The memory of the deportation of their people and the tyranny of their kings is still conveyed today through song:

> Nga bay sab gerté / Dugub ji ne gañň / Buur teg ci loxo / Ne la jël naa ko ! / Ngèèn tëdd ba guddi / Buur tëgg ndëndam / Ni jog lèèn ! / Fii ku fi fanaan di jaam *[You grow your peanuts / And plenty millet / The king sets a hand on everything / And says it is not yours anymore! / In the deepest of your sleep / The king beats his drum / And says wake up! / You are not free anymore].*

Table 1. *African nations and Afro-Indians registered at Habitation Haydel (1819–1860)*

Nation	*Number*	*Origin*	*Observations*
Congo	16	Central Africa	
Mandingo	11	Senegambia	
Griffe	9	Louisiana	African and Indian
Kiamba (Chamba)	7	Bight of Benin	
Bambara	4	Senegambia	
Soso (Susu)	4	Senegambia	
Canga	3	Senegambia	
Pulaar/Fulbe	3	Senegambia	
Mina	3	Bight of Benin	
Igbo	2	Bight of Biafra	
Senegal/Wolof	1	Senegambia	
Nard/Moor	1	Senegambia	
Temne	1	Senegambia	
Guinea	1	Unknown	Imprecise location
Edo	1	Bight of Biafra	
Caracoli	1	French Antilles	African and Indian
Total African-born individuals: 58			
Senegambia	28	48.2%	
Central Africa	16	27.5%	
Bight of Benin	10	17.2%	
Bight of Biafra	3	5.1%	
Guinea	1	1.7%	

Source: calculation from original archives by Dr. Ibrahima Seck. Courtesy of the Whitney Plantation Museum.

Rice growers, *indigotiers* and sugar masters on the German Coast

From quite early on, the French West India Company encouraged rice-farming to solve the problem of food shortages in Louisiana. The captains of the first vessels sent to the coasts of Africa were instructed to acquire rice seeds and find people who knew how to cultivate this crop, which was perfectly suited to the subtropical climate of the Gulf Coast (Donnan, 1969, p. 636). The Africans who developed rice-farming in Louisiana had been exported from the coast stretching from Sine Saloum and the Gambia to Sierra Leone. This area was the maritime province of Mali, the vast empire centred on the Joliba (Niger) River where the main species of West African rice (*Oryza glaberrima*) had been domesticated since the second millennium BCE (Portères, 1951, p. 18). Many Malian peoples, including the Senufo, Somono, Bozo and Songhai, were deported under the generic name Bambara through Galam and Saint-Louis, the two French trading posts on the Senegal River. Wild indigo, which symbolized wealth and fertility, grew along these rivers. Women controlled trade in the blue dye from Soninkeland to Hausaland, and everyone from the Sahel and savanna grasslands of West Africa was likely to have at least a basic knowledge of indigo dyeing, since it was not reserved for any specific caste. Blacksmiths, weavers, woodworkers and leatherworkers, whether free or enslaved, could practise the trade. Africans also herded cattle on the *vacheries* (ranches) of Louisiana. In West Africa this was the exclusive area of expertise of the Fulbe, known as the *Nègres de nation Poullard* in Louisiana.

The German Coast soon became the granary of New Orleans. The German colonists planted corn, rice and vegetables on their small farms. Rice required more work and specific skills to prepare the land, plant the seeds, control the water and perform the tricky task of hulling the grain with mortars and pestles. Following official requests to France for more German labourers, in addition to the usual demands for enslaved people for land cultivation and soldiers for protection, a second wave of German colonists arrived during the 1750s (Merrill, 2005, p. 31). Ambroise Heidel and his wife were mentioned in the 1724 census of the German Coast. He grew corn but did not own any enslaved people at that point. The 1731 census listed Ambroise, his wife, two children and one *engagé* (indentured servant). As well as corn, it is very likely that he grew rice since he owned three enslaved Africans (Maduell, 1972, p. 40, p. 117). Between 1724

and 1731, 12 slave ships had arrived from Africa. All but one of these vessels had come from the Concession of Senegal (Hall, 1992, p. 60).

Indigo became the chief export of Louisiana in the 1750s, accounting for 20 per cent of the total value of its trade with France. Production increased steadily and the crop of 1760 was valued at 1,350,000 livres (Villiers du Terrage, 1903, pp. 147–148). Indigo became a significant part of the landscape of the German Coast in the 1770s, but some planters, including Ambroise Haydel, had entered the indigo business much earlier. The 1766 census of St. John the Baptist Parish indicates that his property had grown from 6 to 11.5 arpents and his labour force was comprised of 20 enslaved individuals. By 1800, many regions of the Western Hemisphere had either abandoned indigo production altogether or had reduced international trade because of unfavourable political and economic environments or natural events. In 1803, no more than 30,000 pounds of indigo were manufactured in Louisiana, as the planters had turned to more lucrative staples such as cotton and sugar cane.

After the Panic of 1819, the plantations of Louisiana experienced enormous growth sustained by a thriving banking system. A steady supply of slave labour coming from the Upper South and improvements to sugar production techniques made Louisiana's planters ever wealthier. Two years before statehood, the Territory of Orleans was home to nearly 35,000 enslaved individuals. By 1860, over 331,000 enslaved people lived in Louisiana (Miller and Smith 1988, p. 414). According to Follett (2005, p. 24):

> Steam power profoundly shaped the sugar industry, but its economic success rested primarily on the mass importation of African American bondspeople to Louisiana.
>
> [...]
>
> The seasonal nature of sugar production imposed a forbidding regime on the slaves [...] gravely affected slave women's capacity to bear children, and it left an appalling legacy of death in its wake.

On 8 January 1811, hundreds of enslaved people on the German Coast rose up and marched downriver toward New Orleans. They were armed with rifles, sabres or simply their tools. They killed two white men and caused considerable damage to the plantations they crossed. The local militia, backed by federal troops, was unable to stop them until three days later. Many were killed in action or escaped and became maroons in the swamps. Those who were captured were brought before special courts on the German Coast and in New Orleans. At least 60 insurgents were sentenced to death and executed in front of the

plantations to which they belonged. Their heads were then cut off and planted on poles (Thrasher, 1996; Rasmussen 2011).

Jean Jacques Sr., the youngest child of Ambroise Haydel and the last surviving member of the first Louisiana-born generation of the Haydels, witnessed two economic periods that differed dramatically. Indigo was booming at the time of his marriage in 1774 and, by the time he retired in 1820, he had reaped the benefits of sugar production. His main plantation was 17 arpents wide and 80 arpents deep ("*double profondeur*" [double depth]). The sugar industry still used only animals and human labour, and his sugar mills produced 190 hogsheads (190,000 pounds) of sugar. Alexis and Barnabé, the two sugar masters (*sucriers*), were both born in West Africa and belonged to the Bambara nation. The main house built on the site was described as a *superbe maison de maître* (magnificent master's house). Twelve cabins housed 61 enslaved people, most of them field hands. Some were referred to as *bons domestiques* (good servants) or *habiles à la garde des troupeaux* (good herdsmen). The oldest among them was Marguerite, who was Creole, 66 years of age and registered with her husband Sam, an enslaved person from the Soso (Susu) nation, who was 60 years old and blind. One enslaved person suffered from a hernia and another was recovering. This illness, associated with hard labour, was quite common among the workforce in the area. The loss of freedom and homesickness certainly affected many of them, especially those born in Africa, such as Bernard, an enslaved person of 50 years of age from the Kiamba (Chamba) nation, who was affected by *moments de démence* (fits of madness). Manuel, a Creole enslaved person aged 23 years, was described as a *voleur et maronneur* (a thief and a maroon).

Jean Jacques Haydel Jr. and his brother Marcellin significantly increased the population of enslaved people and, by 1840, nearly 200 were housed in 22 cabins. Azélie, the widow of Marcellin, took control of the plantation from 1840 until her death in November 1860. That same year she was listed among the largest slaveholders of Louisiana and her estate encompassed 2,200 acres of land (Menn, 1964, pp. 360–361). The plantation's production peaked in 1854 with 407 hogsheads of sugar (Champommier, 1854). From the time of Ambroise Heidel to that of Marie Azélie Haydel, a small farm dedicated entirely to food crops had been turned into a huge agro-industrial unit. The Big House built by Jean Jacques Haydel Sr. remains today one of the finest surviving examples of Spanish and French Creole architecture and one of the earliest and best-preserved raised cottages in Louisiana. Moreover, it is one of the very few historic American houses known to have high-quality and complex decorative wall paintings on both its exterior and its interior. For Kilpatrick, the elaborate

ornamentation conveyed to all visitors the high level of economic success and cultural sophistication that the Haydels had attained (Kilpatrick, 1992, p. 3).

© The Whitney Plantation Museum/Sam R. Sutton

FIGURE 1. *The master house of Haydel plantation*

Owing to the number of outbuildings added to the site over the years, the Whitney Plantation has great historical value and provides a unique perspective on the development of the Louisiana plantation. Very few original plantation outbuildings have been preserved and it is very unusual to find them elsewhere along the river. The plantation also houses the last extant example of a true French Creole barn and the oldest separate kitchen in Louisiana (Edwards 1991, pp. 1–20). It was added to the American National Register of Historic Places in 1992.

From a museum of Louisiana Creole culture to a museum of slavery

The Formosa Chemicals and Fibre Corporation intended to turn the historic structures on the Whitney Plantation into a museum of Louisiana Creole culture. Formosa commissioned a study by the Department of Geography and Anthropology at Louisiana State University. A team of researchers led by anthropologist Jay Edwards immediately recognized the historic and archaeological significance of the buildings at the Whitney Plantation and produced several scholarly volumes on various topics such as architecture, archaeology, decorative art and museum planning. The main focus of the museum was culture in the form of material objects found on the masters' premises. Although the topic of slavery was covered in some of the volumes produced by the team of researchers, none were devoted solely to the study of the people who were enslaved on the Haydel plantation.

The Whitney Plantation is a genuine landmark built by enslaved Africans and African-Americans. It is now the site of the first museum in the United States exclusively dedicated to understanding slavery and its profound negative impact on the lives of the descendants of enslaved people. The Big House is not the focus of the museum because it should never be forgotten that the perpetual economic growth which led to such luxury was brought about by the blood, sweat and tears of people who were denied their freedom and put to work like beasts of burden. Gabriel, an enslaved person from the Congo nation born around 1790, knew better than anyone what it meant to be enslaved on the Haydel plantation, where he spent more than 50 years of his life under four different masters. He belonged to Jean Jacques Haydel Sr. and was sold to Marcellin Haydel in 1820. In 1860, Gabriel was listed as the property of the late Marie Azélie Haydel. He was then 70 years old and respectfully called Vieux Gabriel.

Under Louisiana law at the time, enslaved persons were considered real property attached to the land and their sale had to be officially registered by notaries in the cities or by justices of the peace, who also served as notaries, assisted by clerks. Auctions were a common way of liquidating property and settling debts, and some auctioneers made their living selling enslaved people. In New Orleans, auctions were held every Saturday and attracted crowds of curious people under the rotundas of the city's luxury hotels (Johnson, 1999, p. 54). On the last day of April 1840, after Marcellin Haydel's death, his bankrupt brother Jean Jacques Haydel Jr. sold 70 individuals attached to the plantation,

then owned by his sister-in-law. The sale took place in the Bath Saloon of the St. Louis Hotel located in the French Quarter of New Orleans, the city's most famous slave market. The group, exhibited and sold by auctioneer Joseph Le Carpentier and recorded before the notary public Felix Grima, mostly comprised young men and women but also included elderly people; 12 had been born in Africa and suffered from various ailments such as asthma, hernias or haemorrhoids. There were 66 adults in all and 8 of the 10 children recorded were with their mothers. Lady, a farm worker, 33 years of age, from the East Coast, was sold in one lot with her five children, between 2 and 8 years of age, for $2,650. The oldest enslaved person sold at this auction was Jacob, who was 70 years of age, had been born in Africa and suffered from a hernia, for $175. There was no retirement for enslaved people, unless they were freed or they bought their freedom from their masters. Free people of colour could own their property, including enslaved people, but this was an epiphenomenon among the Louisiana master class. Étienne Villeré, a free man of colour, lived on the Haydel plantation, where he died on 29 July 1850, at 80 years of age. He was then the owner of five enslaved people, including Little Guim (Jim), an African who was 66 years of age and had been bought 10 years earlier at the above-mentioned auctions along with Marianne, a 56-year-old woman, originally from Congo. Sery was considered an 'idiot' and sold for just $105, the lowest price on that day. The man who bought her saw the full potential of a young woman of only 25 years of age.

Enslaved women and girls were more exposed to abuse because of their gender. They were also expected to be good breeders and their children could be sold like cattle to other plantations as soon as they reached the age of 10, according to the 1825 Louisiana Civil Code. Sexual exploitation added a further degree of horror to the lives of enslaved females. Each individual described in official records as a 'mulatto' was, by definition, related to white people to some extent. A priori, they were born only to enslaved females who had been impregnated by their masters. This was common before emancipation.

The couple who later became the ancestors of the African-American Haydel family, Victor Theophile Haydel (1835–1924 [Figure 2]) and Marie Celeste Becnel (1833–1885) were both born on the Haydel plantation. Anna, Victor's mother, was a mixed-raced American, born on the East Coast, probably in Virginia. There is no official document referring to any 'relationship' between either of the two enslaved women and their white masters. However, it was common knowledge that, although both men were married, refusing sex with a white man would not have been an option for these women.

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FIGURE 2. *Victor Haydel around 1920*

Francoise, Celeste's mother, was a cook on the plantation, where she gave birth to eight children between 1819 and 1835. She had finally been freed shortly before she died on 29 December 1841. The brother and brother-in-law of Marie Azélie Haydel were the fathers of Victor and Celeste, respectively.

Anna was 60 years old and in very poor health (*maladive*) when she was valued at 100 piastres in the inventory of Marie Azélie Haydel's estate. According to her family's oral history, she remembered boarding a ship bound for Louisiana with her mother and one or two of her brothers. The mother died at sea and her body was dropped off the side of the ship. Anna was bought at the slave market in New Orleans by Marcellin Haydel. Her brother or brothers was or were sold

off to another plantation, never to be seen by her again. Azélie had no children and Anna, another enslaved person, became her companion. This story was recounted to Curtis M. Graves, a retiree of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) and former member of the Texas Legislature. He was born in 1952 and is the son of Mabel Haydel Graves (1908–1999), the grandson of Elphège Haydel (1879–1959) and the great-grandson of Victor Haydel (1835–1924). Anna passed away in New Orleans in 1871. Victor and Celeste married in 1871 but had been partners since the 1850s. They never learned how to read and write because it was against the law to teach enslaved people anything except how to count. After the American Civil War, they both worked as domestic servants until they were able to purchase some land. They raised 10 children. The oldest ones never went to school and worked as day labourers to support their parents. Clay Haydel, the fifth child of Victor and Celeste, married Nellie Ory, the sister of the celebrated jazz musician Kid Ory. Their oldest son, Clarence Clement Haydel,

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FIGURE 3. *The Morial Family after Ernest 'Dutch' Morial was elected mayor of New Orleans (1978). From left to right : Jacques, Ernest 'Dutch' Morial, Monique, Marc, Sybil Hayden Morial, Julie, Chery.*

was the father of Sybil Haydel Morial, an educator, activist and community leader. In 1978, Sybil became the first lady of New Orleans when her husband, Ernest N. Morial, was elected as the first African-American mayor of the Crescent City (Figure 3). Marc Morial, their son, also rose to fame. He was elected President of the United States Conference of Mayors and, like his father, served two full terms as mayor of New Orleans.

In her memoirs, Sybil Haydel Morial recalled the exceptional achievements of her family against the odds, given the horrors of slavery and racial discrimination faced by her ancestors. While growing up in New Orleans, she could not enter City Park because it was forbidden for black people. Unfortunately, the vast majority of African-Americans cannot claim similar successes as they continue to contend with poverty, poor-quality schools, violence and mass incarceration.

Conclusion

On the grounds of the Whitney Plantation, visitors are offered a unique perspective on the life of enslaved people in Louisiana through restored historic buildings, exhibits, memorials and hundreds of first-person accounts of slavery. The plantation is designed to be a place of commemoration that takes positive action and serves as a catalyst for the second American revolution and the birth of post-racial America through lasting and thoughtful reparations. Education is at the centre of the Whitney Plantation Museum and its founders are convinced that the story of slavery is not merely a story of deportation and forced labour in the tobacco and rice fields, the vineyards or the sugar and indigo mills. As well as laying the foundations of the American economy, enslaved Africans and their descendants helped shape and define American culture and identity.

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CHAPTER 17

CATHERINE MULGRAVE-ZIMMERMANN

Maureen Warner-Lewis

In March 1833, a young girl named Ngeve was out walking, playing and fishing on the seafront in Luanda, Angola, in the company of her sisters and a male cousin.[1] 'Ngeve', from *ongeve*, meaning 'hippopotamus' in the Umbundu language of southern Angola, was the traditional female name for the second-born of a pair of twins; the other twin would have been named Njamba, after *onjamba* ("elephant"). We assume the twins to have been with the group of children on the seafront, but it is unclear whether both were among those lured by sailors into a boat and carried out to a large ship riding the waves offshore. The schooner, the *Heroina*, had sailed out from São Tomé, an island off the Central African coast bound for Havana, Cuba, with a load of 303 slaves destined for the plantations and residences of that Caribbean island, captained by a Portuguese man named Sabino.[2] The Portuguese had colonized both São

1 The account of Ngeve's childhood, enslavement and experience of a shipwreck was given by Catherine Mulgrave-Zimmermann to her second husband, Johannes Zimmermann, who then relayed it to the Basel Mission in a letter dated 18 November 1852. The letter was translated into English by Mary Kuck. For a transcription of the letter in German, see Lovejoy (2010, Appendix A): https://doczz.fr/doc/1369155/the-provenance-of-catherine-mulgrave-zimmermann (Accessed 12 June 2022.)

2 In a 2006 comment on my research findings, Paul Lovejoy noted that the *Heroina* was not mentioned in Eltis et al. (1999). However, he did point out that there were ships captained in the 1820s, 1830s, and 1840s by persons named João Sabino and J. Sabino leaving out of Bahia and São Tomé and operating in the Bight of Benin, Bight of Biafra, and western Central Africa.

Tomé and Angola (from 1470 and 1575 respectively) and there were close family, commercial and shipping ties between the neighbouring colonies.

Ngeve and two other children were seduced by the sailors' enticement of sweets but the cousin ran away; just an eight-year-old schoolboy, he was nevertheless more suspicious of the strangers than those who fell for the blandishments; perhaps he had heard tell of men capturing and carrying away the inhabitants of his country. The girls, struggling to escape their captors, were put aboard the sailors' boat and taken to the schooner where, in the captain's quarters, they encountered a mulatto woman who acted as interpreter between them and the crew – she was crying inconsolably, no doubt because of being forced to provide other services to the captain, which might be why the children found themselves confined in casks from time to time.

Ngeve was a 'sambo', that is one-quarter white and three-quarters black.[3] Her father, the son of an Umbundu chief, had been sent by his father to receive a Western education and his literacy subsequently qualified him to work as a clerk in a Portuguese firm, no doubt involved in the importation of guns, alcohol, cloths and household goods and the export of ivory, beeswax, rubber, animal skins and enslaved people. Ngeve's father had married a mulatto woman – half white half black – named Sophina, whose father was a Portuguese merchant. All along the coast of West Africa – from the Gambia and Senegal (Mathurin-Mair, 1978, pp. 20–26) through Elmina in the Gold Coast and PortoNovo in Dahomey to Angola in Central Africa – European merchants had the support of the Catholic Church and mercantile houses when seeking to marry or form a liaison with well-connected local women. Such unions strengthened the legitimacy of the colonial regime and gave the colonizers an entrée into the culture, politics and economy of the areas that they occupied or wanted to bring under their control; the mulattoes, for their part, gained influence by dint of both their access to capital and education through their European connections and their links with the indigenous social and political networks.

The Catholic Church had influence in the French and Portuguese colonies in Africa through its placement in its enclaves of religious orders, such as the Capuchins, Franciscans, Carmelites and Jesuits. Ngeve would later recall having seen monks in cowls and vestments in her town and known of holy water;

3 A Caribbean colour/racial category. For more on the multiple racial mixtures and colour gradations in the West Atlantic, see Stephens (1989) and Warner-Lewis (2007, p. 119). In Africa, where there was less of an obsession with colour variations, the ethnic categories were not so subtle; Zimmermann, in his letter, refers to Ngeve/Catherine, as she no doubt categorized herself, as a 'mulatto', a term used to connote mixed African-Caucasian ancestry.

having seen a bishop, churches and images of saints, European soldiers and forts, multistorey houses, European kitchenware being used in her home and her European grandfather inoculating his grandchildren against smallpox; and having known of European schools – she had doubtless been attending one before her capture (Lovejoy, 2010, p. 5; Lovejoy, 2011). She did not name the forts but according to Lovejoy (2010, p. 5) they were likely to have been the Fortaleza de São Pedro da Barra and the Fortaleza São Miguel;[4] as to her recollection of another, on an island opposite the harbour, while there was indeed a sandbar or breakwater called Ilha da Luanda creating a channel of calm in front of the harbour, it was not a fort but an arsenal and a fishing village that were located there.

Ngeve would also recall a one-day journey to visit a plantation, first by boat and then:

> The last part of the way was by ox-drawn wagon and she slept along the way in a little village. On the plantation there was a lovely European house, where trading was carried on. She was there for fourteen days. Every morning she saw ice, snow, and frost in the […] snow-covered mountains. She also saw zebras and elephants. Oranges, figs, mangoes, and foreign corn[5] grow there (Lovejoy, 2010, p. 5).

The place described could have been in the highlands beyond Moçamedes in the region of Lubango, then known as Sá da Bandeira, in south-west Angola (Warner-Lewis, 2008, pp. 32–43); or in the highlands up the Kwanza River, south of Luanda. The Kwanza was navigable for about 140 miles from the sea, allowing for trade between Calumbo, Cambambe, Muxima and Massangano, and its banks were lined with the plantations of Portuguese and mulatto settlers. Ngeve 'apparently went far enough up […] to see hills whose cloud cover could give the appearance of snow' (Lovejoy, 2010, p. 8); but she had never yet seen snow so there might have been an element of mental reconstruction and hindsight to her account. Also problematic was the mention of an ox-drawn wagon, the first ever reference to the use of that type of transport in Angola – unlike in South Africa, where it was being used by the Boers, and São Tomé, where it had been introduced by the Portuguese because of the mountainous terrain (Lovejoy, 2010, p. 8).

4 See Lovejoy, 2010: 5. José Curto assisted Lovejoy in this research project. For a revision, see Lovejoy 2011, pp. 247–63.

5 Indian corn or maize, as distinct from Guinea corn or sorghum.

Catherine Mulgrave-Zimmermann recounted Ngeve's life story to Johannes Zimmermann, her second husband, who then narrated it in his letter of 18 November 1852 to the Basel Mission Committee headquarters to justify his decision to marry her. Apart from the description of her town and the story of her capture, she gave him details about the journey aboard the *Heroina*. The ship had passed within sight of an island in the central South Atlantic Ocean and approached from its volcanic and mountainous south-east. It must have been Ascension Island, which had been designated a port for one of the anti-slavery squadrons ordered by the British Government to patrol the waters off the coast of western Central Africa – as well as the approaches to ports in Brazil and the Caribbean – in order to staunch the supply of enslaved people from Africa to Western locations. So it is not surprising to learn that the *Heroina* was intercepted by a squadron patrol sometime after passing the island. The captain was fearful, as the children observed from their vantage point in the captain's quarters – as we know from other narratives of the enslaved, this was not an unusual practice, perhaps because children were viewed as inoffensive and unlikely to behave in a rebellious manner, unlike the older teenagers and adults, who were kept below deck, in the hold, which would be opened daily to allow them up for fresh air; one adult had been taken on deck and badly beaten as punishment for trying to kill himself with a steel knife.

As it turned out, the *Heroina* was allowed safe passage by its interceptors and one can only conclude there to have been bribery or collusion in play. How else could a schooner with over three hundred enslaved persons in the hold have been allowed to escape the dragnet by a squadron patrol? Indeed, the annals of history on illicit slave trade voyages after 1809, when the Abolition of the Slave Trade Act passed by the British parliament in 1807 came into effect, are replete with cases of commissions of inquiry into accusations made and charges of underhand dealings brought by competitors against Portuguese, Spanish, Brazilian, French, American and British carriers (Asiegbu, 1969; Sherwood, 2007, pp. 21–22).

The next we learn of the *Heroina* concerns its shipwreck, on the 40th day of the crossing, on the reefs off Rocky Key, now Rocky Point, on the south-central coast of Jamaica. The ship's navigational gear had gone awry, as it should have been rounding the west coast of Jamaica and bearing north towards Havana, on the north-west coast of Cuba. The wreck happened in the middle of the night and the *Heroina* broke in two;

> [T]he front half with most of the slaves was torn away by the waves [and] the masts broke off […] [T]he three girls came onto the deck [and] saw the front half of the ship drifting on the waves, covered with wretched people; the slaves screamed and wailed, the captain cried, the sailors ate and drank – until daybreak. […] [The girls and the mulatto woman] clung to the captain, who took care of them while wave after wave broke over them.
>
> […]
>
> At daybreak the sailors bound two masts together and put the girls on them. One sailor sat in front, the other behind, and thus they rowed to the bank. Those who could swim got into the water, but the others, some on boards and some on that which was left of the ship, escaped onto the shore; of course not everyone, for many were washed away (Johannes Zimmermann, in his letter of 18 November 1852).

The wreck took the number that had perished on the journey to 61 people. Six corpses remained visible on board and three people initially deemed 'past recovery' and left behind by the salvage party were brought ashore alive the following morning.

The coast was deserted and the survivors spent the next two days in the hot sun without food and warming themselves in the night by lighting fires and huddling in groups, which was how the Jamaican marine authorities found them, at 9 p.m. on Saturday 20 April, after having first learned of the wreck at l p.m. that afternoon. At 6 a.m. the next day, a sloop that had been under repair at Old Harbour Bay arrived with two lifeboats that took the survivors first to Old Harbour then to Port Royal and then a customs warehouse in Kingston. The captain and his crew were led away in chains,[6] no doubt to be brought before an official inquiry and imprisoned.

Soon after the events of the shipwreck became publicly known, the governor of the island, Constantine Henry Phipps, 2nd Earl of Mulgrave, visited the survivors at the warehouse with his wife Maria, Marchioness of Normanby. A politically liberal man in his mid-30s, Mulgrave had already outraged Jamaica's white society by attending a dance organized by coloured people. Jamaican society at the time was rigidly stratified along colour lines – whites on the highest rungs, mixed-race (coloured) on those lower down and blacks on the lowest, with class divisions within each category – but the overarching divide was between the free and the enslaved, the category 'slave' being indistinguishable

6 As recounted by Richard Berry in a letter to the Collector and Comptroller of H. M. Customs, Kingston, dated 21 April 1833, and in a report carried in the *Kingston Chronicle and City Advertiser*, 24 April 1833. Jamaica National Library, Kingston.

from race, in this case 'African' and 'of African descent'. Mulgrave was to scandalize white society once again by taking three of the child survivors to live with himself and his wife at King's House, the governor's residence, in Spanish Town: Ngeve and her sister and a boy, likely to have been a young Mbundu from the Ndongo, that is Luanda and its hinterland. The children were baptized together in Spanish Town on 10 February 1834, Ngeve and her sister were renamed Catherine and Susan Mulgrave[7] and the boy become John Mulgrave. According to Mathurin-Mair (1978), the children were 'treated […] like members of the family, ate with them at the same table' and 'the governor educated them himself', which is perhaps an overstatement, given the demands on his time and the fact that he could afford to employ a tutor. One big change for Ngeve at the time would have been the transition from Portuguese, Umbundu and Kimbundu to expressing herself exclusively in English; among the advantages of the mulattoes, as an intermediary population in Africa, was that of 'linguistic mobility' (Mathurin-Mair, 1978, p. 22).

Recalled in 1834, the year after the shipwreck, the Earl and the Marchioness left for London, taking John with them[8] and placing the sisters at the Female Refuge School, an orphanage run by the Moravian Church and housing thirty girls in Fairfield in the Manchester parish of central Jamaica. The Marchioness was a patron of the school and Catherine's education would continue there. In her later teenage years she became a monitor and junior teacher at the school and at a teacher-training institute started up by the Moravians in Fairfield in 1840. She was then sent for formal training to the Mico Normal Teaching Institution in Kingston, where she stayed for about one year.[9] Subsequently, Catherine, or Kitty as the Moravian missionaries called her, was placed in charge of a Moravian day school at the Nazareth church in Manchester, then appointed as mistress at a larger Moravian day school at the New Bethlehem chapel, also

7 By 1846, Susan Mulgrave's name had changed to Susan Wilson. See the record of the report posted by Brother H. G. Pfeiffer, Fairfield, Jamaica, on 5 February 1846, in the *Periodical Accounts Relating to the Missions of the Church of the United Brethren Established among the Heathen,* Vol. 18, p. 436.

8 John died of smallpox in Dublin, where the Mulgraves were living, on 27 February 1838. A plaque fixed to the wall of Saint Werburgh's Church commemorates his passing with the words: 'His integrity, fidelity and kind and amiable qualities had endeared him to all his fellow servants, at whose desire this tablet is erected by his godmother': the Marchioness no doubt. See 'John Mulgrave, The African Boy', posted by Donal Fallon on the Come Here to Me! weblog on 17 May 2012, to which I was alerted by Dr. Brian Heap, available at: https://comeheretome.com/2012/05/17/john-mulgrave-the-african-boy/

9 See 'Letter from George Thompson to Thomas Buxton, 25 January 1843' in the Papers of Sir Thomas Fowell Buxton collection, reel 9, at Rhodes House Library, Oxford, UK. I thank Dr Lascelles Newman for this information.

in Manchester. Among the subjects taught were reading, writing, grammar, composition, music, Bible knowledge, geography and arithmetic.

New Bethlehem and the Nazareth chapel were visited in 1842 by a three-man delegation from the Basel Mission, a Protestant mission headquartered in Basle, Switzerland, and devoted to spreading the Gospel beyond Europe; one member of the delegation was the product of one of its earliest overseas missions, the by then discontinued station in present-day Liberia. The Mission was contemplating the establishment of a centre in the Gold Coast and, since the Moravian Church and the Basel Mission were both headed by Germans, they formed complementary communities of religious activists. The Basel Mission therefore knew of the proselytizing work of the Moravians among the enslaved people of Jamaica since 1754, and its outreach to Jamaica was an effort to recruit black Christians to help to run its new location in West Africa – it was thought that black people could better survive the environment of the malarial tropics and, furthermore, that the lived example of black Christians would encourage the African population to receive more favourably the religious message of the missionaries. In the end, the Basel Mission delegation successfully attracted 25 persons to accompany them to the Gold Coast: a group comprising six married couples, four unmarried adults, nine children and Catherine Mulgrave.

Catherine had been added to the group because the Moravian hierarchy in Jamaica, saw the young Liberian, George Peter Thompson, as good marriage material for her and decided to promote their union. Arranged marriages among members were customary in Moravian Church and Basel Mission circles; and Thompson, taken from Cape Mount, Liberia, at the age of eight years, had been educated at a Christian orphanage in Basle, spoke fluent German and was going out to the Gold Coast as a schoolteacher. The marriage of the two well-educated and Europeanized Africans took place on 11 December 1842.

The missionary group left Port Royal for the Gold Coast on 8 February 1843, carrying seedlings of cacao, sugar cane, mango, breadfruit, coffee, avocado, orange and arrowroot to diversify the output of the agricultural stations that they planned to establish. In addition to agriculturalists, it included persons familiar with the arts of carpentry and masonry with a view to introducing the indigenous population to improved building construction. The group arrived in the Gold Coast the following Easter.

The marriage of Catherine and George produced two offspring: George Junior, born in 1844, and Rosine, born in 1846. However, George Senior ran into professional difficulties with his German superiors and, after enduring their discriminatory racist attitudes towards him (Miller 1994, p. 131), was subsequently

dismissed from the mission. In the meantime, his drunkenness and infidelity was placing a strain on the couple's domestic relations. By 1847, Catherine had had enough and they separated. The Church later countenanced a divorce.

In 1850, a leader of the Basel Mission Committee, broaching the issues raised by Catherine's unattached status and the fact that she was a single mother bringing up two children, actually suggested marriage with one of the German missionaries as a possible solution, which is what happened, in 1851, when a relatively new recruit to the mission, Johannes Zimmermann, decided to marry Catherine. He did so without first seeking the permission of his superiors, however, which caused consternation as it was the Mission's policy to prohibit its personnel from indulging in intimate interracial alliances, adopting African customs and dress and exchanging gifts with or entering into financial or commercial relationships with 'natives' (Miller, 1994, p. 132). In the end, the marriage was accepted on account of Zimmermann's leadership qualities and his usefulness to the Mission's cause – he is described as possessing a commanding personality and great powers of persuasion and audacity (Miller, 1994, p. 141); also, Catherine was considered 'more "cultured"' than other indigenous African women and the Mission's local authorities were aware that she was contemplating a transfer to the Methodist mission if her situation with its own missionaries became untenable. Basel Mission headquarters in Switzerland clearly disapproved of Zimmermann's errant beliefs and actions and decreed that he was 'no longer to consider himself a European citizen and […] must never expect to bring his wife or children to Europe'. Until May 1872, when Zimmermann retired in good standing from the mission, Catherine and her children were therefore unable to accompany him to Europe, such as in 1862, when he was recalled to Basle for 'retraining'.

Despite suffering several miscarriages, Catherine had five children with Johannes: Johanna (1852–?), Augusta Amalie (1858–1923), Gottfried (1861–1891), Christoph (1863–1865) and Gottlieb Christoph; the latter two died in infancy.[10] In addition to their own offspring, Catherine and Johannes also reared a number of other children over the course of their service at various mission stations, thus reproducing the extended family structure of both Ngeve's West Africa and Zimmermann's rural Swabian homeland (Haenger 1995, p. 13).

Catherine had an active professional life. Put in charge of the Basel Mission school with her first husband George on their arrival in the Gold Coast, she

10 Based on information on Catherine's children received from Ulrike Sill of the University of Basel on 3 October 2006.

went on to become the principal of the first girls' school in Christiansborg, site of a Danish fort on the Gulf of Guinea and now part of modern-day Accra. She was to return there in later life, after moving to her second husband's hometown of Gerlingen, Germany, and staying there with him until after his death on 13 December 1876. Back in the Gold Coast in 1877, her participation in school life was no longer as intense as it had formerly been; the fact that her daughter Augusta Amalie then worked for the Mission at the Christiansborg girls' school from 1889 to 1892, after teaching at the Girls' Institute in Aburi from 1877 to 1883, however, meant that Catherine's contribution to female education in the Gold Coast was intergenerational. In any event, she had worked in schools and communities with Johannes at several locations over the course of their marriage: in 1854 they were living in Abokobi at the foot of the Akwapim Ridge, were later posted to Akropona in the Volta Basin region and then, from 1859, spent twelve years in Odumase Krobo, in south-eastern Gold Coast. Zimmermann himself had integrated so well into Ga society that he was elected to the chieftaincy council of King Odonkor Azu in the Ga-Adanme state of Krobo (Jenkins, 1988, fn. 13; Haenger, 1995, p. 13).

Their union had been a happy one, as Johannes was sympathetic to the social mores of African peoples; he had even designed a missionary's uniform based on the local male dress, in spite of Mission headquarters having discouraged the use of African vestments. He opposed the transatlantic slave trade but countenanced African domestic slavery, which he felt provided family structures for the integration of persons without a sense of community and identity; having understood the rationale for the practice, he felt that it would be gradually displaced by the Christian example; and having been cured of a serious ailment by a herbalist, he did not scoff at herbal medicines. The roots of his empathy lay in his interest in local languages; to learn a language was to understand a society's way of life, value systems and categorization of people, objects and events. He learned to speak and devised a spelling system for the Ga language; he translated the Bible into Ga and composed hymns in Ga; and in 1858 he published *A grammatical sketch and vocabulary of the Akra- or Ga Language with an appendix on the Adanme dialect* followed, in 1874, by a Tshi-Akra-English dictionary compiled with Reverends J. G. Christaller and C. W. Locher.

Catherine was no doubt proud of her husband's accomplishments and empathetic contribution to African life, and Johannes, too, was proud of her: 'my number one Catherine', as he wrote in a 1852 letter. She certainly earned the admiration of her Mission colleagues, both in Jamaica and the Gold Coast, for her assiduous work, her devotion to teaching and her influential role in

the formal education of young Christian Gold Coast women. In addition to that seminal role, we should also note the charming effect that Catherine and her sister Susan had had as children; one Moravian pastor, writing in 1834, commended the 'two young girls' for '[T]heir amiable dispositions, pleasing manners, and wonderfully providential leading, [which] render[ed] them objects of interest to ourselves, and every Christian visitor'.[11]

Catherine died of pneumonia in Osu, the village attached to Fort Christiansborg, on 14 January 1891, and was buried there the same day. She was the last of the 1843 group from Jamaica to have passed away at a Mission location. Her tombstone gives her date of birth as 19 November 1826, but that has been contested: in the light of the dense detail and quality of her recollections, as recorded in Zimmermann's 1852 letter to the Basel Mission, and the relative ages of her siblings, it would mean that she was only six years of age when she was kidnapped. Zimmerman's letter cites her saying that she was 13 years old at that time, meaning that she was born in 1820 and aged over 70 when she passed away.

Catherine's narrative of her life as a child in Africa and on the ship indicates a lively intelligence and a highly observant mind, alive to the details of her surroundings. On the other hand, she endured the difficult challenges and went on to become a pioneer in the bringing of new knowledge to communities in Jamaica and West Africa; there were several wrenching separations – from relatives, from familiar places, from husbands – but she had the courage and strength of character to overcome them and exercise agency as she navigated the difficulties towards the spiritual and material satisfaction that she had always worked for. One hopes that she was able in her latter days to attain peace of mind and a sense of pride in her accomplishments and her noble life of sharing. Her life story illustrates, among many other things, the sometimes serendipitous nature of personal and historical events and the tremendous potential talent of the individual that can be realized if placed in favourable circumstances.

11 See the extract of a letter from Br. John Collis, dated 31 December 1834 in *Periodical Accounts relating to the Missions of the Church of the United Brethren Established among the Heathen*, Vol. 13, p. 230. Published for Brethren's Society for the Furtherance of the Gospel among the Heathen.

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CHAPTER 18

THE SLAVERY AND FREEDOM NARRATIVE OF MAHOMMAH GARDO BAQUAQUA

in the Nineteenth-Century Atlantic World[1]

Bruno Rafael Véras

> Its horrors, ah! who can describe? None can so truly depict its horrors as the poor unfortunate, miserable wretch that has been confined within its portals. Oh! friends of humanity, pity the poor African, who has been trepanned and sold away from friends and home, and consigned to the hold of a slave ship, to await even more horrors and miseries in a distant land, amongst the religious and benevolent (Baquaqua and Moore, 1854, p. 42; Law and Lovejoy, 2007, p. 53).

Those words, drawing on the experience of nearly two months inside one of the worst inventions of humankind, a slave ship, and revealing the despair common to the millions of individuals participating in the Atlantic slave trade as its captives, come from one of the few biographical or autobiographical accounts in the literary genre of 'slave narratives' discovered to date that relate the lived experience of an enslaved African person in Brazil (Véras, 2014).[2]

Baquaqua and Moore (1854) is a unique historical source for the study of politics and everyday life in a commercial city in nineteenth-century West Africa and the social history of slavery in the Americas. It is also unique among

1 For more information on the life of Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua, including documents, educational content and videos, see the 'project Baquaqua' international digital public history initiative.

2 As self-accounts, such narratives can be regarded as the privileged loci where the inner life of the subject – and sometimes the editor – meets the social and cultural context into which he/she has been thrust. For another published example, dictated by an Ijebu man named Osifekunde (born 1795), see D'Avezac-Macaya (1845, p. 18).

the 'slave narratives' – or 'freedom narratives' – published in the United States in the nineteenth century and in Great Britain from the eighteenth century in that its subject, Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua, together with the likes of Gustavus Vassa, Ottobah Cugoano, Venture Smith, and Nicholas Sa'id, is one of the only African-born subjects of those narratives (Lovejoy, 2011, p. 91). In addition to the extensive descriptions of his homeland and the commercial and court culture of a number of cities provided in his biography, other sources of information on Baquaqua's trajectory include a series of letters written and received between 1848 and 1857; affidavits from a trial to which he was subjected in 1847; newspapers published in Brazil, the United States and Canada; a 'fugitive slave' notice; and various reports and documents related to his second Brazilian owner (Bezerra, 2015).[3]

Baquaqua dictated his life story to Samuel Moore and the book was published in 1854, with an attribution to Moore as editor and writer, which is confusing as Baquaqua had clearly drafted at least part of the text himself and the copyright was registered in his name at the Clerk's Office of the United States District Court of Michigan.[4]

In his writings and those of others about him, we can see how the experience of his diasporic trajectory through changing circumstances and cultural contexts changed him as a man, on the one hand, and one how he developed various layers of identity and ethnicity, on the other, the two processes being intricately interconnected. To study how those layers were constructed, Lovejoy (2011) proposes 'a methodology that attempts, through the lens of ethnicity, to shift the focus from aggregate numbers and broad generalizations about slavery to individual experiences' (Lovejoy, 2011, p. 93). According to Lovejoy (1997), 'in studying slavery and the slave trade, biography can capture details of history' and '[b]y re-inserting individuals into the reality of slavery, [can] put flesh on the bones of the past'. Personal accounts, even second-hand, 'can thereby inform our understanding of ethnicity, religion and more broadly culture and how these changed with the time'. (Lovejoy, 1997, p. 119).

Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua was born free. Like countless other Africans in the Americas, he had a home town and a family and, in his youth, had

3 *Arquivo Histórico do Rio Grande do Sul. Série Marinha. Março 24. Rio Grande, 2º Tabelionato, Transmissão e Notas, Livro 21, fls 73.a.*

4 Letter from ALP to Br. Walker, Montrose, PA, July 1853, in The American Baptist, No. 5 (28 July 1853). The copyright was registered on 18 July 1854 by the clerk William D. Wilkins. See William L. Jenks, Michigan Copyrights, Port Huron, Register 1824-1870; available at: https://archive.org/details/MichiganCopyrights18241870/page/n45/mode/2up?view=theater (Accessed 5 August 2022.)

experienced the violence of war. Enslaved and exported to Brazil on a slave ship from the most important slave port in West Africa, the notorious Ouidah, or Whydah, in the kingdom of Dahomey, he was unloaded on to a beach in the northern part of Pernambuco province in 1845. At that time, the transatlantic slave trade had already been prohibited in Brazil, and hence his situation as an enslaved person was illegal. Baquaqua was sold first to a baker in Pernambuco and then, after trying to take his own life, to a ship's captain who travelled the Brazilian coast from his home port of Rio de Janeiro, especially to Rio Grande do Sul. During a trip to New York City in 1847, Baquaqua was able to escape from slavery and subsequently spent two years in Haiti, at a time of political turbulence. Under the protection of the American Baptist Free Mission Society, he returned to the United States in late 1849 to enrol in New York Central College, in McGrawville, NY, where he remained a student from 1850 to 1853.

As a member of a Muslim family in the West African hinterland, Baquaqua had learned to write in Arabic and Ajami. He learned Portuguese in Brazil and, most likely, some French and Haitian Creole during his two years in Haiti. In upstate New York he learned enough English to read and write letters and, in 1854, he published his autobiography in Detroit, Mich., with the help of his editor Samuel Moore. At the time that he finished his biography, Baquaqua was living in Chatham in Canada West, now Ontario, which was one of the main endpoints of the Underground Railroad system helping escapees from slavery in the southern United States to find safety. In early 1855, six months after the biography was published, he moved to Great Britain, where he remained until at least 1857. We do not know what happened to him thereafter, although he did reveal in a number of letters that he was planning to return to Africa and it does seem possible that he went to Lagos, the Niger Delta or even Liberia (Fisher, 1933, p. 73).

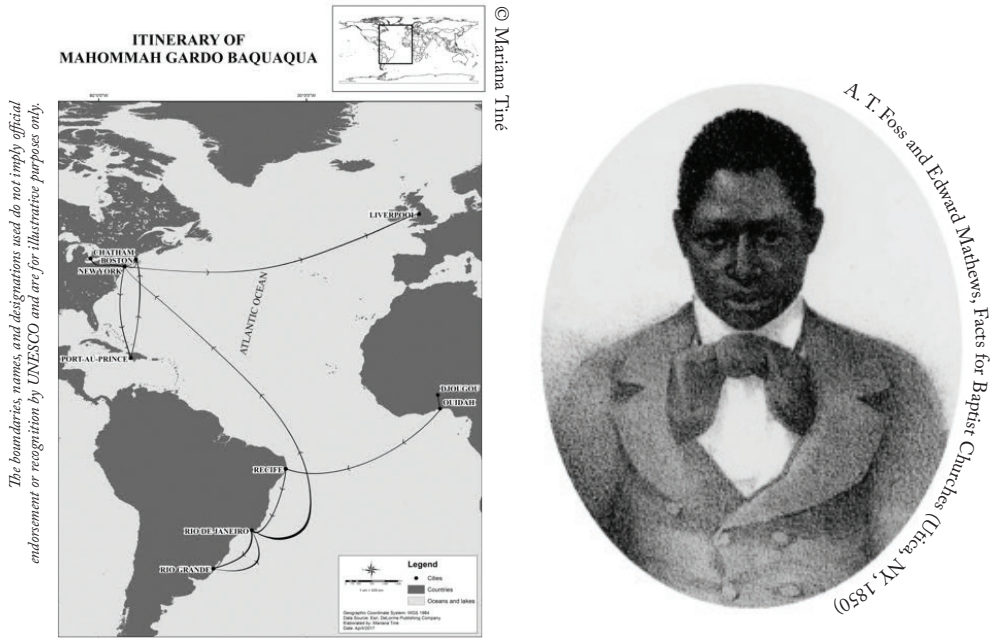

FIGURE 1. *Itinerary and portrait of Mahommah Gardo Baquaqua*

Source: (left) Map by Mariana Tiné, World Geodetic System;
(right) A. T. Foss and Edward Mathews, *Facts for Baptist Churches* (Utica, NY, 1850)

Baquaqua was born in around 1824 in the town of Djougou in the north of modern-day Benin. Located between the Sokoto caliphate to the east, the Asante empire to the west and the kingdom of Dahomey to the south, Djougou was a major hub of the 'savanna trade' – an east-west axis for trade in kola nuts, gold, salt, fabrics and enslaved people. Caravans rested in and around the town, exchanging goods and procuring supplies, and people from other regions – even the Maghreb, including Morocco – circulated in the streets or built homes there. The trade routes also served to spread ideas and Islam.

Baquaqua's own family, as revealed in his correspondence and biography,[5] fits into the migration and commerce model of the cities of the West African hinterland. His mother was born into a prominent local family in Katsina, one

5 Letters by Rev. W. L. Judd, dated 28 October 1847, and Mrs. N. A. L. Judd, dated 8 October 1847, published in the Christian Contributor and Free Missionary of 22 December 1847 and 19 January 1848, respectively (Law and Lovejoy, 2007, pp. 215–216).

of the main cities of the Sokoto caliphate, and both she and his maternal uncle, a leading blacksmith, had connections with the king of Djougou. His father, who was from the Borgu region, most certainly one of its most prosperous cities, such as Nikki, belonged to the merchant community and spoke the Songhay language of Dendi; in addition to which, the traders spoke Hausa as the lingua franca for business in the region and the Sokoto caliphate. His father's family had strong Islamic roots and his maternal uncle was the owner of a large space in Djougou where the Muslim faithful held their prayers.

Baquaqua's first name is indicative of the social context into which he was born. Mahommah is a variation of Muhammad, which, according to the Islamic custom, is the name given to the firstborn male child. As he had an elder brother, he was most likely named after his maternal grandfather, although, out of respect for the latter, that name would not have been used on a daily basis within the family.

His second name, Gardo, was commonly used in both Dendi and Hausa for a child born after a pair of twins, which Baquaqua confirmed to have been his case in his biography (Baquaqua and Moore, 1854, p. 26; Law and Lovejoy, 2007, p. 125). Although he did not explain the meaning of the name, it is pronounced 'Gardo' in Katsina and Daura but 'Gado' in Sokoto and Kano[6] and, as a child born after twins, he would have inherited their bed (*gado*).[7] The fact that he spelled his name 'Gardo' confirms his mother's assertion that she was from Katsina.[8]

As to 'Baquaqua', the prefix '*ba-*' is commonly used in Hausa to indicate a singular form and denote place of origin, but can also mean 'not'; the Hausa word ƙwaƙwa suggests persistence or inquisitiveness;[9] and the entire word baƙwaƙwa (ƙ, /k'/), as far as can be determined, was a nickname meaning 'really loved and well cared for' that a mother speaking the Katsina dialect might have given a child to indicate that she was providing for all his/her needs and that he/she would therefore be beholden to nobody else for any material or other

6 Interview with Ibrahim Jumare, conducted by the author and Paul Lovejoy in Katsina, Nigeria, on 26 November 2017.

7 Interview with Mas'ud Bello, conducted by the author and Paul Lovejoy in Katsina, Nigeria, on 26 November 2017.

8 Letter from Rev. W. L. Judd of 21 July 1848 (Law and Lovejoy, 2007, p. 244).

9 'k'wak'wa [k'wa/"k'wa/+] {n.f.}. Inquisitiveness; being prone to persistent questioning' (Bargery and Westermann, 1934).

kinds of support;[10] in short, a child who was 'not inquisitive' and very close to his/her mother. That name, which Baquaqua retained for the rest of his life, symbolized his attachment to his origins and lifelong affection for Africa, as manifested in his eagerness to return there:

> The retention of this name reveals the importance of kinship in Baquaqua's life history, confirming the memory of relationships that had once existed. Just as his first name reveals his ongoing association with the memory of his Islamic upbringing, his second name connects him with his family, and especially his mother, who is mentioned several times in fond memory (Lovejoy, 2006, p. 96).

Baquaqua was first enslaved as a teenager, having accompanied a military expedition to the Dagomba kingdom and been taken captive by an Asante army sent to restore order to the province. His elder brother bought him back and he went to work for the ruler of Soubroukou, a town near Djougou; he served as a royal messenger outside the palace and joined other royal servants in 'requisitioning' palm wine and provisions from local villagers: 'we plundered for a living' (Baquaqua and Moore, 1854, p. 32; Law and Lovejoy, 2007, p. 134). That was very likely the time that he started to drink alcohol, a difficult addiction that would follow him to Brazil and Haiti. Being in service to the king, Baquaqua had effectively left the commercial, Islamic, circles of his family. Notwithstanding his youth and slender build, he then entered the military and the implicitly non-Muslim world of the local rulers, taking on a new identity and forgetting about the Islamic prohibition of alcohol consumption. Tricked and enslaved by people close to him in Yarakeou, he was sent to Dahomey and then, after a period in the capital, Abomey, to Ouidah, one of the most important slave ports in Africa.

After nearly two months in the hold of a slave ship, he was unloaded on to a beach 'with a natural port' in northern Pernambuco, Brazil, the largest sugar-producing province in South America; a beach in Itamaracá, perhaps, or Goiana. It was not possible for slavers to unload their cargoes in the city ports at that time, in 1845, owing to the illegality of the transatlantic slave trade in Brazil, and hence the landing had had to be executed with great caution and speed (Carvalho, 2012, pp. 223–260); as the slave trade was illegal, the traders did not have the support of the authorities and the forests between Goiana and northern Olinda were full of *quilombolas* – fugitives from slavery living in the Quilombo (Palenque) do Catucá settlement (Carvalho, 2010; Carvalho, 1991, pp. 5–28).

10 Interview with Ibrahim Sani Kankara, conducted by the author and Paul Lovejoy in Katsina on 27 November 2017.

Baquaqua was very likely labelled a *negro boçal* ("black ignorant") or 'Mina slave' in Brazil. The former was used to designate an African-born enslaved person unable to understand the social mores and local language, that is Portuguese, which Baquaqua is certain to have learned within a few months. The latter term was widely used in Brazil, particularly in the mining regions of Minas Gerais and the coastal provinces, and represented 'a broad "metaethnic" category, imposed by Europeans on a relatively heterogeneous group of slaves from the so-called Mina coast' (Sweet, 2009), which is east from the fortress of São Jorge da Mina (renamed Elmina Castle by the Dutch) as far as the Niger delta. Baquaqua was one of many Mina slaves who left traces of their time in Pernambuco in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries; Domingos Álvares was another (Sweet, 2013); and there is evidence of others having joined the Portuguese troops fighting the Dutch in the early seventeenth century.

In his first few months in Pernambuco, Baquaqua, identified as a *boçal*, was assigned to the worst form of *boçal* work – carrying stones to build houses. Before long, however, he was sold to a Portuguese baker in a village on the banks of the Capibaribe River, not far from Recife, which was known as Pernambuco city according to some foreign maps:[11]

> I soon improved in my knowledge of the Portuguese language whilst here, and was able very shortly to count a hundred. I was then sent out to sell bread for my master, first going round through the town, and then out into the country, and in the evening, after coming home again, sold in the market till nine at night. Being pretty honest and persevering, I generally sold out, but sometimes was not quite so successful, and then the lash was my portion.
>
> My companions in slavery were not quite so steady as I was, being much given to drink, so that they were not so profitable to my master. I took advantage of this, to raise myself in his opinion, by being very attentive and obedient; but it was all the same, do what I would, I found I had a tyrant to serve, nothing seemed to satisfy him, so I took to drinking likewise, then we were all of a sort, bad master, bad slaves (Baquaqua and Moore, 1854, p. 46; Law and Lovejoy, 2007, pp. 159–160).

That first attempt by Baquaqua to raise himself in his master's opinion has been interpreted as within the logic of enslavement as he would have known it in Africa – in Djougou where his own Muslim family probably had enslaved

11 See for, example, "Chart of the Coast of Brazil from Maranham to the River Plate" in J. Arrow smith, Litho., London. Ordered by the House of Commons to be printed, 22 July 1850. Library of Congress Geography and Map Division Washington, D.C. 20540-4650 USA dcu. G5402.C6E625 1850.C5. Available at: https://www.loc.gov/item/00556625/ (Accessed 5 August 2022.)

persons in the house and where a master, in keeping with the customary practice in Muslim societies, would manumit an enslaved person as a sign of benevolence during festivals or before their demise (Lovejoy, 2016); and masters obviously chose those for whom they had the greatest affection. As Baquaqua himself made clear, however, that strategy did not work and he tried to flee, hence very likely figured among the Minas and Josés in the 'fugitive slave' notices posted in Pernambuco in 1845 to 1846;[12] the Minas, *Angolas*, *Benguelas*, *Moçambiques*, *Mandingas* and other such terms in what was essentially a 'cultural category used by Europeans to help them distinguish (and conduct surveillance on) groups of Africans by language, religion, country marks, and the like' (Sweet, 2009, p. 300).

Baquaqua was baptized, given the Christian name José da Costa and forced to perform Catholic rites under his master's supervision, which only added to the depth of his sadness during that period of adaptation. He tried to kill himself and was subsequently sold to a merchant named Clemente José da Costa, captain of the *Lembrança* and originally from the Brazilian state of Rio Grande do Sul. Baquaqua was enslaved on his master's ship on the route between Rio de Janeiro and the coastal ports of southern Brazil, close to the border with Uruguay.

In a letter dated 28 October 1847, the Reverend William L. Judd, a missionary, noted Baquaqua's recall of the Arabic language and suggested that it might have been bolstered by 'his intercourse with other slaves from the same country' (Law and Lovejoy, 2007, p. 217). Although there is no confirmation of that. Baquaqua very likely did spend a great deal of time in the city of Rio de Janeiro where he was in touch with other enslaved or formerly enslaved Hausas; as Bezerra (2015) puts it, he was a sailor who 'knew the "life of the slaves in Rio de Janeiro"' (Bezerra, 2015, p. 162). The city's Muslim community was not small, especially after the Malê uprising in Bahia in 1835, when many Muslims were sold into slavery in the southern provinces, such as Rio de Janeiro and even Rio Grande do Sul (alRaman alBaghdadi, 1865; Reis, 2003; Reis et al., 2010). Copies of the Qur'an were sold in Rio de Janeiro and, by the end of nineteenth century, the demand in some Brazilian port cities was quite significant (Rodrigues, 1932, pp. 285–294; Farah, 2014). Baquaqua very likely had a chance to assert his Hausa identity on occasion and felt at home among

12 See Diário de Pernambuco, 1840-1849 - PR_SPR_00008, Hemeroteca Digital Nacional. Biblioteca Nacional do Brasil. Database of fugitive slaves [Escravos Fugidos] in Pernambuco, Fundação Gilberto Freyre. Available (in Portuguese) at: http://memoria.bn.br/docreader/DocReader.aspx?bib=029033_02&pagfis=1229 (Accessed 5 August 2022.)

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FIGURE 2. *Recently freed enslaved men in Rio Grande do Sul*

Source: Ferrari, J. 1884. "*Negros recém libertos em Porto Alegre*". Fototeca Sioma Breitman, 588 F – [Negros Libertos], 1875/1900. Ferrari, Jacinto Museu de Porto Alegre Joaquim Felizardo.

people who shared the same identity. It is important to remember that 'culture was accretive and assertions of identities were situational, dependent on claims and attributions calibrated to constantly shifting sets of sociopolitical demands' (Sweet, 2009, p. 283)

The *Lembrança*, loaded with coffee, arrived in New York City on 27 June 1847 and docked at the foot of Roosevelt Street in Manhattan. A loosely organized group of local abolitionists known as the New York Vigilance Society approached the ship and started a legal tug-of-war over the conditions of enslavement to which some of the crew were subjected. After failed attempts by Baquaqua and two enslaved colleagues, Maria da Costa and José da Rocha,[13] to jump ship and escape, their abolitionist friends filed a writ of habeas corpus requiring the delivery of the three enslaved persons to the Court of Common Pleas of New York. Having come from Brazil, they were initially sent back to the ship while the first two trials took place and Baquaqua and one of the other two were then jailed. Before the final judgement was passed, abolitionists helped the two men to escape from prison and ensured their passage via Springfield, Mass., to Boston, Massachusetts. They subsequently left for Haiti, arriving in Port-au-Prince in September 1847.[14]

Baquaqua had many problems during his first months in Haiti: he could not speak French or Haitian Creole and started to drink heavily. Through an African-American contact named Jones, however, he met the Reverend Judd at the American Free Baptist Mission in early October 1847 and began an association with the Freewill Baptists that would change his life. He started to work as a cook and was soon converted and baptized before being sent back to the United States to avoid being drafted to fight the wars promoted by the president of Haiti, Faustin-Élie Soulouque, to conquer the whole island. He then travelled to upstate New York to spend three years studying at Central College in McGrawville, NY, and took part in a network of Baptist abolitionists in New York, Pennsylvania and Canada West, which ultimately led to the publication of his biography in 1854.

13 José da Rocha's master was Antonio José da Rocha Pereira, the Portuguese owner of the Lembrança and business partner of captain Clemente José da Costa (Bezerra 2015).

14 The "Brazilian Slave Case" story was reported in many newspapers in the United States and Brazil, including The National Anti-Slavery Standard of 12 August 1847; The Liberator of 20 August; Nile's National Register of 24 July; and the Anti-Slavery Bugle of 3 September.

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FIGURE 3. *New York Central College, 1848*

Source: McGraw Historical Society. Stereopticon card "Old N.Y. Central College – showing pupils 1848."

Slave narratives constituted a literary genre with considerable editorial power in the United States and Great Britain, especially among abolitionists and religious groups. According to Bezerra (2011), '[m]any books written or dictated by freed slaves were used as abolitionist propaganda tools, both in England, in the late eighteenth century, as in the United States even before the mid-nineteenth century' (Bezerra, 2011, p. 140). More than 6,000 narratives have appeared in a variety of publications in the United States (Olney, 1984, pp. 46–73).

Baquaqua's narrative was finally published on 21 August 1854, at which time he was a 30-year-old man with a spectacular background living in Chatham, Canada West, a town populated by a large black population (Krueger, 1997; Lara, 1989; Austin 1997). As the editor of the book, Samuel Moore, explained on the cover and in the preface and compiler notes, he had written down and revised '[Baquaqua's] own words' (Baquaqua, 1854, title page).

His biography was partly an abolitionist tract denouncing the evils of the slave trade and the experience of slavery, but also an advertisement for his desire to return to Africa as a Christian missionary, concluding with an explicit appeal for funds for that purpose in the final sentence: '[s]hould a call be given him to return once more to the land of his birth, he will cheerfully respond, and is sure friends will not be wanting to aid him in his benevolent purpose' (Baquaqua 1854, p. 65; Law and Lovejoy 2007, p. 192). Both those aspects should be considered when analysing the biography. The pamphlet was written with specific objectives beyond that of recounting episodes from the life of a formerly enslaved person and served to finance a journey to Africa as a Christian missionary with a practical knowledge of Arabic and other languages.

Baquaqua had built a complex and multi-layered new identity for himself in the United States, where he was labelled and referred to as a 'nigger'.[15] First of all, he presented himself not just as a Mina, Hausa or member of a 'Wangara' family of Muslim traders, but as a generic African man – a strategic term also adopted by Olaudah Equiano (Gustavus Vassa, the African) and Ottobah Cugoano in other contexts in Great Britain (Lovejoy, 2006a, pp. 317–347). Secondly, he was a Baptist Christian and, although he reverted to using his Muslim name Mahommah after reaching Haiti, it was useful to him to belong to the Baptist community. We do not know how sincere he was in his Christian faith, but the fact is that he had a practical relationship with the Baptist abolitionist circles; they used him as a live speaker to illustrate the evils of slavery and he was able to keep up his hope and endeavours to return to Africa and very likely, in the depths of his heart, to his mother's arms in Katsina.

Even when narrating the events from his past, Baquaqua did so in accordance with his present-day criteria and aims. Born into a Muslim Hausa commercial family, speaking Dendi and Hausa and writing Arabic, he had undergone an identity shift and developed various personas over the course of his diasporic trajectory. Even before his second enslavement and shipment to Brazil, his views of the world and behaviour had been altered by the experience of enslavement then freedom, joining the military and working as an official for the ruler of Soubroukou. In Brazil he was a *boçal*, a Mina and then a Hausa again, perhaps, when among his African peers. He is an interesting example of an 'interplay between self-understanding and interpolated identifications' creating 'complex, overlapping, and sometimes shifting "identities" that unfolded over the course of a given lifetime' (Sweet, 2009, p. 284).

Baquaqua went to England as a Baptist with a Muslim name in 1855 and in 1857, according to the last letter bearing news about him, he was talking about his determination to return to Africa. He very likely did return. There is some tenuous evidence to suggest that he went to Liberia as a missionary, following the free African-American pastor Chauncey Leonard (Fisher, 1933, p. 73). However, it is worth considering the possibility that with steam ships criss-crossing the route between England and the new British Protectorate of Lagos to keep Liverpool and the industrial revolution supplied with West African palm oil (Moloney, 1890, pp. 596–614), and in the light of the migratory flows of formerly enslaved persons and African merchants heading north from there to Hausa country (Mann, 2007), Baquaqua might well have made it to Lagos and back to his mother.

15 See, for example, the letter from Kezia King, McGrawville, to her sisters in Hillsdale, NY, written on 23 October 1854 (Law and Lovejoy, 2007, p. 256).

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Section II: Chapter 20

Rafael SANZIO ARAÚJO DOS ANJOS is a Geographer, Professor and Senior Researcher at the University of Brasília (UnB), Prof. Visitor and Collaborator of the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA), CNPQ-MCTI \ CEAO Researcher, GEOAFRO Project Manager.

Section II: Chapter 21

Ana Lucia ARAUJO is an American social and cultural historian and art historian writing transnational and comparative history. She is Professor of History at Howard University in Washington DC, United States. Araujo's work explores the history of slavery and the Atlantic slave trade and their present-day legacies, including the long history of calls for reparations for slavery and colonialism. Her research also examines the memory, heritage, and visual culture of slavery.

Section II: Chapter 23

Lucilene REGINALDO holds a B.A. and M.A. in History from the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo, and a Ph.D. in History from the State University of Campinas. She is currently a lecturer in African Studies - History of Africa at the State University of Campinas. She has experience in the areas of History Theory and Methodology, History of Bahia and History of Angola and Congo, 18th century. Her research focuses on black brotherhoods in the Portuguese Empire, the church and Catholic missions in Angola and Congo.

Section II: Chapter 24

Luis Nicolau PARÉS is Associate Professor of Anthropology at the Federal University of Bahia (Brazil). His interests include the history and anthropology of West African and Afro-Brazilian religions and their cultural transformations in the Atlantic world.

Section II: Chapter 25

Alain ANSELIN was a West Indian anthropologist and Egyptologist, who died in 2019. A major part of his work concerns West Indian and African anthropology. Later, as a disciple of the Senegalese Cheikh Anta Diop, he wrote an original Egyptological work, marked by his research into the African origins of the Egyptian language.

Section II: Chapter 26

Margarida PETTER is Professor in the Department of Linguistics at the University of São Paulo, where she teaches general and African linguistics. She coordinated the project "The participation of African languages in the constitution of Brazilian Portuguese", resulting in the publication of two reference works on the subject of contact between Portuguese and African languages in Brazil. She conducts research into African languages and the contact between African languages and Brazilian Portuguese. She has been director of the Center for African Studies at the University of São Paulo since May 2013.

Section II: Chapter 27

Sônia Maria de Melo QUEIRIOZ has a B.A. and M.A. in Literature from the Federal University of Minas Gerais and a PhD in Communication and Semiotics from the Pontifical Catholic University of São Paulo. She is currently an Associate Professor at UFMG in the area of Publishing and, since the 1980s, has been researching the presence of African languages from the Bantu group in conversations, songs and tales of Afro-descendant Brazilians.

Section II: Chapter 28

Mariana P. CANDIDO is a specialist in West Central African history during the era of the transatlantic slave trade. She got her B.A. in Brazil, her Masters in African Studies in Mexico and her Ph.D. in African History in Canada. Her research interests include forced migrations, colonialism, empire building, gender, slavery and its afterlives in contemporary societies.

Section II: Chapter 29

Judith A. CARNEY is Professor of Geography at the University of California Los Angeles. She is the author of *Black Rice: The African Origins of Rice Cultivation in Americas*, which received the Melville Herskovits Book Award, and *In the Shadow of Slavery : Africa's Botanical Legacy in the Atlantic World*, which was awarded the Frederick Douglass Book Prize. She is an elected member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences.

Section II: Chapter 30

Luís Cláudio Pereira SYMANSKI is a Professor of archaeology at the Federal University of Minas Gerais (2013 to present) and served as a Professor at the Federal University of Paraná (2008-2012). He holds a Ph.D. in archaeology from the University of Florida and a Masters in history from the Pontifical Catholic University of Rio Grande do Sul. His research focus on African diasporic archaeological sites in Brazil.

Flávio dos Santos GOMES is an Associate Professor at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRJ), an appointment he took up in 1998, after a four-year tenure as Assistant Professor at the Federal University of Pará. He received two undergraduate degrees, one in history from the State University of Rio de Janeiro (1989) and the other in social science from UFRJ (1990). He completed his postgraduate work at the State University of Campinas, earning a master's degree (1993) and Ph.D. (1997) in history.

Section II: Chapter 31

Jaime RODRIGUES, Professor of Brazilian History at the Postgraduate Program in History of the Department of History of the School of Philosophy, Letters and Human Sciences of the Federal University of São Paulo. He has experience in the areas of History and Archives, working mainly on slavery, slave trade, maritime history, food history, historical heritage, organization of collections and public health. He has published, among others, *No mar e em terra* (2016), *Alimentação, vida material e privacidade* (2011), *De costa a costa* (2005) and *O infame comércio* (2000), as well as textbooks aimed at elementary school.

Section II: Chapter 32

Clifford PEREIRA holds a B.A. (Hons) from the University of Ulster in Humanities Combined (Geography Major and Asian Studies Minor). He is a Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society (with IBG), London for which he worked as Consultant Researcher, Curator and Facilitator (2006-2013). He was Honorary Research Assistant to Royal Holloway, University of London, Visiting Foreign Specialist (Researcher) to Dalian Maritime University. He is since 2015 researcher at the University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology, Vancouver.

Section II: Chapter 33 / Section III: Chapter 14

Suzanne SCHWARZ is Professor of History at the University of Worcester. Her research and teaching focus on the transatlantic slave trade and its abolition in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. She also focuses on developing historical research skills for students through the study of regional and local history in Worcestershire.

Section II: Chapter 34

Sylvie KANDE holds a Ph.D. in African history from Sorbonne (Paris VII). She is the 2022 recipient of the Tyler Stovall Mission Prize from the Western Society for French History. Her book, entitled *Terres, urbanisme et architecture 'créoles' en Sierra Leone, 18ème-19ème siècles* (L'Harmattan, 1998), examines a West African example of the said back-to-Africa movement. In 1998, she organized an international conference at NYU published under the title *Discours sur le métissage, identités métisses. En quête d'Ariel* (L'Harmattan,1999).

Section II: Chapter 35

Milton GURAN has a Ph.D. in Anthropology (EHESS, France, 1996), with a post-doctorate at USP (2004-2004), and a master's degree in Social Communication (UnB, 1991). Since 2006, he is a researcher at LABHOI – Laboratory of Oral History and Image at the Fluminense Federal University (Rio de Janeiro). He was a member of the International Scientific Committee of the UNESCO Slave Route Project from 2011 to 2019. As a consultant for IPHAN, he coordinated the working group responsible for the candidacy dossier of the Cais do Valongo Archaeological Site for World Heritage status, obtained in 2017.

Section II: Chapter 36

Mônica LIMA E SOUZA is Professor of African History at the Postgraduate Program in History and Social History and the Postgraduate Program in History at the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, coordinator of the African Studies Laboratory Researching and teaching the history of Africa, the African diaspora and Africans in Brazil, in undergraduate and postgraduate courses since 1992. She has carried out research in archives and documentation centers in Africa, Europe and Brazil. She has given lectures and published articles in Brazil and abroad on the history of Africa.

Section III: Introduction

Paul E. LOVEJOY is a Canadian historian in African and African diaspora history. He is currently a Distinguished Research Professor and Canada Research Chair at York University. His research interests are History, African Studies, Culture and Cultural Studies, Race and Racism, Latin American and Caribbean Studies, Slavery and African Economic History.

Section III: Chapter 1

Edward A. ALPERS studied African History at Harvard College and received his Ph.D. from the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London in 1966, where he studied under Richard Gray. His research and writing focus on the political economy of international trade in precolonial eastern Africa, including the manifold cultural dimensions of this exchange system, with special attention to the wider world of the Indian Ocean.

Section III: Chapter 2

Maria Elisa VELAZQUEZ Professor of history focuses on on Afrodescendants, heritage and cultural diversity in Mexico in the History and Ethnohistory Postgraduate program of the ENAH, with a line of research on the topic that has received from 2017 the distinction together with CIESAS (Centro de Investigaciones y Estudios Superiores en Antropología Social), as UNESCO Chair. In 2002 she received an Honorable Mention of the INAH award for her doctoral thesis on the topic of African and Afro-descendant women in Mexico City. President of the International Fund for the Promotion of Culture UNESCO and has been Vice-President of the Scientific Committee of the International Project The Slave Route: resistance, freedom and heritage of UNESCO.

Section III: Chapter 3

Nielson Rosa BEZERRA received his Ph.D. from the Universidade Federal Fluminense, he is a former Banting Fellow (2012–2014), at The Harriet Tubman Institute for Research on Africa and its Diasporas, York University, Canada. He is the author of a number of articles and six books on slavery and the African Diaspora in Brazil. He is also the Director of Museum Vivo do São Bento of Duque de Caxias, Rio de Janeiro.

Section III: Chapter 4

Margaret CROSBY-ARNOLD is presently a Research Scholar in the Department of History at Columbia University. Her work has focused on the development of the History of Diversity in Early Modern and Modern Europe, with a particular focus on the African Diaspora. Prior to Columbia, Dr. Crosby-Arnold was a tenured Associate Professor of History at Howard University.

Section III: Chapter 5

Jean-Pierre LE GLAUNEC is a Professor in the History Department at the University of Sherbrooke. His research focuses on the cultural history of resistance to slavery in the Atlantic world (18th-19th centuries). He is co-director of the "Atlantiques français" collection at McGill/Queen's University Press.

Section III: Chapter 6

Daniela Carvalho CAVALHEIRO (Ph.D. in Social History of Culture at UNICAMP – State University of Campinas) has an M.A. in Social History from the Federal Rural University of Rio de Janeiro (UFRRJ), where she wrote her dissertation entitled "Free Africans in Brazil: illegal trafficking, tutored lives and collective experiences in the 19th century" (2015). She focuses on African trafficking, compulsory labor, free Africans, trafficking between Angola and Brazil, gender, labor history.

Section III: Chapter 7

Kristin MANN is an American historian and author renowned for her works on the history of slavery in Africa. In 2002, she was awarded the Guggenheim Fellowship and is currently Professor of History at Emory University, Georgia, United States.

Lisa Earl CASTILLO is a Fellow of the National Humanity Center, USA. She conducted significant research and published *Between Memory, Myth and History: Atlantic Voyages in the Rise of an Afro-Brazilian Temple (Bahia, Brazil, 1810–1910)*. She also wrote "Famílias africanas em tempos do tráfico atlântico: Evidências de reencontros de parentes em cinco cartas de alforria (Bahia, 1818–1830)," which is forthcoming in *Afro-Ásia* (Salvador, Bahia) and "The Enigma of Candomblé's nação ketu: The Case of Ilê Axé Iyá Nassô Oká" (forthcoming in *Yoruba Studies Review*). She also prepared a technical report for the Brazilian National Historical and Artistic Heritage Commission (IPHAN).

Section III: Chapter 8

Vanessa S. OLIVEIRA earned a Ph.D. in history from York University and was a postdoctoral fellow and lecturer at the University of Toronto before joining RMC (Royal Military College of Canada) as a specialist in African history. She teaches courses on early and modern Africa, European colonialism and women, gender and sexualities. Her book *Slave Trade and Abolition: Gender, Commerce, and Economic Transition in Luanda* was published by the University of Wisconsin Press in January 2021.

Section III: Chapter 9

Mary NIALL MITCHELL is Associate Professor of History at the University of New Orleans. Her scholarship focuses on race, slavery, and emancipation in the U.S. South. Mitchell is the recipient of awards and fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies and the Harry Frank Guggenheim Foundation. She is the author of *Raising Freedom's Child: Black Children and Visions of the Future After Slavery* (New York University Press, 2008).

Section III: Chapter 10

Olatunji OJO (B.A., M.A., Ibadan; Ph.D., York University) teaches African History at Brock University, including African History survey and seminars on slavery, economic and women's history. Prior to joining Brock University, he taught at the University of Ibadan (Nigeria), Ohio University, Athens and Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York. His research interests, which include slavery, ethnicity and identity formation, religion and gender, center on the history of social and economic change.

Section III: Chapter 11

Özgül ÖZDEMIR completed her M.A. thesis on the life histories of enslaved Africans in the nineteenth-century Ottoman Empire. She studied slavery in the often-overlooked intersection of Ottoman and African history. Her work on the Transnational, International, Global History track examines how slavery and abolition pitted regional and imperial powers against each other in the Red Sea region, and thus shaped the histories of the region as well as the lives of enslaved and manumitted Africans.

Section III: Chapter 12

Mohammed Bashir SALAU received his Ph.D. from York University, Canada, in 2005. He taught at Whitman College in Walla Walla, Washington State and served as a visiting scholar at Kwara State University in Nigeria. His works focus on slavery, Islam, labor, European imperialism and African diaspora history.

Section III: Chapter 13

Chika UNIGWE is a Nigerian writer who now lives in the United States. She is the author of four novels, as well as numerous short stories and essays. In April 2014, she was selected for the Hay Festival as part of the Africa project, which aims to showcase a selection of 39 particularly promising authors under the age of 40 from sub-Saharan Africa and its diaspora.

Section III: Chapter 15

David Lishilinimle IMBUA is an award-winning academic attached to the Department of History and International Studies, University of Calabar, Nigeria. Dr Imbua has carried out various assignments for UNESCO. Apart from this, he collaborates with internationally acclaimed historians in various lands on various projects. He is a Member and National Assistant Secretary, Historical Society of Nigeria, Pan-African Historical Association, Association of Nigerian Writers amongst many others.

Section III: Chapter 16

Ibrahima SECK is a Professor at the History department of the University of Cheikh Anta Diop of Dakar (UCAD), Senegal. His research is mostly devoted to the historical and cultural links between West Africa and Louisiana. Dr. Seck is also the lead researcher of the Whitney Plantation Slavery Museum located in St. John the Baptist Parish in Louisiana. He is the author of a book on this historic site entitled *Bouki fait Gombo: A History of the Slave Community of Habitation Haydel (Whitney Plantation) Louisiana, 1750-1860*.

Section III: Chapter 17

Maureen WARNER-LEWIS is a Trinidadian and Tobagonian academic whose career focused on the linguistic heritage and unique cultural traditions of the African diaspora of the Caribbean. Her area of focus has been to recover the links between African cultures and Caribbean cultures.

Section III: Chapter 18

Bruno Rafael VÉRAS is a digital historian whose work focuses on Global Africa, slavery and diasporas. He has been developing multimedia and educational initiatives such as Project Baquaqua and Fragments of Memory. He teaches courses on Digital Humanities and Museum Studies at the University of Toronto. He has worked as a UNESCO consultant for African-Brazilian studies and museum exhibitions at FUNDAJ (2014) and in different art productions in Brazil, Nigeria and Egypt.

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