CHAPTER 6

Asserting the Right to Be

The achievement of freedom throughout the Americas, however qualified, was very much a consequence of the myriad struggles of those of African descent. Their efforts would be supported by well-meaning whites and some indigenous groups. The American War of Independence and the French Revolution would contribute concepts and language to the struggle, but the enslaved did not need theoretical principles, developed to facilitate a breakaway republic in North America or to resolve class conflict in Europe, to know much more definitively than any enunciation of Enlightenment rationality could ever approximate, the depth of their anguish and yearning for deliverance.

The fight against slavery would assume any number of shapes and was waged in a thousand theaters of war, both literal and figurative. Activities from large-scale revolt to marronage to absconding to work slowdowns to poisoning were employed throughout the period of legal enslavement. However, as the antislavery struggle progressed, it became clear that the African was not only combating a nefarious system of inequitable labor extraction but was also up against a force arguably even more insidious: the conviction that African ancestry was an immutable mark of inferiority. Slavery was to leave an indelible imprint upon the attitudes and opinions of all who lived in the Americas, particularly those of European ancestry, who by and large came to view Africans and their descendants as intellectually and morally deficient. Various ideas would come along to buttress this view, including social Darwinism and the rise of pseudoscientific racism in the nineteenth century, by which time African inferiority was held as a certainty. Given

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the rise of racism, the destruction of slavery did not end the woes of African-descended people. Freedom was not the absence of slavery, and in any event it did not automatically follow abolition. Even whites who supported abolition did not necessarily subscribe to its full implications – that black folk should enjoy a complete, broadly defined freedom with rights and privileges identical to that of whites. White opposition to black enslavement did not mean white acceptance of black equality; the phenomenon of racism would prove to be an even more intractable foe than the planter class.

What this meant for the African-descended is that the fight against slavery, while extremely crucial, was at the end of the day only one component of a more complex combat, a lone (though major) battle in a larger campaign for freedom. Forces of oppression assumed temporal, ever-shifting guises, and the vanquishing of one target, such as slavery, often led to discouragement and bewilderment as racism, seemingly defeated, simply morphed into a subsequent form, such as North American segregation. In view of the changing face of oppression, freedom came to mean different things to different people of African descent. We must keep in mind the variable, relative nature of freedom if we are to understand the African's fight for freedom, beginning with the struggle against slavery.

Armed Revolt and Autonomous Space

It did not take long for Africans to revolt. Rebellion began at the initial point of capture within Africa itself, continuing down to the barracoons, and it often erupted into mutiny aboard the slavers. Once in the New World, Africans were again quick to seize upon any opportunity to reverse their circumstances. As early as 1503, Hispaniola's governor Nicolás de Ovando complained that African ladinos were colluding with the Taíno population and fleeing to the mountains to establish maroon or runaway communities. Two decades later in 1522, some twenty slaves abandoned an ingenio (a sugar mill and adjacent lands) owned by the governor of the island, Admiral Diego Columbus, son of the famed explorer and himself a substantial slaveholder. The insurrectionists mobilized an equal number of coconspirators on neighboring establishments and, machetes in hand, literally dismembered plantation personnel and livestock, leaving burned houses and crops in their wake. A mixed force of Europeans and Taíno effectively

ended the revolt; when the dust settled, at least fifteen people were dead, at least nine of whom were Europeans. Diego Columbus reflected that if the uprising had not been quelled quickly, many more "Christian" lives would have been lost. Thus began the first collective insurrection of Africans in the Americas, a movement largely composed of Senegambians, some of whom were probably Muslims. Senegambians would continue to lead revolts in Hispaniola through the middle of the sixteenth century, after which they disappear from the record.

Hispaniola was not the only New World site of rebellion in the early sixteenth century. Revolts broke out everywhere: Puerto Rico in 1527; Santa Martha, Colombia in 1529; the Panamanian town of Acla in 1530; Panama City in 1531; Mexico City in 1537; the Venezuelan towns of Coro in 1532 and Buría in 1555; and San Pedro, Honduras in 1548. White colonists in Panama had complained about maroon communities prior to 1556, but by that year the maroon threat fully surfaced. Ballano, an African-born leader of royal descent, led one of these communities, a mixture of ladinos and unacculturated bozales. He was lured into attending peace talks at a banquet site and, in anticipation of Haitian leader Toussaint L'Ouverture's experience with Napoleon, was immediately captured and eventually taken to Spain; unlike Toussaint, Ballano was given a royal pension, living out his life in Seville.

In 1553, the enslaved rose up in Peru and fought the Spaniards for more than a year. They again took up arms in Santiago de Chile in 1647, when an earthquake provided the occasion for some 400 slaves to rebel under a leader known as the "King of Guinea." Venezuela experienced a series of slave uprisings, such as the 1732 revolt at Puerto Cabello and Capaya; the 1747 revolt led by Miguel Luengo (Loango) in Yare; the uprisings in Caucagua and Capaya in 1794; the rebellion of Maracaibo in 1799; and the insurrection in Sierras de Coro in 1795, probably the most significant of all, led by José Leonardo Chirinos.

Maroon formation was a central feature of Cuban slavery as well. Those fleeing the institution took refuge in the mountains, where they formed *palenques*, or *cumbes*. Life in the palenques was supported by a combination of agriculture and trade. Manioc and sweet potatoes were grown, while cattle were confiscated from neighboring estates. Honey and virgin wax were sold to outsiders in exchange for weapons, gunpowder, tools, sugar, and clothing. Transactions often required

third parties, such as slaves on nearby plantations, who went to town and made the purchases.

The palenques were a constant source of concern, as they inspired rebellion and defiance among the enslaved. The government tried to eradicate the palenques between 1848 and 1853, but it was only partially successful because there were literally hundreds of palenques throughout Cuba. The more permanent, better defended ones were located in the eastern mountains, including Bumba, Maluala, Moa or El Frijol, and Tiguabos, all of which lasted until the first War of Independence in 1868, when palenque members joined the Cuban Liberation Army in large numbers. The 1868 decree of the victors recognized the right of the palenques to continue to exist; some eventually faded from existence, while others became towns or rural neighborhoods when joined by Cubans of all backgrounds. One of the most famous palenque leaders was Ventura Sánchez, whose nineteenth-century community was near Santiago de Cuba.

One pattern of resistance is therefore clear: If the enslaved could flee to an inaccessible place beyond the reach of authorities, they could live in manner more of their choosing; it was not Africa, but barring repatriation, it was as close as they were going to get. Success depended upon a number of factors, including the reception of the native population. If the enslaved could reach an understanding with them, whereby they would not be returned to white authorities, they had a chance of surviving. The understanding sometimes involved forming settlements close to but independent of indigenous communities, and at other times it meant becoming an integral part of those communities, including intermarriage.

Creating a maroon society was one thing; keeping it free of colonial control or interference was another. The former was an act of resistance and affirmation of human dignity, while the latter too often saw those values compromised. The preservation of autonomy sometimes meant yielding to the pressures of slaveholding interests to return runaway slaves in exchange for continuing noninterference. A difficult dilemma, it epitomizes a series of predicaments confronted by slaves seeking freedom. Indeed, the choices facing the enslaved were severely proscribed, and the adoption of any usually carried some element of excruciating sacrifice. Freedom was never free.

Perhaps the greatest example of the maroon community was Palmares. Established as early as 1605 and lasting until around 1695 in Pernambuco, northeastern Brazil, Palmares ("palm forests") was

much more than a community of runaways. It is more accurate to think of this "black republic" as an independent state, and as such it was the first created by nonnative peoples in the New World. In the parlance of the Brazilian context, Palmares was one of ten major *quilombos* or *mocambos* (terms derived from African languages) in colonial Brazil, and of the ten, it was by far the most significant; two others, one in Minas Gerais and the other in Mato Grosso, lasted from 1712 to 1719 and from 1770 to 1795, respectively, while the other seven were wiped out within a few years of their founding. Some of these quilombos were in fact combined settlements of Africans and the indigenous population, and at least two were led by African women. In contrast, Palmares practically spanned the entire seventeenth century, with a peak population of at least 5,000 and possibly as high as 30,000. Palmares was such a threat to Portuguese interests that it endured successive military attacks from the Portuguese between 1672 and 1694 at a rate of one every fifteen months, assaults costly in lives and money.

Palmares was in reality a composite of ten federated political units or *palmars*, each of which owed ultimate allegiance to the sovereign, the *Ganga-Zumba* ("great lord"), the greatest of whom was Zumbi. Although Palmares was initially founded by African-born runaways, distinctions between those from Africa and those born in Brazil, the *crioulos*, became less significant over time; indeed, given the lengthy history of Palmares, a point was reached whereby many of its citizens knew nothing of Africa or slavery firsthand, having been born in the quilombo. Friction between the Portuguese and Palmares intensified as individuals increasingly fled the surrounding *engenhos* (sugar mills and adjacent lands) for the quilombo. The final destruction of Palmares came after a siege of forty-four days, after which the Palmares ruler was captured and decapitated, his head publicly displayed to dispel belief in his immortality.

In addition to those mentioned, Brazil was inundated with smaller quilombos throughout much of its slave history. Quilombos were found in the lands surrounding Bahia in northeast Brazil, of which Salvador was the principal port and city. A major source of sugarcane production between 1570 and 1680, Bahia registered the existence of a quilombo as early as 1575. By the turn of the seventeenth century, there were reports of maroons living in the mountains, who intermarried with the local population. The tradition of the maroon in Bahia continued through the nineteenth century, when it met with Portuguese

opposition and the resulting destruction of such quilombos as the Buraco de Tatú, just outside Salvador.

The maroons of Jamaica have also attracted considerable interest. With the instability of the transition to British rule in 1655, some 1,500 of the enslaved struck out on their own, forming three distinct groups. Much has been written about two of these groups: One group settled in the mountains under the leadership of Juan Lubola, and the other gathered at Los Vermejales (or the Vermahalis), in a plateau in the interior of the island. The maroons under Lubola sided with the remaining Spanish settlers against the British until 1658, when the Spanish were defeated. Lubola promptly entered an alliance with the British that recognized the legitimacy of his 150-person community, but it also called for him to fight with the British against other maroons; the policy of forming impermanent alliances made sense, but its defects would soon be revealed. Lubola was killed in a raid on the maroons of Los Vermejales, who managed to retreat to the northeast part of the island. Los Vermejales was eventually joined in the last quarter of the seventeenth century by some 200 runaways, mostly Africans from the Gold Coast (so-called Coromantee or Kromanti, after the Gold Coast port) and Malagasy captives from a shipwreck. Together in the hills of eastern Jamaica, they established communities informed by African cultures and folkways. They became known as the Windward group, with Nanny Town as their center, named after a woman skilled in war and *obeah* (the practice of manipulating spiritual forces to inflict harm). In the meantime, another group of Gold Coast rebels settled in the mountainous areas in the island's center, and they became known as the Leeward group.

Around 1720 the First Maroon War broke out between the maroons and the British, who, moving into the northeast coast to establish new plantations, suffered continuous assault and harassment. Cudjoe, an adept in guerrilla warfare, led the Leeward group, while the Windward sector, initially under Nanny's control, was marshaled by Cuffee following Nanny's planter-instigated murder in 1733. The Maroon War dragged on, with Nanny Town changing hands several times, and in 1735 the Windward group splintered into two. One of the two factions, some 300 women, men, and children, walked more than 100 miles to join Cudjoe and the Leewards. In a defining decision that revealed the complex and contradictory nature of the Leeward leader as well as the dilemma of maroon life, Cudjoe essentially rejected the Windward refugees, accommodating them for several months until they could return to the northeast. Cudjoe, for all of his bravery and skill, was

reluctant to unduly anger the British; the defense of his freedom in-
cluded avoiding unnecessary confrontation.

Unfortunately for the maroon community and the enslaved, Cud-
joe's war weariness, or perhaps his treachery, became apparent in
March of 1739 when he agreed to a treaty with the British. Its terms
recognized his community as free and owners of the land adjoining to
their towns, some 1,500 acres. The treaty further allowed the maroons
to hunt within three miles of a white-held establishment, to pursue
their own form of justice with the exception of administering capital
punishment, and to sell their produce in local markets. For such liber-
ties, however, Cudjoe sold the store. He agreed to create roads linking
his settlements to coastal plantations to promote "friendly correspon-
dence"; he agreed to allow two white men to live among the maroons
for purposes of monitoring them; but most egregious of all, he agreed
to fight Britain's external enemies, to kill and destroy all in rebellion to
British authority, and to return all runaway slaves to their slaveholders
for compensation. Prior to the signing of the treaty, Cudjoe report-
edly fell to his knees and kissed the feet of the British officer, begging
forgiveness.

Certain of Cudjoe's generals could not accept this turn of events, but
their attempts to organize a response were discovered; Cudjoe himself
put two of them to death. Others in opposition to the treaty tried to
develop strategies throughout the island, especially in Spanish Town,
but authorities responded with brutal repression. The end of the First
Maroon War in 1739 saw the Windwards, their numbers depleted and
facing eminent war with the Leewards, sign a treaty similar to that of
Cudjoe. However, the spirit of rebellion would resurface some twenty
years later, directly inspired by the early maroon example.

In Antigua, maroons preceded the rapid, late-seventeenth-century
advance of sugarcane. By 1678 there were about 4,500 residents on the
island, more or less equally divided between Africans and Europeans,
but already there were significant problems with runaways, especially
in the southwest, in the Shekerly Hills of St. Mary's Parish. Records
show that the maroons were a hodgepodge of African groups, including
Akan, Igbo, "Angolans," and Malagasy. These strongholds threatened
British planters, but the latter had time on their side, with the eventual
deforestation of the island as the principal reason for the termination
of the maroon threat.

In the islands controlled by the French, maroons were divided into
petit and *grand marronage*. The former involved small groups who aban-
doned the plantation for several days, only to return. Grand marronage

could also involve small numbers, but it was characterized by the fairly permanent nature of the stay and therefore of greater concern. One of the first to come to the attention of the French was a group of about 400 to 500 in Martinique who, under the leadership of Francisque Faboulé in 1665, stirred such trouble that the authorities negotiated a short-lived agreement with them. Faboulé was granted his freedom and 1,000 pounds of tobacco, while his followers were given immunity from punishment. Faboulé would form another group of runaways, but he was eventually captured and sent to the galleys.

Guadeloupe also had its share of maroons; one group was an amalgam of Africans and the indigenous population led by Gabriel as early as 1707. Gabriel viewed his community as autonomous, and he preferred to be called "Monsieur le Gouverneur." Though they raided for livestock, the maroons in Guadeloupe were even more notorious for taking enslaved women, a reflection of imbalanced sex ratios. By 1726 some 600 maroons were living in four distinct communities in Guadeloupe.

In Saint Domingue, maroons were famous for frequent raids on nearby plantations that netted livestock while leaving fields ablaze, suggesting an interest not only in survival but also in the destruction of slavery altogether. The French responded with a vigorous campaign, and although leaders of the various maroons were captured and punished, the communities themselves continued under new leaders. In the area around le Cap, for example, leaders such as Noël wrecked havoc until his capture in 1775, only to be replaced by Télémaque Conga and Isaac and Pyrrhus Candide, who pursued the triple objectives of livestock confiscation, female abduction, and field torching. The most famous of all Saint Domingue's maroon societies was le Maniel. Established at some point before the end of the seventeenth century, le Maniel successfully defended against repeated attacks throughout the eighteenth century and witnessed the dawn of Haiti. Le Maniel owed much of its success to its location on the border with the Spanish-held eastern part of the island, from which it received support against the French. Indeed, together with the southern mountainous area, the Spanish-held section of the island was the preferred destination of most maroons, where some 3,000 were estimated to have settled by 1751.

In general, the maroon communities of Saint Domingue were overwhelmingly male, with women accounting for no more than 20 percent of the population. Most were born in West Central Africa and had labored in the fields. Although removed from the plantation, the

maroons stayed in touch with those who remained, receiving provisions and news of slaveholder activities and intentions. The maroons also kept lines of communication open with free blacks who gave some assistance, a reminder that interaction within Saint Domingue society could be fluid.

François Makandal is probably the most famous of the maroon leaders. His background is rather curious, as he was supposedly born in an Islamic society in West Africa, raised as a Muslim, and literate in Arabic. Captured at the age of twelve and shipped to Saint Domingue, his grounding in Islam may have been incomplete, for by the time we encounter him on the island, Makandal is a fully emerged voodoo priest. Voodoo, *vodu*, and *vodun* derive from Dahomean words for "gods"; the religion as practiced in Haiti, Martinique, Louisiana, and Mississippi represents both a transformation and amalgamation of various religions from West and West Central Africa, specifically Fon–Ewe–Yoruba influences from the former and Bakongo elements from the latter. As a result of either an amputated hand from sugar mill machinery or a dispute with a slaveholder over a black woman, Makandal set off on an independent course. An eloquent man with extensive knowledge of both medicinal and injurious properties of plants and herbs, he developed a following of undetermined size. In concert with those who systematically pillaged estates, but unlike others content to live in isolation, Makandal developed a conspiracy to destroy slavery as an institution, and he recruited from the plantations. The blow for freedom was to begin with a general poisoning of the water in the town of le Cap, highlighting poisoning as a weapon of choice among the enslaved in Saint Domingue. As would be true in many conspiracies, carelessness led to his arrest in early 1758, before the revolt could begin, and after a brief but sensational escape, he was recaptured and burned at the stake. Makandal's career was an indication, however, of epic events to come forty years later. The revolution that would ultimately arrive saw the forces of marronage combine with those on the plantation to effect sweeping change.

In various places throughout the Caribbean, Africans and Native Americans engaged in a complex set of relations. Not unlike the dilemma facing the Jamaican maroons, the Arawak and Carib confronted the issue of runaways in their efforts to defend their freedoms from European colonial powers. The Arawak and Carib were formidable forces in the eastern and southern Caribbean, and unlike their indigenous counterparts in the larger islands (or Greater

Antilles), they used their considerable naval capabilities to both defend themselves and counterattack Spanish positions in the sixteenth and seventeenth-centuries. Runaways often reached their territories, where they either merged or formed associated but independent communities. Some merged communities reportedly began with seventeenth-century shipwrecks, such as the "Black Caribs" of St. Vincent, whose descendants were later taken to Belize, Guatemala, and Honduras, where they form the Garifuna nation (or Garinagu, as they prefer to name themselves); and the "Zambos Mosquitos" of Nicaragua's Mosquito Coast. Reasons for not forming single communities included either party's desire to preserve its cultural integrity. But the African was also aware that the Carib and Arawak had their own version of slavery, and sometimes reenslaved runaways for their own purposes or returned runaways to Europeans. Runaways were especially vulnerable following peace treaties between native groups and Europeans, a provision of which invariably called for the return of the absconded. For example, runaways were returned to the French in the mid-seventeenth century as part of a treaty, but apparently not fast enough, as token Carib compliance caused the French to oust them from Martinique in 1658. The Black Caribs of St. Vincent stopped returning runaways to the English after 1680, having come to regard runaways as societal members. Runaways from the neighboring islands of Guadeloupe, Barbados, and Martinique reached such numbers, however, that the threatened and overextended St. Vincent Caribs relented and agreed to return the later arrivals.

The territory that would become the United States also had maroon communities; at least fifty existed in the swamps, forests, and mountains of Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Virginia, and the Carolinas between 1672 and 1864. Often ephemeral and numerically smaller than their counterparts elsewhere in the Americas, these maroons were frequently related to the frontier, beyond which white settlement was sparse and indigenous reception a possibility. Enslaved blacks often struck out for the backwoods to seek refuge in otherwise inhospitable, inaccessible, mountainous terrain. One early retreat center was St. Augustine in Florida, founded as a Spanish position around 1565. Beginning in the late seventeenth century, Carolina slaves fled to St. Augustine and the neighboring village of Gracia Real de Santa Teresa Mose, or Fort Mose, for asylum; those involved in the famous Stono Rebellion of 1739 may have also been headed for St. Augustine, where they could acquire their freedom as a result of

Spanish–English hostility. St. Augustine continued as a problem for English planters through the colonial period, after which their focus shifted to the growing challenge of runaways among the Seminoles (a term meaning "runaways"). Like the Carib and Arawak, blacks either intermarried with or established separate but linked villages among the Seminoles. Africans and Seminoles became culturally fused, establishing a fortified position of their own, Fort Blount. The number of runaways among the Seminoles rose so dramatically that Carolina and Georgia planters demanded a federal response, especially after a Georgia army was repulsed in 1812. The United States government intervened; no less than Andrew Jackson himself led the charge, attacking Fort Blount in July of 1816. Confronted by the Americans, some Seminoles switched sides and became slavetraders, but this is only part of a more complicated story. When the United States claimed Florida in 1821, Africans and Native Americans responded by retreating even further into the swamps and forests of Florida. The so-called Seminole Wars ensued, lasting until 1842.

In colonial Louisiana, maroon communities were established in the cypress swamps, *la ciprière*, where they grew their own crops, gathered berries and nuts, and sold baskets and squared cypress logs to outsiders. Like their counterparts elsewhere, the maroons also raided nearby establishments to supplement their provisions. By the end of the American War of Independence, maroons controlled virtually the whole of the Bas du Fleuve, the area between the mouth of the Mississippi River and New Orleans. As the maroons were in defensible terrain and the white population minimal, there was not much the latter could do for a significant period of time. The dynamics of the area began to change by the middle of the eighteenth century, such that in 1784 St. Malo, leader of the maroons, was captured and hanged along with many of his followers, signaling the beginning of the end of an era.

There were also maroon communities in the Dismal Swamp, between Virginia and North Carolina, where at one point nearly 2,000 runaways lived. In South Carolina and Georgia, maroons both traded with whites and raided their establishments. White fear of insurrection led to a number of laws passed, calling for the destruction of these communities and the killing of their leaders. Maroons invariably enjoyed relations with the enslaved on farms and plantations, and planters frequently complained that maroon influence was corrupting their slaves, inspiring them to rebel. As a result, expeditions were launched all over

the South to rein in the maroons. Their numbers were reduced here and there, but on the whole maroons continued through the Civil War.

A major feature of North American society not necessarily true elsewhere in the Americas was the bifurcation of the republic between slaveholding and free states. The existence of the latter presented another option for the enslaved. The organized procession of escaping to the North, referred to as the Underground Railroad, was therefore a means to another kind of existence. Those who escorted and facilitated the runaways, the conductors or operators, numbered at least 3,200. The greatest of all, Harriet Tubman, would actually hire herself out as a domestic servant for several months to support her work. An extraordinary individual, she alone was responsible for conducting at least 300 persons to freedom, threatening to shoot any who succumbed to fear and attempted to turn back. The Underground Railroad was so effective that 100,000 persons may have escaped between 1810 and 1850, creating such a problem that in 1850 the country passed the Fugitive Slave Act, granting slaveholders the right to arrest and return runaways from any state in the Union.

Finally, the ultimate maroon formation developed in the Guyanas. Maroons in French and British Guyana were eradicated by the end of the eighteenth century, but those in Suriname continue to the present, representing a legacy of more than 300 years. Formerly called "Bush Negroes," these people escaped the littoral plantations of Surinam in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries and moved into the interior, where they fought long and hard against a colonial military. Treaties were signed and broken, but the Surinamese maroons continued on, living in states of self-sufficiency except for their reliance on certain manufactured goods, like firearms. Principally informed by African cultures, various cultural groupings emerged out of the maroon communities, with the Juka (Djuka) and the Saramaka as the most prominent. Their lifestyles have been the subject of significant anthropological investigation.

Everyday–Every Way Resistance

Somewhere between forming maroon communities and collectively taking up arms to dismantle the slaveocracy were vast numbers of slaves who found other ways to resist, and that on a regular basis. Some eventually joined the maroons, while others ultimately took up

the gun. Many did neither; instead they used other methods to contest both the substance and the implications of slavery.

Although many blacks challenged slavery, there were those who did not. There were individuals who felt inferior to whites, who believed they were under the Hamitic curse and could expect nothing better in life. Certainly there were those who desired and appreciated any degree of recognition from whites. Not everyone resisted; some capitulated. The seemingly endless accounts of conspiracies betrayed are proof of this.

But many, perhaps most, did resist, and resistance assumed many forms, covert and overt, sporadic and continuous, direct and indirect. It is probably a mistake to think of resistance as a continuum, ranging from "sassing massa" in the lower register to becoming maroons and organizing revolution in the highest. First of all, individuals who experienced any substantial length of life may have made any number of decisions, and over time they would have exhibited various behaviors that were different and even contradictory. Some may have resisted at certain times of their lives and cooperated during others, while there were surely those whose actions were consistent (one way or the other). Second, any demonstrable action of resistance was not only the product of the individual's will and disposition but also the result of several calculations. In addition to determining the likely success of any given action, the individual had to define the meaning of success itself. What of consequences for family and friends? What of separation from family and friends? What of other options less risky and without the drama? These were only some of the meditations of folk engaged in rebellion, and it may be wrong to conclude that those who remained with family were less opposed to slavery, or less valiant, than those who ran away.

In many ways, simply surviving with most of your body and mind intact was an act of resistance, especially where Africans were imported and worked to death in a few years. To beat the odds, to start a family, to see your sons and daughters develop and mature, and to impart to them something of your guidance and wisdom were all acts of defiance, and though difficult, must have taken place, as the considerable population of African-derived persons in the contemporary Americas attests.

On the other hand, accounts of mothers allegedly killing their young infants, or even choosing to not have children (or sex), suggest that not all saw survival as resistance, and they underscore the relative and mutable nature of opposition. Infanticide remains an open question;

scholars disagree over the evidence and the degree to which it was practiced. Less open to debate is the use of birth control, often accomplished by prolonging lactation through breast-feeding; and the incidence of abortion, practiced throughout the Americas and especially in the Caribbean, where knowledge was largely derivative of African procedures and involved the use of herbs, shrubs, plant roots, tree bark, lime, mango, papaya, yam, manioc, frangipani, and the less popular employment of sharp sticks and stalks. Caribbean planters were convinced that enslaved women were inducing miscarriages and were turning to older women and obeah practitioners for assistance. The use of abortifacients may have been a deliberate strategy to deny the slaveocracy the labor it needed; it may also have been out of recognition of a very high infant mortality rate, in the Caribbean largely the result of such diseases as peripneumonic fevers and infant tetanus, or the "jawfall." In the United States, scholars have offered sudden infant death syndrome as an alternative explanation to infanticide, especially in those instances in which mothers were said to have accidently rolled over and suffocated their infants during sleep. Whatever the causes of miscarriage and infant mortality, it would seem that the protection of young life, as well as its termination, were both viewed as viable options.

That preservation and destruction of life may have both been consistent with resistance underscores that slavery, above all else, was a theater of the absurd, and that the enslaved faced an almost impossible navigation in a sea of dilemma. Indeed, the predicament characterized the enslaved condition; any action, be it adversarial or compliant, would likely engender unpleasant consequences. If the slave runs, she will suffer the loss of her family, and they may well be punished as coconspirators; but if she stays on this plantation, there is the certainty of unending ignominy at the end of a whip.

Women were probably more familiar with the dilemma than men; it was most likely their constant companion. Women throughout the Americas were more valued as producers than reproducers, but this observation cannot obscure the fact that they were also female and that they were objectified sexually.

The rape of African women is well established in the literature throughout the Americas; it was necessarily violent in nature. Untold numbers of girls and women were made to endure the violation, sometimes repeatedly, and this fact alone may help explain the incidence of abortion and infanticide. But what about the woman who was

FIGURE 5. Female slaves in Brazil, 1830s. From Jean Baptiste Debret, *Voyage Pittoresque et Historique au Bresil* (Paris, 1834–39), vol. 2, plate 22. Print Collection, Miriam and Ira D. Wallach Division of Art, Prints and Photographs, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations.

not subjected to physical coercion, but rather felt psychological and social pressure to yield in exchange for an improved lifestyle? What if she could alleviate the backbreaking monotony of fieldwork for both herself and her children, or her aged mother, by agreeing to compromise? Was it always a compromise? What if she were already free, of mixed ancestry, and lived in a place like New Orleans, where she would have been more valued than women not of mixed ancestry, and where her status would be considerably elevated by entering into *plaçage*, a socially recognized relationship in which she lived as a homemaker with a white suitor and in a marriage-like condition (not quite marriage though; the suitor was probably married to a white woman in France or on some plantation)? Her children would receive a decent education, and perhaps even travel to Paris to further it. Given such circumstances and options, was there a "right" course of action? Was there one consistent with "resistance?" In the final analysis, is it really possible to extract the element of coercion, in whatever form, from such relations? These queries have particular relevance in the case of Sally Hemings, described as "mighty near white . . . very handsome, long straight hair down her back," who, according to published

DNA test results, most likely had at least one child, and possibly as many as six, by her master, the illustrious Thomas Jefferson.

Ultimately, many problems flowing out of some fundamental predicament were related to the question of family. In the end, although some persons made decisions and conducted their lives as individuals, so many more proceeded out of a familial context. It was the African family, therefore, that informed the decision to resist, the modalities of that resistance, the when, where, how, and degree of that resistance. People acted in concert; they moved in groups; they fought in units. Some discussion of the family is therefore in order, before we turn our attention to other dimensions of resistance.

The literature on African families, as historical variables in transition, remains one of the least understood aspects of the heritage of the African Diaspora. There is a tendency to overgeneralize about "the African family," glossing over important ethnolinguistic and even regional differences within Africa. Not all African families were matrilineal (tracing identity and inheritance through the female line); many were patrilineal, and some were bilineal. While polygyny was a possibility in West and West Central African societies, the likelihood of substantial numbers of men having more than one wife was small, since men needed time to build sufficient resources to support multiple wives and their children, which in turn usually meant that men were significantly older than the women they tended to marry, especially a second wife. This also meant that younger men did not always have access to women, given the hurdles of economic preparation and competition from older, established men. Polygyny was therefore a function of status in much of West and West Central Africa, its seeming continuation in the Americas more the result of New World circumstances than Old World traditions. That is, other factors influenced the formation of African families in the Americas. In fact, the disproportionate importation of males to females could only heighten feelings of frustration and competition.

Planters in the Caribbean and Latin America were for a long time unconcerned with the African family, or at least with the ability of the enslaved to replicate their numbers. To be certain, the Code Noir and the Siete Partidas contained provisions encouraging the maintenance of families, and with the support of the Catholic Church they discouraged the dismemberment of families through individual sales. Nevertheless, the reality on the ground was different; planters were solely concerned with the bottom line prior to 1790, when pressures

to abolish the transatlantic slave trade forced them to enact measures more favorable to childbearing. New pronatalist policies were therefore embraced at the end of the eighteenth century, such as lightening the workloads of pregnant women as their time drew near and constructing special houses or plantation hospitals for expectant mothers; these efforts were less successful than envisioned.

A strategy to produce a self-sustaining, enslaved population was also adopted in North America. However, the sanctity of the African family was hardly a consideration; North American planters were interested in their slaves' procreating for the purpose of augmenting the labor force. "Family" beyond the mother–child bond was unimportant to these planters; indeed, slave marriages did not enjoy any legal standing, although circumstances in Catholic regions may not have been so antagonistic. Like their counterparts in the Caribbean and Latin America, the enslaved in North America had to struggle to create some semblance of family life, a struggle informed by what the Africans knew of family prior to the Middle Passage. Therefore, the African family in America tended to be extended; that is, relations of significance went well beyond the nuclear arrangement. Uncles and aunts and cousins became very important, as did the reverence for elders. Fictive kinship was also critical, and familial ties were formed on the basis of experiences of common suffering, such as those created among survivors of the Middle Passage, who became relatives for life, even practicing exogamy. Slave marriages were as stable as conditions allowed, but because those conditions frequently changed, partners sold far away from one another often remarried. Such serial marriages point to the importance the enslaved attached to the institution of marriage, rather than the reverse. Abroad marriages were also widespread, in which partners attempted the difficult task of sharing their lives while belonging to neighboring plantations and farms. Enslaved women were therefore often abroad wives and single mothers, while the man's presence in the lives of his wife and children was inconsistent and variable through no fault of his.

Families also participated in cultures, and scholars continue to discuss how African cultures engaged those of Europe and Native America. Africans had to learn aspects of European culture to survive, but they also retained degrees of their own cultures. Further, while the results of such interaction varied with time and place, it was generally the case that European forms adopted by the African-descended population were heavily influenced by African culture. From religion

to music to literature to clothing, European sensibility was Africanized and then reembraced, in many instances by those of European as well as African descent. In many ways, this is the essence of American culture.

Religion was a cultural fundamental, and African religions all posited belief in a generally unapproachable supreme being, with whom were associated more accessible, lesser deities as well as the spirits of departed human beings who remain active in the world. Many African religions also practice spirit possession, not unlike the bori practices in North Africa. As culture bearers, Africans throughout the Americas transformed the Christianity of whites by bringing such antecedent beliefs and practices into its adoption, which is precisely what whites had done in Europeanizing a faith originating in the Middle East. In North America, for example, the African-descended gradually adopted a Protestant Christianity consistent with their own conceptual framework. The concept of a Trinity was not shocking or beyond consideration, nor was the idea of an indwelling Holy Spirit. However, the stiff, placid liturgical styles of the various churches were altered substantially to accommodate the full expression of the Holy Ghost, within which dance and ceremony were in every way consistent with African notions of spirit possession. The ring shout, featuring worshipers moving counterclockwise in an ever-quickening circle, was derivative of West Central African and West African practice and was widespread in North America. In these and other ways, Christianity itself was first converted, facilitating the subsequent conversion of the African to its main tenets.

Africans also entered the Americas speaking their own languages, which, like religion, both altered European languages and were altered by them. For the most part, complete African languages were gradually silenced in the Americas, although significant portions remained in areas where groups were isolated, or where the preservation of African religions required linguistic familiarity. More widespread, however, was the tendency for Africans to take European languages and infuse them with African structure, cadence, and terms, a process that began with Portuguese and continued with Spanish, English, French, Dutch, and other such tongues. The degree of Africanization depended upon several factors, but the end result spanned a continuum, from speaking the European language with an African accent, to changing the syntax of what remained an essentially European idiom, to so altering the language and infusing it with African content that it
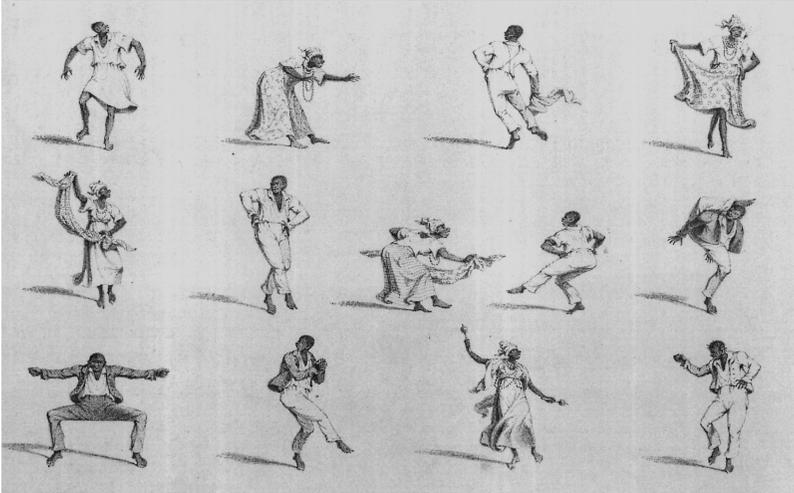
FIGURE 6. Dance steps and movements, Trinidad, 1830s. From Richard Bridgens, *West India Scenery*. Trinidad (London, 1836), plate 22. General Research Division, The New York Public Library, Astor, Lenox, and Tilden Foundations.

became unintelligible to Europeans, achieving a Creole or *patois* status, at which point it was as much African as European, if not more. This occurred all over the Diaspora, so that "black English" or "ebonics," with which North Americans are most familiar, is not simply a function of contemporary social disadvantage but is also the product of identifiable historical processes.

For the enslaved to insist upon the retention of their culture was not necessarily, in and of itself, resistance to enslavement. Many pursued African-derived cultural forms because it was all they knew; it was the substance of their lives and was not necessarily laden with political content. But the close identification of the African with slavery, such that by the nineteenth century the only slaves were those of African descent, combined with their dehumanization and the rejection of Africa as a site of civilization, meant that resistance for the enslaved was multidimensional. One resisted not only the physical status of slavery but also the devaluation of the African person, which is about culture in the final analysis. As it became impossible to separate slavery from the African, so the fight against slavery and the insistence on African cultural forms became one and the same struggle for many – but of course, not for all. Many blacks had become enamored of European

ways and saw little value in anything African. For them, deliverance
from slavery required a simultaneous rejection of African culture, the
source of their woes.

From a sense of who they were in relation to each other and to
Africa, the enslaved engaged in all manner of resistance. Slaveholders
and overseers were sometimes killed, often through the use of poi-
son, or they were seriously injured and maimed. Work slowdowns and
stoppages, misinterpreted throughout the Americas as an outgrowth
of the "innate laziness of the Negro," were common. Sabotage was
a related mechanism of resistance, as enslaved workers deliberately
torched fields and destroyed equipment. Food and provisions were
regularly confiscated, often through the offices of domestics working
in the big house, who never forgot their cosufferers and were constantly
on the lookout for opportunities to collude. Blacks acquiring their free-
dom often aided those remaining in slavery. Persons hired out by slave-
holders did their best to shield their actual earnings. Those allowed
to sell produce in the markets, such as market women in eighteenth-
century Charleston, monopolized certain goods and controlled the
prices, charging as much as 150 percent more than their initial outlay,
thereby extorting additional revenues from their white customers while
keeping the extra money for themselves and their fellows. So well had
they mastered the essentials of capitalist entrepreneurship, so expan-
sive was their sense of autonomy, that these women, as many as several
hundred by the mid-eighteenth century, reached a point where they
were unafraid to tell whites just what they thought of them. Regarded
as "insolent" and "impudent," these market women dared to openly
sass and make fun of their white customers. The charge of insolence
resonates with the very same characterization of enslaved women else-
where, and it provides an extraordinary moment in American history.

But perhaps the most fundamental expression of resistance was
absconding. Running for freedom was widespread throughout the
Americas. As there could be no maroons without this initial step, flight
was essential to the development of an alternative, independent com-
munity. Escape to marronage can be viewed as the ultimate form of
absconding, but there was yet another, far more unalterable voyage
from which there was no return. Suicide was common throughout the
Diaspora, men as well as women, African born as well as creole. The
former understood suicide as a return voyage to Africa, a means of
reversing sail. There are collections of stories in the United States and
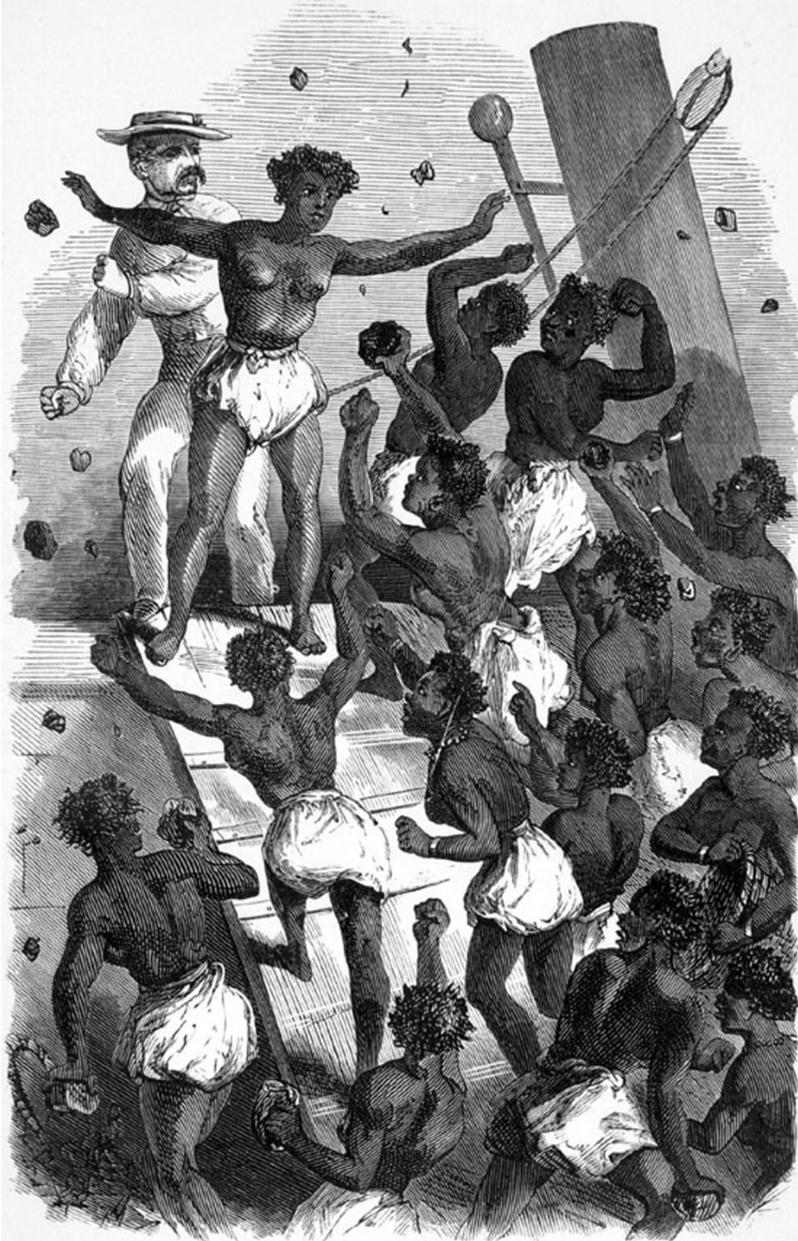in the Caribbean (and doubtless in Latin America as research will

FIGURE 7. Loading coal on a steamer, St. Thomas, 1864. From John Codman, *Ten Months in Brazil* (Boston, 1867), facing p. 20.

uncover) that make reference to "flying Africans," who became fed up with slavery and took wings and "flew back to Africa" or, in other folk-lore, marched in groups to the seashore, where they mounted into the sky and flew away, back to their homeland. The commission of suicide was no light matter, as it was an abominable act worthy of the great-est condemnation in many African societies; recourse to this form of resistance was a direct indication of the depth of suffering and despair.

Sometimes abscondees stayed away for just a few days or a few weeks; just enough time to clear their heads or experiment with the idea of escape. Specific incidents, rather than the overall concept of slavery, may have triggered the decision to leave: a particularly brutal beating, the sale of a spouse or child, some unbearable humiliation. Perhaps the runaway simply wanted to obtain better working condi-tions, or some other concession, and temporary flight drove the point home. However, often the design was much more permanent, the deci-sion much more final. In such instances the enslaved stole away under various scenarios and traveled under every imaginable arrangement. The old fled as well as the young, though in far fewer numbers. Per-sons belonging to the same ethnolinguistic grouping ran away together; persons belonging to differing groups did the same. The African-born joined the creole, and from the runaway slave advertisements it is not always clear which of the two was in command. A few individuals from the same family disappeared, while whole families would on occasion risk the danger. Very dark-complexioned persons conspired with very light-skinned ones, whereas other bands were exclusively composed of persons from either category. While statistically there were more males than females in flight (at least in North America), there are plenty of instances in which groups were all female, some with small children in tow, many still nursing. It was the support of women, who remained to care for the children and who maintained the family, that often en-abled men to run in the first place, and it was frequently a network of women who kept them alive as they moved from safe haven to safe haven. In sum, there was no circumstance under which the enslaved would not bolt.

For those intending a more permanent stay, the question of destina-tion generates a number of responses. While many headed for maroon communities, others made their way to towns and cities, where they had a better chance of blending in and achieving anonymity, a possi-bility enhanced by vocational skills. In these and many other instances, those absconding were seeking to reconnect with family and friends,

and often enough the runaway ads describe persons "escaping" to another plantation, where it was believed they had relatives. Some of the more striking cases involved newly arrived Africans heading for the coast, or toward some body of water, with the apparent intention of returning to Africa or some other place, as was true of Jamaica during the last quarter of the eighteenth century, when runaways sought to escape to Cuba by way of canoe. Taken together, these and other vignettes create a more complete picture of an enslaved world on the move, in constant motion. It is the portrait of a hemisphere engaged in an enormous enterprise of industry, agriculture, and commerce largely fueled by the labor of the enslaved, whose restlessness constituted an ever-present threat to these vast, interwoven operations. Africans were never comfortable or complacent in slaveholding America; they could never sit still.

Facing the Enemy

The decision to directly confront the very fount of oppression, rather than create spaces of autonomy, stirs the imagination like no other. In sixteenth-century Hispaniola and elsewhere in Spanish-claimed territories, Africans revolted with regularity, actions that often resulted in the first American maroons. In Antigua, a 1736 conspiracy engulfing the whole of the island was led by Court (or Tackey), along with Tomboy. An Akan speaker and a creole, respectively, they were assisted by Obbah (Aba) and Queen, both Akan women who provided critical leadership in facilitating the Damnation Oath, a ceremony derived from Akan traditions in which the insurrectionists committed themselves by drinking rooster blood, cemetery dirt, and rum, among other elements. Court had been crowned by 2,000 of the enslaved as the "king of the Coromantees," the basis of which was the Akan *ikem* ceremony, a tradition preparing participants for war. Queen, in turn, may have been Court's principal advisor, playing the same role as the queen-mother or *ohemaa* in Akan society. While the conspiracy was exposed before it could be executed, planters were astonished that not only the enslaved but many free blacks and so-called mulattoes were also implicated. Some eighty-eight enslaved males were executed and forty-nine expelled from the island.

A few decades following Tackey's insurgency in Antigua, conspiracies and revolts erupted throughout the circum-Caribbean: Bermuda

and Nevis in 1761, Suriname in 1762, 1763, and 1768–1772; British Honduras in 1765, 1768, and 1773; Grenada in 1765; Montserrat in 1768; St. Vincent in 1769–1773; Tobago in 1770, 1771, and 1774; St. Croix and St. Thomas in 1770; and St. Kitts in 1778. Yet another Tackey led a revolt in Jamaica in 1760, two decades after the British–Maroon peace treaty. With Abena presiding as the Akan queen-mother in Jamaica, over 1,000 slaves raised havoc for six months; some sixty whites died, compared with 600 of the enslaved after Tackey was killed by the maroon leader Captain Davy of Scotts Hall. Well organized and widespread, the revolt was Akan based, incorporating participants from a number of parishes. Taking an oath similar to the 1736 Antiguan Damnation Oath, the Akan sought to destroy slavery and replace it with a society based upon West African models. They found succor in the example of the Windward and Leeward maroons, and they sought to extend the freedoms the maroons enjoyed. However, as irony would have it, it was the Leewards and Windwards who, in compliance with the 1739 treaty, fought alongside the planters to end the 1760 revolt; they would do the same in the revolts of 1761, 1765, and 1766, all Akan-led conspiracies betrayed by informants. The Leewards, particularly the Accompong and Trelawny Town groups, were rewarded with twice as much money as were the Windward groups of Scotts Hall, Moore Town, and Charles Town, whose participation was considerably less enthusiastic.

Maroon opposition to these revolts would eventually return to haunt them. The enslaved could not help but feel ambivalent, at best, toward the maroons, unsure if they were friend or foe. Conversely, the maroons had become contemptuous of the slaves but never comfortable in their role as treaty partners with the British. They were wary of the planters and the colonial government, concerned about the latter's continual encroachment and attempts to bring the maroons under their jurisdiction. Tensions came to a head in 1795, at the height of the Haitian Revolution, when conflict erupted between the Trelawny Town maroons and the local government of Montego Bay of St. James Parish. The Trelawny Town War ensued until the following year, with minimal slave support for the maroons. Indeed, the other Leeward group, the Accompong, fought against the Trelawnys on the side of the British, whereas the Windwards, as a whole more distrustful of the planters and more independent, offered the British little in the way of assistance. In the end, the Trelawnys were defeated and some 568 were deported, first to Nova Scotia in June of 1796 and ultimately to Sierra Leone. Their land, some 1,500 acres, was seized by the British.

The war against slavery in Jamaica continued, but the end of the eighteenth century saw an important development in the insurrection movement. An uprising led by Cuffy, another Akan speaker, was this time composed of several ethnolinguistic groups in addition to the Akan. This represented a heightened awareness of similarities among the enslaved, and it suggests they were moving away from specific African groups to a broader sense of African-derived commonality. The zenith of this new corporate expression took place in 1831–1832, when some 20,000 slaves from all ethnolinguistic backgrounds, together with the Jamaican-born slaves or creoles, waged a widespread war against the slaveocracy. The best organized of all of Jamaica's slave revolts, it proved to be the most costly to repress; it was a critical factor in the eventual collapse of slavery in the British Caribbean, together with major uprisings in Barbados in 1816 and Demerara (what is now Guyana) in 1823.

Similar kinds of disturbances, attributed again to the Akan, were taking place in eighteenth-century New York City. The port had a significant slave population during the period: Between 1700 and 1774, at least 6,800 slaves were imported, 41.2 percent of whom were born in Africa. Before 1742, 70 percent came from Caribbean and American sources, with thousands arriving from Barbados and Jamaica, underscoring the interconnectedness of enslaved populations throughout the Americas. After 1742, however, 70 percent came directly from Africa. This turnabout was related to the revocation of the asiento after 1750, when Spanish markets were closed to English slavers and traders flooded New York and other English colonies with captives. The enslaved loaded and unloaded at docks, slips, and warehouses along the East River, labored in shipbuilding and construction industries, ferried between Long Island farms and the city, contributed to public works, served as domestics, and sold so much produce in the city streets that the Common Council curbed their activities in 1740.

Those from Jamaica and other Caribbean locations would have been aware of slave revolts and unrest in the islands; some had in fact been shipped to New York because of their participation. It is not surprising, then, that the Akan played prominent roles in the New York City rebellion of 1712, when "some Negro slaves of ye Nations of Carmantee and Pappa plotted to destroy all the White[s] in order to obtain their freedom." Nine were killed and five or six wounded before the uprising ended; twenty-one were executed by hanging, burning, or being broken at the wheel. Six ended their own lives. The conspiracy of

1741 involved similar participation from these and other ethnolinguistic groups, when it was believed (partially informed by white paranoia) that some 2,000 slaves were poised to torch the city. Sixteen blacks and four whites (judged coconspirators) were hanged, thirteen blacks were burned at the stake, and another seventy-one were expelled from the island following mass hysteria and a sensational trial.

Brazil experienced many slave insurrections that, like those in Jamaica and to a lesser extent New York City, tended to be organized along ethnolinguistic lines. In particular, the northeastern province of Bahia was a hotbed of discontent, notorious for slave revolts in the first half of the nineteenth century, and it is there that a multiplicity of identities arising from the intersection of a variety of elements that included racial intermixing, free versus slave statuses, urban versus rural settings, and religious adherence can be discerned. The Hausa, Muslims from what is now northern Nigeria, had been implicated in a revolt in Bahia in 1807, when the Hausa near the city of Salvador were accused of a conspiracy to capture ships and reverse sail to West Africa. Enslaved and free Hausa plotted together, and the two leaders of the conspiracy were executed. Two years later, in January of 1809, almost 300 slaves, again mostly Hausa, attacked the town of Nazaré das Farinhas in search of food and weapons. The attack was beaten back and eighty-three persons were captured, women and men. The 1809 revolt saw increased non-Hausa participation, in the form of "Jêjes" or Aja–Fon–Ewe from Dahomey and "Nagôs" or Yoruba from what is now southwestern Nigeria. Between 1810 and 1818 were three more revolts of significance, the second of which involved Nagôs under Hausa leadership headed by a *malomi* or *malām*, a Muslim religious leader. The revolts continued with regularity through the 1820s to 1835.

It was in the latter year that the insurrection of the *Malês* took place, a term referring to African Muslims who were by then mostly Nagôs rather than Hausa. Islam had become an important religion in Bahia, but it was not the dominant religion among blacks, nor were all Nagôs Muslim. In January of 1835, up to 500 Africans, enslaved and free, mostly Muslim but also non-Muslim, took to the streets of Salvador under Muslim leadership. The plan called for the conspirators to link with the enslaved in the surrounding plantations, but betrayal forced them to begin the uprising prematurely. Brutally repressed with over seventy killed, the Malê revolt revealed the importance of Islam and an impressive level of Arabic literacy among the participants, who wore

distinctive clothing, maintained their own religious schools, and ob-
served Islamic rituals such as fasting Ramadan. The 1835 revolt also
suggests that participating Africans rejected the notion of race, prefer-
ring their own ethnolinguistic identities. The rebels sought to kill not
only whites but also "mulattoes" and crioulos (creoles or Brazilian-
born blacks), a reflection of not only racial ambiguities but also signif-
icant cultural differences. The 1835 revolt, therefore, was a Muslim-
led, mostly Nagô effort that targeted whites and Brazilian blacks while
also rejecting Africans from Congo and Angola for cultural and re-
ligious purposes. In the end, hundreds were sent to the galleys, im-
prisoned, lashed, or expelled from Bahia, with some returning to West
Africa. In such a context, a single, all-inclusive definition of blackness
would have been highly elusive.

As unrelenting and courageous as the Brazilian and Caribbean up-
risings were, the single most far-reaching revolt in the New World took
place in Saint Domingue. Although the former uprisings were crucial
to the eventual abolition of slavery, the Haitian Revolution stands apart
as the only revolt to militarily defeat the slaveocracy and colonialism,
and it is the only revolt that ended slavery directly. That the enslaved
and their free black allies freed themselves sent shock waves throughout
the Americas, striking terror in the hearts and minds of slaveholders all
over. Word of the revolution also reached the ears of cosufferers from
Virginia to Bahia, and it served as a model for one of the most impor-
tant conspiracies in North America. News traveled not only through
slaveholder conversations and newspapers but also through black sea-
men, underscoring that blacks regularly plied the seas in ships other
than slavers. But in addition to information were enslaved individuals
themselves, either expelled from Saint Domingue or in the company
of slaveholders fleeing to other parts. So it was that on the island of
Curaçao, as one example, several of the enslaved from Saint Domingue
joined Tula in his 1795 revolt against the Dutch.

The repercussions of the 1789 French Revolution were far-
reaching, to say the least. In Saint Domingue, white planters took
advantage of the new situation to agitate and maneuver for greater au-
tonomy of their own. Although there were serious political differences
between them over developments in France, they became one in resist-
ing attempts of affranchis (free blacks and so-called persons of color)
to join their ranks and enjoy equal liberties. The enslaved, observing
the dissension and rancor, began to realize that all this talk of freedom
and liberty, combined with the unstable situation on the ground, was

a unique opportunity to do something about their own freedom. The enslaved on several plantations in the North began holding clandestine meetings in the woods, initially broken up by the maréchaussée (hunters of runaway slaves) and the execution of leaders. The meetings nevertheless continued, and by August 22, 1791, the date of the revolution's commencement, leaders from northern plantations had been meeting for weeks, planning the wide-scale revolt. At the Lenormand de Mézy plantation in Mourne-Rouge, they finalized their plans to set it off.

The leaders of the conspiracy included Boukman Dutty, a voodoo priest, Jean-François, and Georges Biassou; the first two apparently had some maroon experience. In an instructive example of how relatively privileged persons were not necessarily narrowed by that privilege but could instead see the larger picture, Toussaint L'Ouverture, the eventual leader of the revolution, was a black affranchi and a coachman. He was in the background in the early days, serving as a link among the leaders. Women played important roles as well, and their ranks included Cécile Fatiman, a voodoo high priestess or *mambo* severally described as a "green-eyed mulatto woman with long silken black hair." In the dense forest of Bois-Caïman, she and Boukman officiated a solemn voodoo ceremony for the conspirators that was not unlike the Damnation Oath in Antigua and Jamaica, again demonstrating the centrality of African religions.

At ten o'clock on the morning of August 22nd, the enslaved arose and torched plantation after plantation in the North, destroying everything in their path. By the eighth day of the insurrection, some 184 sugar plantations had been destroyed in seven parishes, rising to 200 sugar and 1,200 coffee plantations by September's end. By the end of November, some 80,000 out of 170,000 enslaved in the North had burst their chains, attacking both symbol and substance of power. This initial eruption was soon channeled into more manageable military order, as the insurrectionists were organized into bands under officers answering to Jean-François, who assumed the generalship following Boukman's capture and decapitation by the French, his head stuck on a pole and displayed in le Cap's public square. After initially indicating a willingness to settle for less than full freedom, the revolution's leadership was forced by the masses to persevere in the fight.

The Haitian Revolution would take many unpredictable, bewildering shifts and turns. Unlike those in the North, the enslaved in the South and West of the island were not as organized or cohesive, and

they were overshadowed by the politics of the free blacks and gens de couleur (persons of color or mixed ancestry). Matters spun out of control, with free blacks and gens de couleur teaming up to fight white planters in the South. The enslaved were enlisted to fight on both sides and therefore fought each other. Further developments and the realization that the gens de couleur were also slaveholders, even more so than whites, led the enslaved in the South to come together and fight for their own interests. The combination of insurrection and conflicts between Britain, France, and Spain led the French to abolish slavery throughout Saint Domingue on October 31, 1793. For the most part, however, little changed for the exslaves. Although they could no longer be whipped or tortured, they were still landless, legally bound to the plantations of former slaveholders. Many continued to run away or commit acts of sabotage.

In the meantime, Toussaint had emerged as leader of the forces in the North, under whom served Dessalines, Henri-Christophe, his brother Paul, and his adopted nephew Moïse. By 1798, after further intervention by the British, Toussaint had taken control of both the North and the West, with the South under the control of Rigaud, leader of the mixed race elite. Civil war (or fratricide) ensued, with Rigaud and those under his command suffering defeat. By 1801 and the termination of the civil war, Toussaint was the single leader of a slaveless Saint Domingue, but it remained a French colony. Continuing conflict with France eventually led Toussaint to accept an invitation to a meeting to negotiate a settlement, where he was promptly arrested and shipped to France. He would remain in the French Alps for the rest of his life, dying of consumption, in isolation. His lieutenant Dessalines, now commander of a unified black and mixed race army, went on to defeat the French and to declare independence on January 1, 1804. The island would henceforth be called Haiti, its original Arawak name.

The Haitian Revolution stands as a crowning achievement of those Africans determined to deliver themselves from American slavery. In the short term, however, the fall of slavery in Saint Domingue ironically led to the expansion of the institution elsewhere in the attempt to replace the island as a leading sugar producer. As for Haiti itself, those who struggled so valiantly against tyranny have only met with a U.S.-led policy of ostracism and indifference ever since. The island's poverty endures.

The struggle in Haiti was joined by forces to the north, on the North American mainland, where there were a number of revolts. One of the

more striking examples was the prior Stono Rebellion of 1739, when a contingent took up arms twenty miles west of Charleston, South Carolina and marched through the countryside wrecking havoc. South Carolina at this time had a black population of some 39,000 (compared with 20,000 whites), 70 percent of whom were from West Central Africa. The revolt was put down after several days and the deaths of thirty whites and forty-four blacks.

Another development was the response of those of African descent to the American War of Independence, a conflict financed by black labor. Blacks fought on both sides of the war with the hope of ensuring their freedom, so it is not inaccurate to characterize their participation as a slave revolt coinciding with, or taking advantage of, an anticolonial struggle. Those who fought with the colonies, some 5,000 out of 300,000, were mostly from the North and only entered American ranks after considerable vacillation by the Continental Army, which under George Washington had forbade the participation of blacks, only to later amend that policy. Most of the colonies also reversed themselves and allowed for both enslaved and free blacks to serve (with the exceptions of Georgia and South Carolina). The cause of the colonies' reversal was the November 7, 1775 declaration of Lord Dunmore, governor of Virginia, freeing all slaves and indentured servants who bore arms on the side of the British. As a result, it is estimated that Georgia lost 75 percent of its enslaved population (of 15,000), while Virginia and South Carolina combined may have lost some 55,000 slaves; it is not clear precisely how many of these actually fought for the British, but even if they only ran away and did not formally join the British, their actions still represented a significant defection.

Blacks who fought for the British had every right to do so. Indeed, the Declaration of Independence, that oft-quoted articulation of a desire for freedom and equality, absolutely ignored the plight of the enslaved. This comes as no surprise, since many of the Declaration's signatories were themselves slaveholders. In a surreal echo of the second-century Greek physician Galen, Thomas Jefferson, principal architect of both the Declaration and the Constitution, reveals his deep-seated reservations and overall racist sentiments concerning the African in his *Notes on the State of Virginia* (1781–1782):

> The first difference which strikes us is that of colour. . . . And is this difference of no importance? Is it not the foundation of a greater or less share of beauty in the two races? Are not the fine mixtures of red and

white, the expressions of every passion by greater or less suffusions of colour in the one, preferable to that eternal monotony, which reigns in the countenances, that immoveable veil of black which covers all the emotions of the other race? Add to these, flowing hair, a more elegant symmetry of form, their own judgment in favour of the whites, declared by their preference of them, as uniformly as is the preference of the Oranootan for the black women over those of his own species . . . They are more ardent after their female: but love seems with them to be more an eager desire, than a tender delicate mixture of sentiment and sensation. Their griefs are transient. Those numberless afflictions, which render it doubtful whether heaven has given life to us in mercy or in wrath, are less felt, and sooner forgotten with them. In general, their existence appears to participate more of sensation than reflection . . . Comparing them by their faculties of memory, reason, and imagination, it appears to me, that in memory they are equal to the whites; in reason much inferior, as I think one could scarcely be found capable of tracing and comprehending the investigations of Euclid; and that in imagination they are dull, tasteless, and anomalous. . . . This unfortunate difference of colour, and perhaps of faculty, is a powerful obstacle to the emancipation of these people. Many of their advocates, while they wish to vindicate the liberty of human nature, are anxious also to preserve its dignity and beauty. Some of these, embarrassed by the question "What further is to be done with them?" join themselves in opposition with those who are actuated by sordid avarice only. Among the Romans emancipation required but one effort. The slave, when made free, might mix with, without staining the blood of his master. But with us a second is necessary, unknown to history. When freed, he is to be removed beyond the reach of mixture. (*Notes on the State of Virginia*, W.W. Norton and Co., 1972, pp. 138–143)

This distillation of racism into its two core components – the rejection of African somatic form and the dismissal of African comparable intelligence – is notable for both its inimitable style and devastating effect. For Jefferson, the racial chasm was unbridgeable, a certitude that could only encourage rebellion.

Smaller revolts followed the American War of Independence, but in August of 1800, Gabriel Prosser and Jack Bowler met with an army of over 1,000 of the enslaved six miles outside of Richmond, Virginia. Having planned their assault for months, they marched on the city only to be thwarted by a powerful storm and the previous betrayals of two slaves, by whom the governor, fully informed of the conspiracy, called out the militia. Many were arrested and thirty-five executed; Prosser himself was captured in late September and also killed.

The Denmark Vesey conspiracy of 1822 also developed in an urban setting – Charleston – and demonstrates the interconnectedness of the African Diaspora by the early nineteenth century. Vesey, born either in the Caribbean or Africa, was a fifty-five-year-old seafarer who had purchased his freedom in 1800. Like Toussaint, he lived relatively well as a carpenter in Charleston, but he became persuaded by the suffering of the masses that there was more to life than his personal comfort. Organizing a revolt that took into consideration differences among the enslaved, he formed columns of distinct groups, such as the Igbo and Gullah (West Central Africans, Gola from West Africa, or both). African religious practices and Christianity were both observed out of respect for diversity. Vesey evoked the Haitian Revolution, predicting that help would arrive from that island and Africa itself, if only those in and around Charleston would take the initiative. All of this suggests that Vesey's followers, possibly as many as 9,000, could grasp his vision of a black world, in which the cause of freedom transcended divisions of birthplace and language. But the refrain is all too familiar: Made aware of the conspiracy by informants, white authorities preempted the revolt and arrested suspects; thirty-five blacks were hanged and forty-three deported to either Africa or the Caribbean.

David Walker may have been in Charleston at the time of the Vesey conspiracy; something certainly inspired him to pen his famous anti-slavery *Appeal* in 1829, in which he called for a general uprising in clear language. Walker died in Boston under very suspicious circumstances the following year, but Nat Turner attempted to answer his summons, launching a large-scale revolt in August of 1831 in Southampton, Virginia. A religious man and mystic, Turner interpreted that year's solar eclipse in February to be the divine signal for the apocalypse, and he launched the revolt on August 21. Within twenty-four hours, some sixty whites were killed, including Turner's owner and family. When the smoke cleared, over 100 of the enslaved had been killed in combat, and another 13 were hanged (along with three free blacks). Captured on October 30, Turner was executed on November 11. The revolts would continue in less dramatic fashion, only to flare up one more time just before the Civil War, when John Brown's company of less than fifty men, including several blacks, raided the federal arsenal at Harpers Ferry, Virginia on October 16, 1859. John Brown's leadership, reminiscent of the Zanj revolt in ninth-century Iraq under ʿAlī b. Muḥammad, points to the fact that whites were involved in a number of these uprisings, usually in supportive roles. Federal and state
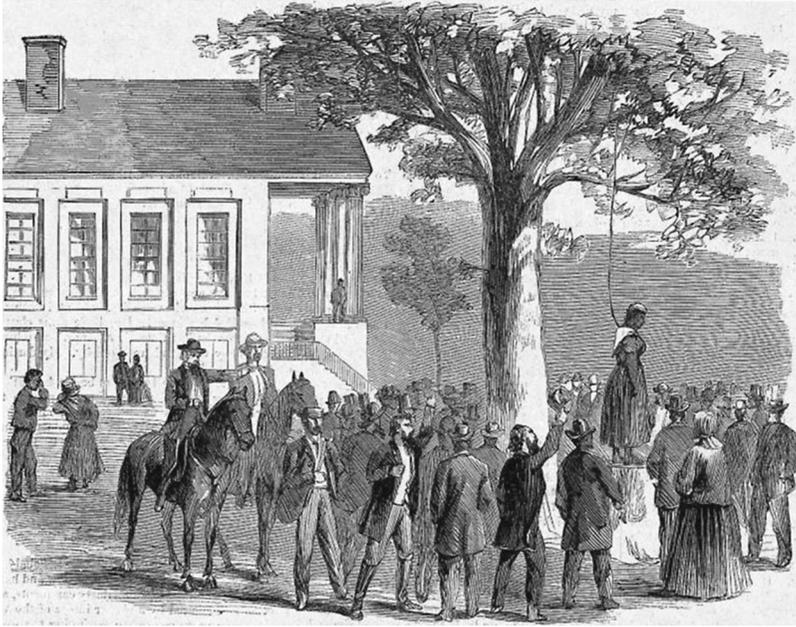
FIGURE 8. Hanging a slave, South Carolina, 1865. From *Harper's Weekly* (Sept. 30, 1865), p. 613.

troops overwhelmed Brown's small force, killing many and hanging others. On December 2, John Brown was also hanged, but only after his self-sacrifice and total identification with the enslaved had caused a sensation throughout the South.

Slavery's End?

The cumulative effect of all of these acts, large and small, was to undermine the institution of slavery throughout the Americas. Resistance increased slavery's costs, affecting the bottom line while raising the level of danger. Resistance also emboldened the oppressed, making the entire system increasingly unmanageable. Slavery expired with a whimper in some places, while in others it required herculean efforts to subdue. In the end, the antislavery struggle of the enslaved themselves was fundamental to abolition.

But abolition was a long process informed by other factors as well. Throughout the Americas there were those, black and white, who

opposed the slave trade or slavery and fought for their destruction by way of antislavery publications (pamphlets, newspapers, novels, and slave narratives) and government petitions, seeking legislative means to this end. In North America, antislavery sentiment became significant following the American War of Independence, as whites struggled with Enlightenment ideas and the Bible. Manumission and antislavery societies, first organized by the Quakers in 1775, were in every state from Massachusetts to Virginia by 1792, in tandem with similar forces in Britain. A direct consequence of their agitation was the passing of legislation in 1807 (effective in 1808) by both Britain and the United States outlawing the transatlantic slave trade. The trade continued illegally and without significant efforts on the part of the United States to enforce the ban, but the story with Britain was different. While maintaining its slave-based colonies in the Caribbean, Britain gradually committed its naval capabilities to interdicting the trade. They had some success, but it was not possible to police all nations and parties trafficking in such a vast ocean. The real effect of the ban in the United States, where the westward expansion of commercial agriculture required labor, was the acceleration of the domestic slave trade.

Antislavery literature included the important 1789 publication of Olaudah Equiano's *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa*. Antislavery sentiment in the United States intensified after 1815, resulting in such papers as white abolitionist William Lloyd Garrison's *Liberator*, first appearing in January 1831, and religious treatises such as James G. Barney's *Letter to the Ministers and Elders* in 1834 and Theodore Weld's *The Bible Against Slavery* in 1837. Black abolitionists had their own newspapers, including the first black newspaper, *Freedom's Journal*, published in 1827 by John Russwurm and Samuel Cornish. Others included the *National Watchman*, published by Henry Highland Garnet and William G. Allen, and the *North Star*, begun by Frederick Douglass in 1847. Important slave narratives included Douglass's own story, first published in 1845 and subsequently revised, while the most prominent antislavery novel was Harriet Beecher Stowe's 1852 *Uncle Tom's Cabin*. Selling more than 300,000 copies in its first year of publication, its description of the horrors of slavery was also dramatically translated to the stage. Whether in print or theater, the effect was electrifying.

As just one example of organized antislavery activity outside of the United States, Brazil also witnessed the development of a significant

abolitionist movement. Before 1850, independence leader José Bonifácio de Andrada e Silva spoke out against slavery, although his protests were rejected by Brazil's ruling class. In the late 1860s, a number of antislavery societies were created, consisting for the most part of persons of mixed ancestry and relative privilege. Perhaps the most important was Antônio Frederico de Castro Alves, who recited his poetry before large gatherings and was involved with two antislavery societies in Salvador and Recife prior to his death in 1871. José do Patrocínio of Rio de Janeiro, whose father was a Portuguese priest, was a former slave who achieved his freedom and went on to purchase two newspapers, turning them into antislavery organs. In 1880, Patrocínio would be instrumental in the creation of an antislavery umbrella organization called the Abolitionist Confederation, and he was crucial in making the debate over slavery much more public. The more elite Brazilian Anti-Slavery Society was founded by Joaquim Nabuco and intellectual André Pinto Rebouças in 1880, and it was the organization through which *The Abolitionist* newspaper was begun. A final example of leading Brazilian abolitionists was Luís Anselmo da Fonseca, a medical professor who published *Slavery, the Clergy, and Abolition*, the most influential critique of slavery of the period, in which he took both the Catholic Church and free black Brazilians to task for their complicity in slavery.

One of the more arresting developments to come out of the antislavery campaign was the movement to repatriate the African-descended population to Africa. These efforts reveal how participants in the same enterprise came with entirely different assumptions and motivations. For Africans and their descendants, the opportunity to return to Africa represented the possibility to reverse sail and reconnect, to escape the oppressive, racist atmosphere of the Americas and start over as pioneers, or to fulfill a missionary zeal to bring the Christian gospel to "benighted heathens." Whites who supported repatriation were divided. Those in Britain were interested in relocating the "black poor" to Africa, where they could both improve their lives and facilitate British interests in "legitimate" (nonslave) trade. Whites in the United States, on the other hand, were entirely cynical in their approach, advocating the project to rid the land of free blacks, thereby actually strengthening slavery. Men like Thomas Jefferson and Abraham Lincoln were convinced that Africans could never become the equal of whites, and that repatriation to Africa, or deportation to the Caribbean, was the best solution for resolving "the freedman question." This is consistent with

the fact that whites could be opposed to the slave trade but not slavery, or, if they were opposed to slavery, were not necessarily advocating full citizenship rights for blacks; these attitudes were evident in the U.S. North, where blacks, though technically free, suffered from a range of discriminatory laws, practices, and even violence.

Whatever their various impulses, repatriation to Africa from Britain and Canada, the latter the destination for Jamaican maroons and a refuge for blacks who fought for the British during the American War of Independence, began in 1787 and centered on the British settlement at Sierra Leone. These initial groups would be joined, beginning in the nineteenth century, by captives taken from slavers bound for the Americas, the result of the British effort to outlaw the trade. Sierra Leone received thousands of such recaptives, reaching a peak in the 1840s. As for the United States, repatriation became an organized, state-sanctioned enterprise beginning in 1817 with the founding of the American Colonization Society, which in 1822 began a colony in what would become Monrovia, Liberia. Money was raised to finance the voyages, and by 1830 some 1,420 persons had sailed to Liberia. All told, not more than 15,000 blacks participated in the return, to which can be added recaptives liberated from slavers by the American navy. The scheme was opposed by abolitionists, white and black, but in both Sierra Leone and Liberia, the return of Africans and their descendants from the Americas would have a profound effect upon the future course of those nations. Fundamentally, the cultures of the returnees had been altered by the experience in the Americas; they did not necessarily identify with Africans who had never left the continent. Stratification developed largely along lines of cultural differences between the returnees and the indigenous population, with the former arrogating privilege and power for themselves. It was a recipe for disaster, the consequences of which continue to reverberate.

While many Africans and their descendants returned to the continent by way of American and British government and private assistance, others financed their own way. In North America, Paul Cuffe, possibly of Akan (but also of Native American) descent, personally transported thirty-eight persons back to Africa in 1815, financing the entire enterprise himself. Perhaps even more spectacular was the return of people from Brazil and Cuba to West Africa, particularly to what is now southwestern Nigeria and Benin. Those not sent back as conspirators were usually members of *cabildos* (in Cuba) and *irmandades* (Brazil), fraternal organizations based upon purported

membership in ethnolinguistic groups. These brotherhoods pooled their resources to pay for such return voyages, among other things. Rather than blending in upon their return, persons originally taken from the Bight of Benin (many of whom were Yoruba, Fon, and Ewe) often formed their own settlements along the coast and became known as *amaros*. Similarly, some of the Yoruba and Fon–Ewe rescued at sea by the British and brought to Sierra Leone later returned to southwestern Nigeria and Benin, where they were referred to as *saros*. Perhaps the New World experience had changed them, like it had the "Americo-Liberians." There is great irony here: People who voluntarily returned to Africa wound up distancing themselves from Africans, or perhaps it was the indigenous peoples who rejected the returnees. Rejection and self-containment may have even been mutual. In any case, the recovery of life prior to the slave trade proved challenging.

One by one, and over a long stretch of time, the various polities throughout the Americas dismantled the machinery of slavery. The people of Haiti freed themselves in 1791. Next came many of the colonies under Spanish control, where wars of independence were organized as early as 1808. As would be true of the United States and Cuba, black soldiers made their own contributions to the independence efforts, fighting as well for an end to slavery. General José de San Martín, who led much of South America in their struggle against Spain, was authorized by both Argentina and Chile to grant freedom to slaves enlisted in his armies, resulting in the mobilization and manumission of thousands. The scope of these manumissions was limited, as those who would become freedmen or *libertos* could only do so after serving extended terms in the army; one term, for example, required that they continue to serve for two years after all hostilities had ended. While some deserted, others stayed the course; in the invasion of Chile in 1816 to fight the Spanish, half of San Martín's army were exslaves, recruited from Buenos Aires and western Argentina and serving in all-black units. These soldiers paid dearly; they fought with San Martín in Chile, Peru, and Ecuador between 1816 and 1823, returning to Argentina with only 150 of the original 2,000. Nevertheless, some had risen to the rank of officer, a feat duplicated in Mexico, where African-descended leaders José Maria Morelos and Vicente "El Negro" Guerrero provided important leadership. In what is now Colombia and Venezuela, the "great liberator" Simón Bolívar, who in 1815 requested and received military assistance from Haiti, favored abolition, though he was ambivalent about freed Africans

becoming full members of society. Abolition was opposed by Colombia and Venezuela's mining interests, for whom 55 percent of the 38,940 enslaved still toiled as late as 1830. As a result, slavery was officially abolished in Chile, the countries of Central America, and Mexico in 1823, 1824, and 1829, respectively, but not until 1852 in Colombia. Ecuador followed suit that year, then Argentina and Uruguay (1853), Peru and Venezuela (1854), Bolivia (1861), and Paraguay (1869).

Emancipation in the British Caribbean, achieved through the resistance of the enslaved, was supported by British abolitionists under William Wilberforce's leadership in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Initially waging a campaign of "amelioration" to improve the conditions of the enslaved, these abolitionists soon lobbied for the interdiction of the transatlantic trade and the end of slavery itself. Prominent among them were Olaudah Equiano and Ottobah Cugoano, who published his *Thoughts and Sentiments of the Evils of Slavery* in 1787. The cumulative effect of antislavery forces was the passing in Parliament of the Emancipation Act of 1833, ratified the following year, which ushered in the Apprenticeship period in the English-speaking Caribbean. Under these provisions, children under six years of age became free, while all others were to work for their former slaveholders for another four years, after which all would be emancipated in 1838. For their losses, slaveholders received significant compensation.

Slavery in Canada, a modest institution in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Lower Canada, was also destroyed by Parliament's 1833 Act, following its demise in Upper Canada (now Ontario) in 1793. Slavery in what remained of the French and Danish-held Caribbean was abolished in 1848, while the Dutch afforded the same to their colonies (Aruba, Bonair, Curaçao, St. Maarten, St. Eustatius, and Saba) in 1863. It would take a major civil war, however, for the institution to be abolished in the United States. Some 186,000 blacks enlisted in the Union Army, 93,000 of whom came from seceding states, and over 38,000 died in the war. Initially opposed to using black troops, the Union acquiesced in August of 1862, more than a year after the war began. The enslaved also advanced their own liberation by crossing Union Army lines and offering to work for wages. On the other side, the Confederacy used slaves for much of the vital infrastructural work, such as repairing railroads and bridges, manufacturing firearms and powder, and constructing fortifications. They were the cooks for the Confederate Army, and they attended the wealthy soldiers, cleaning their clothes, polishing their swords, and running

errands. A few blacks also fought with the South, a last-ditch effort resulting from an act of desperation on the part of the Confederate government, enacted in March of 1865, by which time all was lost; the Confederacy surrendered at Appomattox the following month. But before placing the South in too cynical a light, we should recall that President Abraham Lincoln preceded the Confederacy in embracing expediency. In issuing the Emancipation Proclamation, initially floated on September 22, 1862 but not put into effect until January 1, 1863, Lincoln sought to deny the Confederacy its labor base and main support for the war. The Proclamation only applied to those in the Confederacy, and it did not emancipate the enslaved in states loyal to the Union or in territory under Union occupation. It was not until the war's end and the ratification of the Thirteenth Amendment on December 18, 1865 that the formerly enslaved were freed.

The culmination of the American Civil War brought into focus the remaining Spanish-held territories of Puerto Rico and Cuba as slaveholding societies. A military junta seized power in Spain in 1868 and issued a Cuba-directed decree freeing children born to enslaved mothers. The abolitionist Segismundo Moret, appointed minister of the colonies in 1870, convinced the Spanish legislature to pass the Moret Law that year, which in effect reinforced the 1868 decree. The Moret Law affected the fortunes of Puerto Rico, whose enslaved population by 1872 was less than 2 percent of its labor force; the Spanish legislature abolished slavery in that island in 1873 without compensating slaveholders.

The British abolition and interdiction of the slave trade, combined with the end of slavery throughout the Americas (except for Brazil), made it more difficult for Cuba to import captives. Further mechanization of sugar manufacturing decreased reliance upon slave labor, while the eruption of three major slave revolts in 1842–1843, followed by the repression of an 1844 conspiracy known as *La Escalera* ("The Ladder," where those charged with insurrection were tied and beaten), certainly underscored its unreliability. However, the fatal blow to slavery was struck during the Ten Years' War (1868–1878), when Cuba attempted to throw off the Spanish colonial yoke. As was true of both the American War of Independence and the American Civil War, whites fought for their reasons and blacks fought for those same reasons as well as their own, particularly for freedom. Slavery became more of an issue as the war progressed, but initially it was fought in the name of Cuban nationalism. These two different yet related issues would

coalesce to place Cuba's greatest military leader, Antonio Maceo, on the horns of yet another dilemma. The son of a free African Cuban, Maceo delivered stellar service to the Cuban struggle for independence, but he was suspected by white revolutionaries of harboring secret plans to establish a black republic on Cuban soil, à la Haiti, a fear encouraged by the Spanish. Maceo was joined by such men of African descent as Quintín Bandera, Guillermo Moncada, and Policarpo Pineda (or Rustán) as military leaders in the Ten Years' War, and they were joined by thousands of enslaved infantry. The war ended with the Pact of Zanjón and the defeat of the nationalists. Spain manumitted 16,000 slaves to quell further trouble, but Maceo rejected the Pact precisely because it did not manumit all the enslaved. The Guerra Chiquita (Little War) ensued in eastern Cuba from 1879 to 1880, in part waged by blacks and those of mixed ancestry over their lack of power and slavery's continuation. Quickly suppressed as a result of a lack of support by white Cubans, Spain further undermined the spirit of the rebellion by declaring the end of slavery in 1880 and the start of the *patronato* or apprenticeship which, like the policy in the British Caribbean, required former slaves to work for former slaveholders for the next eight years. Because there were few *patrocinados* left in Cuba by 1885, Spain declared the end of the apprenticeship in 1886. The enslaved's fight for freedom from both slavery and colonial rule would deeply influence the concept of race in Cuba.

Brazil was the last to abolish slavery. In contrast to both Cuba and the United States, there was no all-consuming conflagration within which the enslaved fought for multiple purposes, with the possible exception of the Paraguayan War of 1865–1870. It was during that war, waged against Paraguay by Brazil, Argentina, and Uruguay, that Brazil offered freedom to those who enlisted. Although this war was important to the demise of Brazilian slavery, more critical was the steady diminution in the slave population stemming from resistance, mechanization, and the abolitionist campaign in that country. The ban of the transatlantic trade, initially agreed to in 1817 by the Portuguese, was finally enforced after 1850, although the clandestine trade continued. The 1860s through the 1880s saw a significant increase in the number of slaveholders killed by the enslaved, the number of (mostly small-scale) uprisings, and the number fleeing from slavery, particularly in the coffee regions around Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo. The surge of activity pressured the government to pass the Rio Branco Law of 1871, or Law of Free Birth, manumitting the children of enslaved

mothers, and a sexagenarian law passed in 1885 granting freedom to those reaching sixty years of age. The effect of resistance and legislation was the precipitous decline in the percentage of the enslaved, from 50 percent of the total population in 1822 to 5 percent in 1888. In that year the Golden Law was enacted, officially abolishing a slavery in Brazil that had been practically ended by the enslaved themselves.

The close of the nineteenth century saw the end of an institution throughout the Americas, but by the time slavery was finished in Cuba and Brazil, another chapter had begun elsewhere in the Caribbean and the northern mainland. The question for all concerned was this: How free would freedom be?

Games People Play

The most arresting, startling, critical, and indisputable fact concerning the whole of the Americas and their respective processes of emancipation was that, whether slaveholders were compensated for their losses or not, the enslaved themselves received virtually nothing. It is therefore the case that past and present development in the Americas was based upon an institution whose labor came free of charge. Many contemporary African countries may be presently indebted, but the Western world is historically indebted and ironically so, as it extracted free labor in exchange for costly suffering from Africans and their descendants, stolen from Africa. Does this historical debt require some contemporary resolution from those in the Americas and Europe, who obviously were not "there" in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries but whose lives and economies continue to benefit from a foundation laid by slavery?

A review of postemancipation societies, beginning with the British Caribbean, demonstrates a certain continuity of experience between slavery and freedom. The Apprenticeship, 1834 to 1838, began the process by which the status of some 80 percent of the British Caribbean population changed. During the four-year transition period, former slaves were still required to work for former slaveholders in exchange for wages, and they were bound to the plantations by means of socalled pass laws that restricted their mobility. It became clear, therefore, that the apprentices themselves would have to take action to transform the significance of freedom from an abstraction of colonial decree to the substance of lived experience. This they did by asserting as much

control over their labor as possible; they used their free time (a quarter of the week) as they saw fit, often withholding it from desperate employers. They also refused to work in some instances, resorting to sabotage in others. While wary of the legal system, they yet sought to clarify their freedom in the courts.

Following apprenticeship, blacks were keen to negotiate a freedom that afforded the conditions of their labor as much flexibility as possible, and provided their families as much autonomy as possible, including the opportunity to relocate, both within the island of their residence and to different islands as well. Many vocationally skilled and semiskilled workers moved to urban areas, while others migrated from lower-wage areas such as Barbados and the Leeward and Windward islands to higher-wage sites, such as Trinidad and British Guyana. Negotiations, work stoppages or strikes, and violence accompanied efforts to receive equitable, acceptable salaries. Conflict with employers determined to reduce wages produced major strikes in Jamaica in 1838–1839 and 1841, Guyana in 1842, and Trinidad in 1843. While wages were important, the African-descended also fought for task work and jobs that did not require contracts, both of which maximized their choices and enhanced their liberty. They could better control their time on the plantations, have more time to cultivate their own provision grounds and participate in the market, or pursue supplemental economic endeavors. They insisted on shorter weeks for women and children than men, allowing women more time to work the provision grounds and pursue huckstering in the market.

Attempts to define the terms of freedom, severely handicapped by the absence of any meaningful compensation for slavery, were resisted within ten years of emancipation by former slaveholders. They responded by seizing the courts and imposing a series of restrictions on movement, squatting, and the use of plantation property. They succeeded in lowering wages and reestablishing their ownership of provision grounds. Increased educational access was a glimmer of hope, but this was severely restricted to a few privileged families and individuals, leading to even more class divisions among blacks.

The former slaveholder backlash resulted in a period of renewed oppression, contiguous with enslavement. Those of African descent responded in ways similar to their resistance to slavery; cultural opposition took the form of a reinvigorated embrace of African-influenced religions, while the folklore, memorials, and the language itself evinced a deep-seated anger. The cultural worked in tandem with the political,

FIGURE 9. Thatched houses, Barbados, 1898. From Robert T. Hill, *Cuba and Porto Rico* (New York, 1898), facing p. 396.

and violent revolts against reconfigured oppression broke out all over the Caribbean. These included the 1844 Guerre Nègre in Dominica, the Angel Gabriel Riots of Guyana in 1856, the 1862 Vox Populi Riots of St. Vincent, the 1876 Belmanna Riots of Tobago, and the Confederate Riots of Barbados of the same year. Perhaps the most representative of these uprisings were the Morant Bay Disturbances of 1865 in Jamaica, led by the lay preacher Paul Bogle.

In 1865, the people of Stony Gut, a St. Thomas Parish farming village located on land leased by blacks following apprenticeship, faced desperate economic times, a condition exacerbated by royal and colonial government indifference. Refusing to continue paying rent to the magistrates of Morant Bay, these black farmers claimed squatters' rights. The local planters tried to evict them, and Bogle, leader of the Stony Gut community, called for revolt. Following the rescue of a fellow farmer on trial in Morant Bay, members of Stony Gut violently resisted the arrest of the rescuers. In a response bearing clear resemblances to Akan-based uprisings during slavery, Bogle and his followers took an oath and administered it to others, and on October 10 they marched into Morant Bay with drums beating and conch shells blaring, crying "Cleave to the black, color for color." Vowing to kill repressive whites while saving white sympathizers, they took control of

St. Thomas Parish for three days. After death and destruction, Bogle was captured with the assistance of – who else? – the maroons, and he was hanged on a British gunboat on October 24, along with over 1,000 other blacks.

By the 1870s, then, many in the British Caribbean had been forced to return to dependence on the plantations as a consequence of both planter countermeasures and the disruption of trade resulting from the American Civil War. They suffered rates of unemployment, lowered wages, and a surge in food prices that placed them in conditions not very far removed from those characterizing slavery. Their continued resistance, however, establishes this response as a principal theme in the history of the African Diaspora. Their experience would be echoed in the mainland of the United States.

Freedom's Tease

The close of the Civil War ushered in Reconstruction (1865–1877), the quintessential saga of the rise and fall of a people's dreams and aspirations, as promising and progressive social policies introduced at the period's beginning were ultimately reversed and crushed by the period's end. Some 4 million people had been emancipated, but as was true of the British Caribbean, the precise meaning of their emancipation was undefined and contested. A war-torn South, struggling to regain an economic footing while wrestling with the implications of freedom, initially attempted to resolve both by controlling black labor. Again, not unlike the Caribbean, southern whites adopted legislation collectively known as the Black Codes, seeking to ensure black worker availability. The Black Codes were similar to the Slave Codes in that they proscribed black movement, limiting where they could rent or own property and forcing them to work for white employers by means of vagrancy laws. Black life in the workplace and society in general was regulated, and opportunities for blacks' participation in the political process were denied. The dawn of Reconstruction was pretty bleak.

Determining that Andrew Johnson, Lincoln's successor following the latter's assassination in April of 1865, was content to allow white home rule in the South, Congress convened in December of 1865 and wrested control of Reconstruction away from the executive branch, inaugurating the subperiod known as Radical Reconstruction. With the

exception of a cooperative Tennessee, the South was divided into five military districts governed by martial law; no southern state would be admitted into the Union until it ratified the Fourteenth Amendment granting blacks citizenship. In March of 1865 the Bureau of Refugees, Freedmen, and Abandoned Lands was established. Better known as the Freedmen's Bureau, the agency oversaw efforts to relieve not only blacks but also whites of intense suffering. To that end, the Bureau created forty-six hospitals by 1867, and by 1869 dispensed food rations to 5 million whites and 15 million blacks. The Bureau intervened in disputes between black workers and employers, and it helped thousands resume work under better conditions. "Freedmen's" courts were created to adjudicate cases deemed inappropriate for local tribunals. Perhaps what was more important was that the Bureau promoted the education of freedpersons and created day, evening, Sunday, and vocational schools. The African-descended of all ages sat in the same classroom, eager to finally read the Bible for themselves. Colleges were also established with Bureau assistance during this time, including the Hampton Institute and Fisk, Howard, and Atlanta Universities. Hundreds, if not thousands, of whites from the North volunteered as teachers, and by 1870 there were some 247,333 students in over 4,000 schools.

In addition to such measures, the Reconstruction Act of 1867 enfranchised southern blacks and loyal whites while disfranchising a large number of disloyal whites. Constitutional conventions were held in 1867 and 1868 in which blacks participated, constituting the majority in South Carolina while equaling the white delegation in Louisiana. Black delegates helped craft the most progressive state constitutions the South had ever known, with such features as the abolition of property qualifications for the franchise and elective office. Blacks went on to hold public office, especially in South Carolina, where they controlled the lower house of the legislature for a period, contributed two lieutenant governors, and served in the state supreme court from 1870 to 1876 in the person of Jonathan Jasper Wright. Between 1868 and 1896, Louisiana saw thirty-eight black senators and ninety-five representatives elected to the state legislature; of its three black lieutenant governors, P. B. S. Pinchback served as acting governor for forty-three days. At the national level, of the twenty blacks elected to the House of Representatives between 1869 and 1901, South Carolina supplied the largest number with eight. There were also two black senators, Blanche K. Bruce and Hiram R. Revels, both of Mississippi; no African

descendant would again serve in that capacity until the election of Edward Brooke of Massachusetts in 1966.

Although these developments were significant, they did not address the fundamental economic difficulties of freedpersons. The notion of "forty acres and a mule" for every black family stems from an 1865 military order by General Sherman, by which certain sea islands and a thirty-mile tract of coastal land south of Charleston were designated for freedperson settlement. Households were assigned forty-acre plots and a pack animal (if no longer needed by the Union Army), and by 1865 some 40,000 freedpersons had received 400,000 acres of land. But in February of 1865, Congress stripped the Freedmen's Bureau of the authority to assign such lands, and President Johnson soon rescinded all such land titles. Some of the many displaced were helped by the Southern Homestead Act of 1866, which provided those in five southern states, both black and white, the opportunity to secure homesteads. By 1867, blacks owned 160,960 acres in Florida, and they acquired over 350,000 acres in Georgia by 1870.

However, in the larger scheme of things, the vast majority of the 4 million freedpersons received nothing, and they were forced by economic necessity to return to plantations they had worked prior to the war, lands owned by former slaveholders. They were then required to work for either monthly wages or as sharecroppers; in the former instance, the wages in 1867 totaled less than what had been paid to the enslaved who had been hired out. As for sharecropping, it was a nefarious system that kept black labor in place, bound to the land like serfs, because at year's end they were always in debt to plantation and farm owners who manipulated the records or "cooked the books." Thus, the reality for too many was an economic arrangement similar to an institution supposedly abolished. Sadly but predictably, the South's production of cotton rebounded from its wartime lows, and by 1880 was higher than it had ever been.

Just as sharecropping was another form of exploitation, even slavery under a different name, so the South resurrected another institution echoing the activities of the antebellum patty-rollers. The institution made the reimposition of white control possible and was, simply put, state-sponsored terrorism. In reaction to Radical Reconstruction, white southerners unleashed a widespread, unrelenting campaign of sheer horror, aimed at driving blacks, along with their white supporters, out of the political process and back to the plantations, where they were to be immobilized and "put in their place." As early

FIGURE 10. Black family, Beaufort, South Carolina, 1862. Library of Congress, Prints and Photographs Division, LC-B8171-152-A.

as 1866, organizations such as the Regulators and the Black Horse Cavalry emerged, terrorizing blacks throughout the South. After 1867 the number of these clandestine societies mushroomed to include the Pale Faces, the Rifle Clubs of South Carolina, the White Line of Mississippi, the White League of Louisiana, the White Brotherhood,

the Knights of the White Camelia, and the Knights of the Ku Klux Klan. Together with the Black Codes, these terrorist organizations were quite effective in intimidating a defenseless population, and they worked with white politicians to resist and gradually overturn progressive legislation through murder, mutilation, rapine, and confiscation. With the North weary of the fight for black citizenship, the federal government's decision to remove federal troops from the South in 1876 opened wide the floodgates for white supremacists. By such requirements as the poll tax, proof of literacy and ability to understand any part of the constitution, ownership of property, grandfather clauses, and by vulgar physical threat, blacks were removed from the polls in dramatic fashion. By 1910, state constitutions rewritten to include such requirements had disfranchised blacks in North and South Carolina, Louisiana, Georgia, Mississippi, Alabama, Virginia, and Oklahoma. Jim Crow laws, legislating separate and segregated spaces for blacks and whites in public and private places, became fixtures on the legal landscape, upheld by the Supreme Court itself in its 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* decision; they would remain until the civil rights gains of the 1960s. By the dawn of the twentieth century, the vestiges of slavery were apparent throughout the South, home to 90 percent of all the African-descended in the United States. For another 100 years following slavery's abolition, black folk suffered another form of legal, state-supported discrimination and oppression, and again they endured the exploitation of their labor, the destabilization of their families, and the curtailment of their potential. All, it would seem, simply because they were black.

Another Way

The different yet parallel experiences of those of African descent in the United States and the Caribbean suggest that de facto slavery in the postemancipation period was a powerful factor in the development of race and racial consciousness in these societies. The denial of opportunity and pervasiveness of black suffering, white arrogation of privilege and power, and the mediating role disproportionately played by those of mixed ancestry rendered racial identity a meaningful category of social significance. Blackness, well established during slavery, acquired an even greater quality of immutability, as the end of legal slavery failed to significantly alter the very real predicament of the formerly enslaved.

A consideration of postslavery Cuba, however, suggests that the concept of race was neither universal nor unchanging throughout the Americas; it was relative to the unique circumstances of a given society. Cuba's struggle for independence from Spain, coming on the heels of the abolition of Cuban slavery, forged a collective identity in that island that attempted to merge color and nationality. That is, the African-descended felt loyal to both their blackness and their Cubanness; the two were not easily separated and were uniquely linked to their white Cuban compatriots. Evidence for this view of racial identity can be found in the words of the black general Guillermo Moncada, military leader in both the Ten Years' War and the Guerra Chiquita, who argued for the existence of a "Cuban race." The context for Moncada's statement was war with Spain, without which Cuba's racial relations may have conformed to North American and British Caribbean patterns. The notion of a "Cuban race" was in conversation with the idea of a *raza de color* (race of color) or *clase de color*, created by African-descended Cubans to combine blacks (morenos) and those of mixed ancestry (pardos) into a unified category, with the result that morenos and pardos were both often called *negros* (blacks). But even those who embraced the idea of a raza de color saw themselves as fully Cuban and vigorously fought for their rights as such.

The end of slavery in Cuba resulted in continuing despair for the majority of the formerly enslaved. As was true elsewhere, they received nothing. Some moved to urban areas; others fled the sugar plantations of the island's western sector in search of land to farm on their own. However, most remained where they had been, on or near their former plantations, where they worked for either wages or tenancy. Wages were uncertain and individual lives quite precarious, however, as the Cuban sugar industry was in crisis, suffering from competition, in addition to other factors. Laborers had also been displaced by an influx of more than 100,000 Spaniards between 1882 and 1894, most of whom wound up working in rural areas, where the devastation of two wars between 1868 and 1880 remained a formidable challenge. By the early 1890s, therefore, the situation for blacks in Cuba was not unlike their counterparts in the United States and the Caribbean.

Desperate economic conditions further fueled the flame of resistance to Spanish rule and the drive for independence. To counter the insurgency, Spain held aloft the example of Haiti and warned that independence efforts would devolve into racial conflict. Led by the writings of José Martí, the response of Cuban intellectuals of all shades

was to develop a concept of transracial nationalism in Cuba. Their work aimed at rewriting the black insurgent as raceless compatriot and hero rather than black, vengeful menace, an effort greatly assisted by black and mixed race journalists and writers, including Juan Gualberto Gómez, Martín Morúa Delgado, and Rafael Serra y Montalvo. It was through such individuals, along with black newspapers, that the struggle for black civil rights was simultaneously waged, and the establishment of such organizations as the Directorio Central de las Societies de la Clase de Color allowed black and mixed race organizations to coalesce. Their creation points to the fact that black leaders did not necessarily agree on the best way to achieve a common Cuban identity, as some advocated black political organizations and others (such as Antonio Maceo) did not.

Led by Martí's Cuban Revolutionary Party, the independence movement again took up arms in February of 1895, Antonio Maceo was again a principal general, and black participation was again both significant and crucial. Racial equality was enunciated by independence leaders as the ideological underpinning of the movement. Achieving rapid success, the insurgents suffered a major setback when Maceo was ambushed and killed in Havana province in December of 1896. Hopes that Spain would be more amenable to Cuban independence revived with the assassination of the Spanish prime minister in August of 1897 and the fall of Spain's conservative government. The American entry into the conflict in April of 1898 launched the Spanish-American War, ending with an American victory that August. The Americans would remain in Cuba for three and a half years, until the Cubans had satisfactorily demonstrated to the Americans their "fitness to rule," certified by Cuba's acceptance of the 1901 Platt Amendment (which granted the United States the right to intervene in Cuba whenever the former deemed necessary).

American interventionism was a blow to Cuba's transracial experiment, as Americans introduced Jim Crow to Havana, complete with segregated fighting units. The black Cuban's pride in both her blackness and her nationality would be tested, therefore, as some white Cubans were encouraged by North American racism to forego the principles of Martí.

The irony in the Spanish-American War is difficult to overlook. African Americans from the United States enthusiastically supported Cuban independence out of an identification with Cubans, who they viewed as largely black or of mixed ancestry and therefore similar

to themselves. After all, both groups were just out of slavery. Four all-black units saw action in Cuba and probably saved Theodore Roosevelt's Rough Riders from annihilation at Las Guasimas. Those very same black American soldiers, however, suffered discrimination in a service for which they were prepared to give their lives. They could not even get to Cuba without first passing through a gauntlet of hate-filled white mobs in the American South, protesting their transit. For those black American soldiers, a raceless American nationalism was unimaginable.

Suggestions for Further Reading

Resistance and emancipation literature has amassed rapidly. An introduction to themes in the Caribbean is provided by Hilary Beckles and Verene Shepherd, eds., *Caribbean Freedom: Society and Economy From Emancipation to the Present* (Kingston, Jamaica and London: Curry, 1993). In addition to aforementioned works by C. L. R. James and Carolyn Fick, there is Mavis Campbell, *The Maroons of Jamaica, 1655–1796: A History of Resistance, Collaboration, and Betrayal* (South Hadley, MA: Bergin and Garvey, 1988); Jean Fouchard, *Les marrons de la liberté* (Paris: Éditions de L'École, 1972); Michel-Rolph Trouillot, *Silencing the Past: Power and the Production of History* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1995); Michael Craton, *Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell U. Press, 1982); David Barry Gaspar, *Bondsmen and Rebels: A Case Study of Master–Slave Relations in Antigua, With Implications for Colonial British America* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins U. Press, 1985); and Thomas C. Holt, *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor, and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832–1938* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins U. Press, 1992).

For Brazil and Latin America, see Emilia Viotti da Costa, *The Brazilian Empire: Myths and Histories* (Chicago: U. of Chicago Press, 1985) and *Crowns of Glory, Tears of Blood. The Demerara Slave Rebellion of 1823* (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1994); Rafael Duharte Jiménez, *Rebeldá esclava en el caribe* (Veracruz: Gobierno del Esatado de Veracruz, 1992); João José Reis, *Slave Rebellion in Brazil: The Muslim Uprising of 1835 in Bahia*, trans. Arthur Brakel (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins U. Press, 1993) and *Death is a Festival: Funeral Rites and Rebellion in Nineteenth-Century Brazil*, trans. H. Sabrina Gledhill (Chapel Hill: U. of North Carolina Press, 2003); Rebecca J. Scott, *Slave Emancipation*

in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860–1899 (Princeton, NJ: Princeton U. Press, 1985); Ada Ferrer, *Insurgent Cuba: Race, Nation, and Revolution, 1868–1898* (Chapel Hill: U. of North Carolina, 1999); Louis A. Pérez, *The War of 1898: Cuba and the United States in History and Historiography* (Chapel Hill: U. of North Carolina, 1999); Aline Helg, *Our Rightful Share: The Afro-Cuban Struggle for Equality, 1886–1912* (Chapel Hill: U. of North Carolina, 1995); and Jane Landers, *Black Society in Spanish Florida* (Urbana and Chicago: U. of Illinois Press, 1999). Richard Price, *Maroon Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas* (Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins U. Press, 1979), remains useful, while Pierre Verger, *Trade Relations Between the Bight of Benin and Bahia from the 17th to 19th Century*, trans. Evelyn Crawford (Ibadan, Nigeria: Ibadan University Press, 1976) provides fascinating insights into cultural ties between West Africa and Brazil.

As for the United States, W. E. B. Du Bois, *Black Reconstruction* (Millwood, NY: Kraus-Thomson, 1963) remains a standard and remarkable work, as is C. Vann Woodward, *The Strange Career of Jim Crow* (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1955) and Leon F. Litwack, *Been in the Storm So Long: The Aftermath of Slavery* (New York: Knopf, 1979). There is a lot of work on rebellions. Herbert Aptheker, *American Negro Slave Revolts* (New York: International, 1970) has been an important source for many years. Eugene D. Genovese, *From Rebellion to Revolution: Afro-American Slave Revolts in the Making of the Modern World* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State U. Press, 1979), organizes slave revolts in a progression with which not all scholars agree, but is nonetheless valuable especially concerning Denmark Vesey, an example of which is Douglas R. Egerton, *He Shall Go Out Free: The Lives of Denmark Vesey* (Madison, WI: Madison House, 1999). An instructive scholarly debate on Vesey entitled "Forum: The Making of a Slave Conspiracy" can be found in *William and Mary Quarterly* 58 (no. 4, October 2001): 913–976 and 59 (no. 1, January 2002): 135–202. The journal *Slavery and Abolition* is also an excellent source for materials on slave insurrection. Peter P. Hinks, *To Awaken My Afflicted Brethren: David Walker and the Problem of Antebellum Resistance* (University Park: Pennsylvania State U. Press, 1997) is a related though overlooked investigation of David Walker, and suggests a possible, indirect link between him and Vesey.

The movement of black sailors and their contributions to resistance can be read about in Peter Linebaugh and Marcus Rediker, *The Many-Headed Hydra: Sailors, Slaves, Commoners, and the Hidden History of the*

Revolutionary Atlantic (Boston: Beacon Press, 2000). Black mariners and revolt are also taken up in Julius S. Scott, "The Common Wind: Currents of Afro-American Communication in the Era of the Haitian Revolution," (PhD dissertation, Duke University, Durham, NC 1986). Jeffrey W. Bolster, *Black Jacks: African American Seamen in the Age of Sail* (Cambridge: Harvard U. Press, 1997) also contributes to the subject of black seafarers.

Regarding culture and resistance, one should consult such works as Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana: The Development of Afro-Creole Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State U. Press, 1992); Margaret Washington Creel, *"A Peculiar People": Slave Religion and Community Culture Among the Gullahs* (New York: New York U. Press, 1988); and Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion: The "Invisible Institution" in the Antebellum South* (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1978). Alex Bontemps, *The Punished Self: Surviving Slavery in the Colonial South* (Ithaca, NY and London: Cornell U. Press, 2001) presents slavery as predicament, an idea borrowed here. Certainly the work of Sterling Stuckey, *Slave Culture: Nationalist Theory and the Foundations of Black America* (New York: Oxford U. Press, 1987) has been critical to the uncovering of a resilient African culture's role in resistance to slavery and racism in the United States.