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PLACES OF CULTURAL MEMORY:

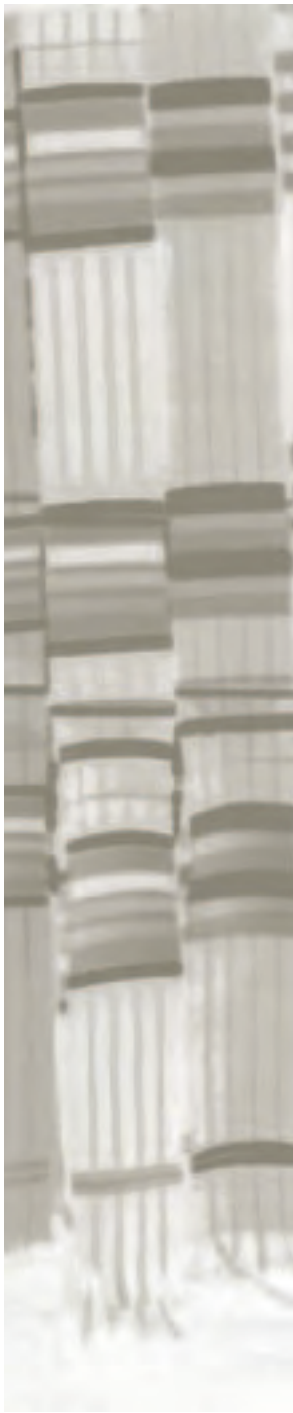
AFRICAN REFLECTIONS ON THE AMERICAN LANDSCAPE

CONFERENCE PAPERS

May 9–12, 2001
Atlanta, Georgia

Introduction

The 13 essays that appear in this compilation were prepared for the conference, "Places of Cultural Memory: African Reflections on the American Landscape." This conference was held May 9–12, 2001, in Atlanta, Georgia.



The conference developed from an idea posed by Falona Heidelberg, now the Executive Director of the African American Experience Fund at the National Park Foundation. While her initial interest was in the African Burial Ground in New York City, she believed that there was much about African cultural heritage in the United States that was little known and under-appreciated. Together with Katherine H. Stevenson, Associate Director, Cultural Resource Stewardship & Partnerships of the National Park Service, Ms. Heidelberg began a series of meetings to discuss the possibility of convening a conference on the tangible aspects of African American history.

As the conference program evolved, three consultants from the scholarly community were engaged to advise on the major conference themes and prospective speakers. The conference sponsors appreciate the major input of Joseph E. Harris of Howard University, LaVerne Wells-Bowie of Clemson University, and John Vlach of George Washington University. Their interest in and support of this conference clarified the program content.

Antoinette Lee of the NPS National Center for Cultural Resources was assigned to organize and implement the conference and provide editorial direction for the conference papers. Scott Whipple, now of the Maryland Historical Trust, assisted her in the early phases of the conference planning. Later, Brian Joyner was hired to coordinate the details of the conference and to provide editorial support for this compilation of papers. Marcia Axtmann Smith prepared the design for this compilation, based in part on the artwork for the printed conference announcement that LaVerne Wells-Bowie provided.

The topic of the influence of African cultural heritage on the American landscape is introduced in this compilation of conference papers. Readers will note that this topic is a potentially vast one—one that deserves additional attention if the historic preservation programs of the nation are to adequately reflect the contributions of Africans to the development of the United States.

Session One:

MEMORIALIZING PLACES OF DIASPORA

For centuries, Africans have been dispersed throughout the world and have established "communities" outside of Africa. These scattered communities retain their African identities within the culture of the host communities. The Diaspora involves places of departure, arrival, resistance, liberation, linkages, emigration, migration, escape, and other places where movement of human populations took place.

Freedom's Trail: The Florida Cuba Connection

Ralph B. Johnson

Africanisms Upon the Land: A Study of African Influenced Place Names of the USA

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Autobio-*graphic* Space: Reconciling African American Identity with the (In)Visible Past

coleman a. jordan (ebo)

Freedom's Trail: The Florida Cuba Connection

Ralph B. Johnson

Before emancipation and during Reconstruction in the United States free Africans found themselves in a very precarious position, being neither slave nor free. Achieving freedom was a major accomplishment, but one that could not be taken for granted. Even after leaving slavery some people had to struggle to claim their civil rights and retrieve them if they were abrogated for some reason. They found solace in their own communities. These were self-contained communities where every member of the community contributed to the whole. Many were skilled carpenters, masons, and agriculturists. Together they cleared the land, planted new fields, built homes, built the church, and the fortifications to protect their community.

In their new communities, once again the Africans, now free, found it necessary to sacrifice their beliefs in order to fit within the host culture. They learned a new language, converted to a new religion, risked their lives as many had to escape bondage on this southern "trail to freedom," and acquired loyalty to foreign governments, often by military services. Such was the case in "La Florida," a province of the Spanish crown, and now the southeast region of the United States of America.

In 1762 the English were finally successful in capturing Havana, Cuba a stronghold of the Spanish Empire in the Caribbean. However, in the Treaty of Paris Spain ceded *La Florida* and *Gracia Real Santa Teresa de Mose* to England, in exchange for Havana and Puerto Rico. The following year the residents of her Florida communities were evacuated and moved to Cuba, even though His "Britannic Majesty" agreed to allow remaining inhabitants of in 1763 the "liberty of the Catholic religion." No more than eight Catholics and laymen could be found anywhere on the peninsula. Thus ended nearly a century of safe haven for run-away slaves from the British Carolina and Georgia low-country plantation system. This was most timely given the fact that the peak of the colonial import trade in slaves was probably reached between 1764 and 1773, the period that overlaps nine of the 21 years of British occupation of Florida.

Slavery in Spain and Her Colonies

The institution of slavery in Spain was different than other European nations. Slaves had a moral and juridical personality, and Spanish legislation specifically granted them rights and protections in addition to obligations. Spanish slave codes were derived from the Justinian Code, and had been incorporated into Castilian law in the thirteenth century by King Alfonso X. As African slaves reached Spain in the fifteenth century, they were ruled by this legislation, known as the *Siete Partidas del Rey Don Alfonso El Sabio.* The *Siete Partidas* also governed slavery in the New World. The *Siete Partidas,* and its adaptations, formed a body of law that held that slavery was against natural law, for God had created man free. This philosophy was held in the context of a country steeped in religious righteousness.

The "Catholic Monarchs," as King Ferdinand and Queen Isabelle were affectionately called, were very concerned about the souls of their subjects. This applied most importantly to the Indies and Spanish Florida. Slaves, Native Americans, and free men were brothers in Christ and it was the responsibility of masters and the Church to teach them the rudiments of the faith so that they might be admitted into the Church and enjoy all its sacra-

ments. These included marriage. The sanctity of the family was protected by requirements not to separate members of the family. Brotherhood in the Church sometimes served to tie masters to slaves in fictive kinship arrangements, when owners served as godparents and marriage sponsors for their slaves.

Slavery was considered as an accident of fate, and an aberration in nature, rather than a perpetual or preordained condition. These circumstances, the emphasis on a slave's humanity and rights, and the lenient attitude toward manumission embodied in Spanish slave codes and social practice made it possible for a significant free black class to exist in the Spanish world. Aside from this attitude, blacks were not free of racial prejudice.

Embroiled in a social and religious reconquest of its own at home, Spain was nevertheless preoccupied with racial purity and blacks that ruled Iberia for several centuries up to this period were assigned to the bottom of the social hierarchy. But the Spanish recognized early on the useful contributions blacks might make in their colonial empire. Their services were welcomed particularly in the area of defense. Florida was an important and strategic location for the safe passage of Spanish treasure fleets and later, as a buffer against French and English colonization. For some time blacks were drafted into the militia. As early as the sixteenth century, militia companies in Santo Domingo, Cuba, Mexico, Cartagena, and Puerto Rico included black regiments. In Florida a company of black and mulatto militia was formed as early as 1683, and there may have been earlier ones.

Blacks were incorporated into services in another respect. Pedro Menedez de Aviles, established the first successful Spanish settlement in Florida, assisted by black laborers and artisans imported from Havana. They worked on early fortifications, sawed timber, and built several structures, including a church, a blacksmith shop, and an artillery platform. They also cleared land for planting and harvested the crops. Florida was a part of Spain's strategy to substantiate its claim to the Americas, denied of course by its rivals, France and England. It was important therefore to effectively occupy and populate the respective territories.

By papal donation the lands of the so-called New World belonged to the Catholic Monarchs of Spain. The Spanish Crown hoped to populate these lands with Christian *pobladores* or population, much as they had done in the areas Spain re-conquered from the Moors. They hoped to build ordered and just communities in the Americas, modeled after those of Spain. Although earlier municipal legislation existed, the regulations of Charles V are notable for the detail with which they prescribe the rituals for town foundation, the establishment of municipal governments and parishes, the proper division of lands, and the actual physical organization of ideal towns. The Crown, through its local representatives (the governors or municipal officers) could allocate Crown land to deserving or needy subjects, and town building was considered a noble, and indeed, a necessary objective of the Spanish administration.

In October 1687, the first known fugitive slaves from Carolina arrived in St. Augustine, the Spanish colony in La Florida. Governor Diego de Quiroga dutifully reported to Spain that eight males, two females, and a three-year-old nursing child had made good their escape in a boat. Six of the men were put to work in the Castillo, but two others were assigned to work with the blacksmith, a possible indication that they already had skills in that area. The women became domestics in the house of the governor. All were paid for their labor. When an English official arrived the next fall to claim them, Governor Quiroga refused to release them, on the grounds that they had received religious instruction and been converted to Catholicism, had married, and were usefully employed. Moreover, they claimed to fear for their lives. Thus a fugitive slave policy began to evolve which would have serious diplomatic and military consequences for Spain.(1) King Charles II, on November 7, 1693, issued the first official position on the runaways, "giving liberty to all…the men as well as the women…so that by their example and by my liberality others will do the same."

Gracia Real De Santa Teresa De Mose

By 1736, records show that a total of 630 Spaniards and 143 slaves and free Africans were confirmed in the new church of St. Augustine, Nuestra Senora de la Leche. And, by 1738 the settlement of Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose or Fort Mose as it was commonly known, was established by African-born run away slaves from the English Carolina and Georgia plantations. It was located approximately two miles north of St. Augustine. Fort Mose was strategically situated to protect both land and water routes to St. Augustine; and, the African homesteaders vowed to "spill their last drop of blood in defense of the Great Crown of Spain and the Holy Faith, and to be the most cruel enemies of the English." They cleared the lands they received from the governor, planted crops to sustain their families, and built a settlement that included a small fort complex. It included associated structures such as a church and

sacristy, and a number of houses that seem to have been scattered among the planted fields.

In many ways, the settlement at Fort Mose resembled those of the Native American villages also on St. Augustine's periphery. The structures at Fort Mose were said to be thatched *bohios,* "such as the Indians have." Archeological investigations at the site also prove the diet of Africans and Indians to had been heavily dependent upon riverine resources and non-domesticated animals hunted or trapped in the surrounding forests. Historical records indicate that an African Mandingo leader named Francisco Menendez governed the community. This Mandingo warrior also commanded the Fort Mose militia for almost thirty years.

The Free Black Militia Company of Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose consisted of the following:

> Commander Don Geronimo de Hita y Salazar; *Cura Beneficiado,* Don Agustin Geronimo de Resio; Captain Francisco Menendez, Lieutenant Antonio Joseph Eligio, Second Lieutenant Francisco Escobedo, Sergeant Pedro Graxales, Antonio Gallardo, Thomas Chrisostomo, Pedro de Leon, Pedro de Fuentes, Francisco Rosa, Juan Fernandez, Juan de la Torre, Francisco Joseph Menendez, Joseph Escobedo, Francisco Graxales, Antonio Blanco, Francisco Diaz, Joseph Bentura, Manuel Rivera, Joseph de Pena, Nicolas Briones, Francisco Suni, Joseph Fernando, Santiago Solis, Francisco de Torres, Juan Lamberto, Antonio Garcia, Julian Bulero, Pedro Martines, Nicolas de Cesar, Ignacio Roso, Juan Chrisostomo, Juan Thomas de Castilla.(2)

After the British General James Oglethorpe destroyed the first settlement of Fort Mose during the 1740 invasion, Menendez and his "subjects" built a second settlement in 1752. Historical and archeological research at the second Fort Mose has produced a rich picture of the Afro-Hispanic colonial life on the Spanish frontier. Fort Mose withstood repeated Indian attacks, and the deprivation associated with an embattled frontier until the 1763 mass evacuation of La Florida colonists to Cuba. There, they established a new frontier homestead, San Agustin de la Nueva Florida in the province of Matanzas.

San Augustin De Le Nueva Florida, Cuba: Ceiba Mocha

The Seven Year War, known in America as the French and Indian War, culminated with English forces capturing the port of Havana. In the First Treaty of Paris, La Florida was chosen over Puerto Rico by King Charles III of Spain to be the more easily expendable property. The transfer of sovereignty to England was formally done, and the first Spanish Period of Florida came to an end.

By March 1764, eight transports arrived in Havana with 3,104 people. Florida's governor, Melchor Feliu, oversaw the evacuation of the Spanish colony, organizing a flotilla of ships to carry its citizens to Cuba. The exiles included Spaniards, Canary Islanders, Catalans, Indians from the mission villages of Nuestra Senora de Guadalupe de Tolomato and Nuestra Senora de la Leche, and African residents of Gracia Real de Santa Teresa de Mose.

Initially the Floridians were housed in Havana, and in the outlying towns of Guanabacoa and Regla. Within months of their arrival in Cuba, however, the government arranged the transfer of 73 Floridian families or a total of 331 persons to a new settlement in the province of Matanzas, to be called San Agustin de la Nueva Florida. It was also popularly known as Ceiba Mocha. (The word "Ceiba" is the Spanish name of a tree also called the Cottonwood tree that in Africa possesses a sacred significance.)

The group included 13 Spanish families, 43 Canary Island families; four English families (called Germans on the reports), four free *pardo* or *mulatto* families (members of the free disciplined militia of Havana posted in St. Augustine); and nine free *moreno* or *black* families (from the free militia of Mose). The following year, 11 more service families from Florida joined them.

A wealthy rancher, Don Geronimo Contreras, donated the land to establish the new town and the Crown gave each household head a *caballeria* (approximately) of uncultivated land, a stipend of sixty *pesos,* tools, and a slave newly imported from Africa to assist in the labor of homesteading. The Mose militiamen received the following plots of land:

> Lot # 40 Francisco Menedez
>
> Lot # 45 Juan Chrisostomo Gonzalez
>
> Lot # 60 Juan Fernandez
>
> Lot # 61 Francisco Diaz
>
> Lot # 65 Antonio Gallardo
>
> Lot # 67 Joseph Ricardo
>
> Lot # 68 Lieutenant Joseph Antonio Elixio
>
> Lot # 91 Captain Francisco Menendez
>
> Lot # 92 Domingo de Jesus Parilla
>
> Lot # 93 Thomas Chrisostomo

The free pardo militiamen from Havana posted in St. Augustine received the following plots of land:

> Lot # 83 Captain Manuel de Soto (of Havana militia)
>
> Lot # 94 Joseph Orozco
>
> Lot # 98 Juan Fermin de Quixas

Government officials also provided the new colonists with food until they could harvest crops. After nine years, the homesteaders were obligated to repay the cost of the slave (150 pesos) and the subsidy (60 pesos) or a total of 210 pesos to the royal treasury.

Conditions at the new settlement were difficult. The homesteaders struggled to clear the land, plant fields, and build new structures in an untamed wilderness. Smallpox swept among the slaves, killing many. Several slaves revolted and killed their owners. The Floridians pleaded for more assistance from Havana. They reported, "We have not been supplied with (shelter) to protect our bodies from the punishments of the weather, and consequently, without housing or sustenance find ourselves obliged to sleep under doorways exposed to inclement conditions."

Another report from 1766 stated that all the conditions at Ceiba Mocha suffered the same defect—there was no water to drink, it was difficult to drill wells in the land, and the closest water was the river which was one-half to two-thirds leagues distant.

The report added that the only reason 16 families stayed there was that they were too poor to move. Although a total of 200 *solares,* or town lots, had been donated for the Floridians, there was some delay in allotting the property. The people lived in huts scattered around the countryside among their fields. These "sad shacks" were described as being constructed of yagua, which is the impermeable and pliable material that joins a palm frond to the trunk of the palm.

Because the homesteaders lacked oxen with which to plow and could not afford to buy any, all the land had to be cultivated with a hoe. The only crops that the people had been able to grow were maize, yucca, some beans, *boniatos,* and squashes. The settlers had no bread or meat, and even cassava was scarce. The report continued, saying the woods were so thick that they did not have wherewithal to clear much land for planting, and the people were reduced to misery.

The settlement of Ceiba Mocha had no doctor, no barber, no pharmacist, no priest, and people died without the benefits of the sacraments. The closest church was in the city of Matanzas, 24 leagues distant. For the reasons given, only 16 of the total 84 families actually remained on the lands allotted for the new town of San Agustin de la Nueva Florida. Others rented outlying farmlands or moved to Matanzas and Havana. Those that left sold their allotted lands to the remaining families, allowing the latter to consolidate and enlarge their holdings.

The free pardos and morenos of the original Fort Mose community were scattered by the evacuation to Cuba. Antonio Joseph de Elixio, his wife, and five children remained on the lands of San Agustine de la Nueva Florida, or Ceiba Mocha, as did Captain Manuel de Soto of the pardo militia of Havana, and his wife, Gertrudis Contrera, and child. Thomas Chisostomo, his wife Francisca Rodriguez, and their three children rented land in the countryside outside of Ceiba Mocha. Thomas appears in the burial registers of Ceiba Mocha. He died on February 23, 1798, by which time his wife Francisca had already died.

Antonio Gallardo, his wife, and two children; Domingo de Jesus Parrilla, his wife, and seven children; Joseph Ricardo and his wife; and Juan Fernandez and his wife, Flora de la Torre; all of these families moved to the city of Matanzas, where they supported themselves by working for daily wages. The pardo (actually Indian) militiaman from Havana, Joachim de Orozco, with his wife, and four children; Pedro de Leon, his wife, and three children; and Francisco Diaz, his wife, and two children, all returned to live in the vicinity of Havana where they subsisted on *limosnas,* or government subsidies. Each of these families received one and one-half *reales* daily (eighty *reales* equals a *peso).* The pardo militiamen from Havana, Juan Fermin Quixas, his wife Maria de Soto, their child, and Marcelo de Cordova, and his wife did likewise.

The Floridian immigrants to Cuba continued over the years to petition the Crown and Havana officials for some relief, and finally, in 1770, the Crown established a pension for wives and orphaned daughters of men exiled form Florida. Several of these pension lists, dating as late as 1805, have been located, and they show that only white Floridians were recipients. Documents from the Archive of the Indies in Seville, Spain, show that Maria Gertrudis Rozo, widow of Ignacio Rozo, a free militiaman from Mose, tried for nine years to win the same pension for herself and her orphaned daughter, but despite their proofs of legitimate marriage and government service, they were repeatedly denied on the basis of their color.

Nineteenth Century Ceiba Mocha Town Plan and Layout

The development and growth of colonies throughout the Spanish Empire were prescribed by the Ordinances for New Towns or Laws of the Indies. Produced by Seville administrators for the King, the Ordinances determined exactly how the new towns of the New World would be physically organized. The layout used in San Agustin de la Nueva Florida was the simplest example of Spanish American town planning.

As was common in Spain the plaza was the main urban organizing element. Around the plaza of Ceiba Mocha there were no civic buildings usually associated with the Laws of the Indies guidelines, rather simple houses that line the narrow dirt streets. The church was the only architectural element that identified this site as a public space. It served as the place of worship as well as an official point of reference and record keeping. The church was a dominant force in the lives of the early settlers. Its presence then, as it does today, provided order for the town layout of Ceiba Mocha.

The African militiamen that settled in Ceiba Mocha were skilled carpenters, ironsmiths, and masons and were familiar with the classical style of nineteenth century Europe. They built all their own structures at both the first and second settlements at Fort Mose. They built the defense line and the stockade outpost on the Sebastian River and in the repairs of fortifications at the Castillo de San Marcos. Most importantly, they had also assisted in the carpentry on the church of St. Augustine.

The Church of Nuestra Senora de la Candelaria was built in 1792, almost 30 years after the town's founding, as a result of the town's growth and a sense of permanence brought about by better economic conditions. The church is a small, but significant structure. It is approached from the north end of the plaza and accessed through a façade that is simple, but classically attractive in design. The upper part of the façade terminates in a classic pediment that reflects its pitched roof. Simple pilasters with bases and Tuscan capitols frame the façade and flank the main entrance.

As with most of the churches of this period, the church in Ceiba Mocha has an open rectangular plan. The interior space or nave is proportioned approximately three-to-one, length versus width. The height of the ceiling is slightly more than the width. The nave has no visible structural elements, other than a column that supports an interior balcony. In its present form, the balcony is too small and low for much practical use, and is not an original element of the church. Although it has been there for many decades, it is believed that there was originally an area for a choir. There are three niches in the interior wall of the nave, one of which holds a statue of the African, St. Augustine, an Early Christian Bishop. A classical neo-Gothic wooden altar was located in the sanctuary.

The bell tower is attached to the main building and to one side. It consists of three vertical sections, each separated by flat horizontal bands. The tower terminates with a cupola with four arches from which the bells are hung. There are also four pinnacles, one on each corner, and the cross that symbolically connects the building to the sky. The walls of the church were constructed of *mamposteria,* a technique that utilizes a mixture of materials including irregular fragments of stone, clay tile, or brick with soil and sand. The walls are very thick and require the placement of square stones at the corners, and at intermediate locations along the walls for reinforcement.

Housing

Most of the buildings in Ceiba Mocha were houses built in the nineteenth century that gave form to the public spaces of the town. They were built to conform to their respective sites and reflect the simple domestic life style associated with this community. There were two basic types, row houses and detached homes. The predominant building materials were stone, red clay, sand, and lime mortar utilizing the *mamposteria* technique. The houses built in the *mamposteria* fashion utilized unfinished stone instead of the more polished and regularly shaped stone or *canteria* found in more important buildings in the larger towns. Clay bricks were bonded together with mortar joints from a mixture of lime and sand. The older structures have thicker joints with a narrower brick. The builders reinforced the structure with timber studs placed every two or three meters.

In several examples, houses were also built of wood. In these cases, one can easily distinguish between earlier examples of the nineteenth century and those more recently constructed. The older structures were constructed with planks of a wider width. The more recent a structure is, the narrower the planks.

Perhaps the most striking feature about the houses found in Ceiba Mocha was the use of clay barrel tile roofs. Houses have flat as well as slightly pitched roofs. In every case, however, a porch was typical. In the older buildings, signs of structural members are evident. The beams are larger and located closer together that those built in the second half of the nineteenth century.

The floor plan of the house reveals another characteristic found to be typical in this region and unlike those found in Matanzas and the larger towns. The perimeter of the houses are normally rectangular, as opposed to different configurations, such as "L," "T," "U," or "J" layouts. Ceiba Mocha houses included a patio that stretches across the entire back. Normally only one room in depth, the Ceiba Mocha houses have excellent cross ventilation. This condition is enhanced by the fact that the interior partitions dividing the house into three major spaces do not extend up to the ceiling. Instead, there is adequate space to allow hot air to rise, creating a comfortable living space below.

Conclusion

Although there is no physical evidence of the first architectural elements developed in Ceiba Mocha, we can observe existing configurations and spatial organizations that help explain how the domestic space was organized. The repetition of spaces, the relationship of the house with the street and the clarity of its interiors indicate the original way in which people interacted with each other and with the environment. The dwellings show that the builders had learned how to fit their structures to the climate. The house, with its personal openings, represented privacy within the collective. And, its façade announced the quality of its inhabitants, and their function in the community of Ceiba Mocha.

The flight to freedom for the African was "against all odds". They were challenged on all fronts. However, by the reliance upon skills learned or inherent skills they brought with them from Africa and cultural identities they were able to survive even within the culture of their host countries.

Notes

1. Jane Landers, *Against the Odds: Free Blacks in the Slaves Societies of the Americas* (London and Portland, OR: Frank Cass, 1996), 6.

2. Taken from *Pie de Lista,* January 22, 1764, in AGI, Santo Domingo 2595.

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Africanisms Upon the Land: A Study of African Influenced Place Names of the USA

Annette I. Kashif

The vitality and trans-ethnic influence of African American language continues to be a widely acknowledged phenomenon within the American populace.(1) Since the mid 1900s, there have been several systematic studies which demonstrate that that vitality is in some ways a function of African influences in African American language varieties.(2) The African stratum preserves remnants of the various predecessor African languages in complex, though uneven and interesting ways. As more evidence is uncovered which delineates Africanisms in the Diaspora, the once widely held belief that African culture was extinguished under the devastation of slavery will be more firmly overturned.

For a complete picture to emerge, American place names research needs to be included in the effort to discover linguistic Africanisms. It is important to understand that a "unique source of information about a society's history, beliefs, and values is in the names people give to their surroundings."(3) This sources is referred to as place names, or toponyms, a part of onomastics.(4) One language study could be found on the subject, and it focused on only Bantu (Central African) linguistic influences in the place names of nine formerly confederate states. Of course, African descendants in the United States have a heritage of African admixture extending from Central Africa, to at least, the northwestern belt of the continent.

In its explanation that numerous aspects of a country's development achieve linguistic recognition in its place names, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language* states that the "various" steps in the exploration of America…can be seen reflected in the layers of Spanish, French, Dutch, Indian, and English names introduced by different groups of explorers."(5) Though it is a major reference work found in many public and academic libraries, there is no mention of any African impact on America's development, which may be seen through its toponyms. Seeking to put an end to such oversights, this study delineates a broader and more varied African impact on American toponyms.

A curious off-hand comment turned the writer's attention, in the 1970s, to the impact African Americans may have had on American place names. A female acquaintance rushed into a nearby dormitory bedroom, excitedly recounting to her friend a harrowing experience she had undergone before dawn with another college classmate. The gist of the narrative went thusly: returning them to town after a home visit, the bus driver had dropped his passengers off at the closed bus station. It was already after midnight, so they were unable to catch a cab. Though they returned without incident, she exclaimed that she was terribly frightened because they ended up having to walk through "Colored Town" to get back to campus. The writer, having never heard such a reference before, was surprised and unsettled. The acquaintance turned in surprise to see the writer, then apologetically explained that no harm was intended; it was just a term that whites in her Florida hometown used to refer to the "black section of town."

Further, when the researcher worked as a camp counselor the following summer in a rural settlement near Palakta, Flordia, she was surprised to come upon a street name, "Colored School Road" emblazoned on an old, wooden-plank street marker.

Those encounters led to wondering, "Were there or had there been autonomous towns or settlements established by black people in the U.S.?

Given the opportunity, would African Americans assign racially self-referent names to their town and street names?" Or, "Was the racially referent, 'Colored Town' just derisive slur?" Subsequent to those experiences, it was found that African Americans had exercised onomastic agency in bestowing the alternate names, e.g., "Chocolate City," an alternative name for two different types of predominantly black habitats—one, Washington, DC, the nation's capitol; and, the other a long-standing housing project in Orlando.(6) These are essentially questions about the language of group agency, identity, and autonomy upon the American landscape.

The African enthusiasm for naming and naming ritual has been widely observed and document. From Djdehuty of the Ancients in Egypt, to Nommo of the Dogon in Mali, this enthusiasm is tied to African spiritual philosophy. Obenga says, "we see throughout Africa the creative and powerful force of the word. To name is to beget, that is, to call up a genealogy and an evolution."(7) Further, from this African worldview, the one who names has the power to structure or re-structure reality.(8) We come to understand then the connections between naming, power, and dominion.(9) African descendants desired to structure a reality of self-determination, and freedom from racist oppression and exploitation, by securing plots of land over which they could exercise power and dominion.

Linguistic Status of Names

Place names, or toponyms, are proper names, and proper names are words that serve a particularizing and referential function.(10) However, proper names have varying degrees of transparent meaning, or semantic content, sometimes no more than that the referent is so-called.(11) Accordingly, the *Cambridge Encyclopedia's* place names entry explains that "many thousands of names have an unclear or unknown etymology, and this fact provides a continuing motivation for toponym study." While place names may be "fanciful and idiosyncratic" sometimes, a "small set of creative processes" will account for the "vast majority" around the world. Those creative processes result in categories, such as geographic features; religious import; royal or lofty status; explorers and other famous people; memorable or outstanding events; state of affairs; animals; and other places.(12)

African Onomastics

Though African personal names are characteristically drawn from common nouns, descriptive phrases, and even whole sentences which provide transparent meaning, it is not necessarily so and one may easily find a meaning known only narrowly to bearer (e.g., a revered ancestor name with opaque meaning in the contemporary language community).(13)

To some onlookers beholding African onomastica,

> [t]he African continent offers a bewildering array of names: names of distinctive populations and their subdivisions, their languages and dialect; names of countries, geographical places, and archaeological sites; names of empires, kingdoms, chiefdoms, and villages; terms for territorial and administrative divisions; and names of kinship groups, cults, and associations. This terminological profusion permeates all aspects of life, from personal name giving to…artistic and technical taxonomies.(14)

Considering the deep antiquity of African peoples, cultures, and civilizations, one should not be surprised at this onomastic profusion. It is a basis for the expectation that, being so deeply and broadly ingrained, onomastic Africanisms would survive within the African Diaspora.

Migrating African peoples, upon the founding of settlements, usually named them after their founders.(15) Yai also found that in Yorubaland (Togo, Benin, and Nigeria), for example, the placename also designates the language and ethnicity of the inhabitants.(16) And from oral traditions (e.g., oriki recitations), one could discover information about certain lineages that make up most of the Yoruba ethnic groups. Interestingly, he also found some language mixture among the toponyms where Yoruba have been in contact situations with different ethnic groups in other localities. First, there are hybridized forms, e.g., where emigrant Yoruba have assimilated into the Mahi population of Benin, one may find the toponym, Nagokome, resulting from the agglutination of *Nago* (Yoruba people) + *kome* (district, a determinative in Mahi). This example serves as historical evidence of the persistence of ethnic reference in African toponyms. Second, Yai found toponymic calques, wherein a word from one language is translated into the language of the surrounding population. In a predominantly Fon district in Benin, for example, one will find that the toponym, *Idaaasa Iqbo,* or "underwood," in Yoruba, > *sasa zume,* or "Dasa in the forest," in Fon.(17)

Names and Language Contact

African influences in African American onomastics is to be understood in the context of language contact when speakers of disparate languages and social (and/or ethnic) statuses come into contact within the same geo- and

socio-political environment. Linguistic outcomes may be of three general types: maintenance, mixture, or shift. Language mixture includes the development of creole languages.(18) When features of a supplanted ancestral language persist after language shift, and exert influence within the successor language, these features constitute a *stratum* in the successor language. The language forms in the stratum are variously referred to as *continuity, retention,* or *survivals.* Moreover, social and emotional (i.e., non-linguistic) elements which influence linguistic ones must be considered in analyses of contact-induced language mixture.

Beside the fact that names reflect cultural, historical, and social change, there are other attributes of names that further justify their importance in the study of language mixture induced by a contact situation, as is represented by the African American experience:

1. Because they are lexical items, names are among the easiest linguistic items to transfer into a successor or second language.(19)

2. It is not uncommon that a toponym is the only record of a historical event, or of a person's existence.(20)

African American Onomastics in Historical Context

A historical overview of the North American language contact situation into which Africans were initially plummeted should be considered basically in three eras: Colonial/Enslavement; Emancipation-Reconstruction; and, Outward Migrations. The literature indicates that the language of African descendants began shifting first, from an African polyglot status in the first generations of arrival, to a period of bilingualism between a pidgin and each person's African mother tongue.(21) Then, subsequent generations incorporated elaborated and restructured features into the pidgin, forming deep and more stable regional creoles; they were characterized by mixture of English-Irish, and West African grammatical structures and vocabulary. These creoles lasted throughout the centuries of enslavement. All the while, of course, a smaller number of African descendants would have common access to non-African speakers, which afforded them opportunities to learn other languages. This is not only true for those more frequently in contact with prestige dialects of English, but also those affiliating with Native Americans. Also, the continuous arrival of continent-born Africans right up until the Civil War reinforced persistence of Africanisms.

Colonial and Slavery Era

Africans were brought here mostly in chains from the 1500s to the beginning of the Civil War in 1861, an era that lasted longer than any other in African American history to date. Spanning Africa's central region, out to its northwestern bulge, they were kidnapped from places named Abomey, Calabar, Congo, Djenne, Gizzi, Gola, Kanem, Mande, Mina, Ngola, Oyo, Segu, Whydah, and hundreds more.(22) They had been the skilled and unskilled, literate and illiterate, peasant and artisan, bureaucrats and soldiers, royalty and subjects, aristocrats and commoners, and et cetera. Their back-breaking toil and know-how were at the foundation of the development of the "new" Americas. Hall found, for example, that in colonial times, the survival of French Louisiana was due not only to African labor, but also to African technology in rice cultivation, indigoterie, medicine, and surgery.(23) In addition, Africans did the "metal work, shipbuilding and river transport."(24) It was clear that "Africans and their descendants were competent, desperately needed, and far from powerless."(25)

The records indicate that they did not simply wait idly by for deliverance from their brutal servitude. Constantly on the look-out for available opportunities, they were agents on their own behalf. That agency included violent and non-violent resistance to slavery. And, that should come as no surprise when one considers the wide range of culture complexes and civilizations, from which they were so hatefully uprooted. Throughout all of American history, there were numerous courageous, desperate, and determined acts of agency by African descendants in their quest for freedom and self-determination. Prior to the abolition of slavery, the record is replete with news of African resistance, including mutinies, runaways, conspiracies, revolts, and maroonage (settlements of runaways in the wilderness). These acts of daring were committed in the face of white retaliation, including torture, imprisonment, mutilations, and executions. Runaways, with opportunity, giving reasons for having done so, "almost invariably cited unjustified and excessive punishment, overwork, and inadequate food."(26)

Beginning in the early 1500s, many maroon settlements were successfully established throughout the antebellum era. Their members carried arms, and sometimes waged guerilla raids and warfare against the slave plantations.(27) With a few exceptions, the literature does not identify maroon settlements of North America by name, perhaps one indication of their precarious status. Aptheker reported in 1939 that the "mountainous, forested, or swampy regions of South Carolina,

North Carolina, Virginia, Louisiana, Florida, Georgia, Mississippi, and Alabama were the favorite haunts of these black Robin Hoods."(28) According to Creel, a careful examination of the existing sources shows that a spirit of rebellion, and strong will to freedom were prevalent among South Carolina slaves.(29) About escapees along its Gullah coastal regions, Creel found that, while African-born persons were more likely to escape singly, a mixed group of American and African-born were more likely to make up a band of maroons.(30) But even among the mixed groups, the predominant identity was that of "African." However, it was sometimes true that whites and Indians joined with the maroon bands.

"Maroonage" around colonial French New Orleans was characterized by more interracial amalgamation and permanence of its settlements. Rather than a widely diverse grouping, the Africans were found to have been taken from mostly Wolof and Bambara speaking regions of the continent. Among the swamps around New Orleans, a network of maroon villages were established, and are identified by name on a 1768 map of the region.(31) The daring Juan Malo, was the singular warrior-governor over this network. One of the villages was apparently named after him, Bayou St. Malo, and another possibly, Bayou Marron, as well. Apropos for his exploits, Malo's surname is from the Mandekan group, perhaps Bambara. As they sought to survive and avoid recapture, these valiant fugitives also forged an autonomous culture from various ethnic backgrounds, to create cohesive communities, a process taking place concomitantly within the woeful confines of "Slave Row," to use Lerone Bennett, Jr.'s, terminology.(32) These communities foreshadowed the cultural syncretism and creolization which would become characteristic of the African American population in the post-slavery eras.

An important element in the maroon mix was Native Americans, who were being killed and cruelly driven from their ancestral lands by the colonial settlers and militias. The fleeing indigenous bands and African escapees established close relations for mutual benefit, and sometimes intermarried. But, they generally maintained separate identities. In Florida, their settlements acquired names that reflect this admixture. Although not so identified in the literature, their towns—bearing names such as Wahoo Swamp, King Cudjoe's Town, and Minatti—indicate African linguistic agency in place-naming. Both "racial" groups were understood to constitute the Seminoles, but those of African descent are most frequently termed Black Seminoles, or a similar variant. On the lushly thicketed Florida frontier, Black Seminoles built housing compounds distinct from the indigenous peoples. Their compounds might be within the same village as their Native American affiliates, or situated in a network nearby, or even more remote villages. By the late 1700s across Flordia, Black Seminoles numbered more than 100,000, a testament to their more than 100-year alliance with indigenous peoples in Spanish Florida.(33) One of the Seminole initiatives which precipitated the Second Seminole War (1835-1842) was the "Dade Massacre" in Sumter County, and its attendant liberation of enslaved Africans from plantations to its north and east.(34) This initiative has been posed as possibly the largest slave revolt in U. S. history.(35) So prominent was African influence in their alliance that, during, General Jesup wrote that, in reality, it was not an Indian, but "a negro war."(36)

Though most maroon camps and setlements in the U. S. were eventually crushed before the Civil War, that was not always true. The Dismal Swamp Maroons persisted from the colonial era up to the War.(37) Their villages stood in the swamplands bordering Virginia and North Carolina. Reaching from the Roanoke are to the Albermarle waterways, the Dismal Swamp sheltered about 2000 fugitives.(38) Similar to the permanent marooners of Louisiana and Florida, they carried on "regular" trade with ordinary citizens. They even assisted the Union Army, as independent contractors, in its triumph over the Confederate militia in their region, during the latter part of the Civil War.

Laeming's cultural analysis of the Dismal Swamp Maroons also revealed some maintenance of distinct African identity in the presence of intimate alliances with fugitive whites, and indigenous peoples.(39) Pondering the possiblilty that there may have been Africans in sufficient enough numbers to form ethnically disticnt villages within the network, he noted that there "was a Congo village, as well as, individual maroons of other specific west African cultural or religious emphases," reflected in their leaders' names, e.g., "Osman (Islamic) and Gamby Gholar and his spiritual associates, who he identified as Yoruba-Dahomean."

Though maroonage was one avenue through which African descendants imprinted their language upon the American landscape in the antebellum centuries, it was not the only way. In fact, marooners were often more campers than settlers, needing to abandon areas quickly to avoid recapture and slaughter. Aptheker posits that those maroon towns and settlements in the U.S., which experienced unusual longevity, probably had done so because they traded in desired goods,

and avoided clashes with white planters and settlers. Furthermore, because the large majority of maroon communities wre destroyed, and the inhabitants captured and/or killed, it could be that the majority of the toponyms they bestowed are lost to history.

In his *Names on the Land,* Stewart expressed no doubt that "many hundreds of small streams and swamps," whose meanings he could not distinguish, "were named by Negroes."(40) He further recognized that "Pinder Town in South Carolina preserved the Kongo *Mpinda* (peanut)." But, he added that "white men probably did the naming after the word had become current in local speech." His understanding that black people did, in fact, assign place names is correct thinking, but his attitude is somewhat problematic. First, he seems unable to conceive of Africans having left their distinct liguistic imprint on large geographical masses; and, second, that when African names appeared as a whole town name, that is was not by direct African American agency.

One attestation concerning personal names is illustrative of the probability of a more than insignificant and indirect African American toponyimc agency. The son of a Mississippi slaveholder recollected the exasperation of white planters over the attributive names insistently given to them by the Africans they held captive on "Slave Row":

> The redesignation would take place in spite of all [resistance], and so thoroughly that often friends and acquaintancs of the family never knew the real name of the child. [Eventually] the parents themselves at last fell into the use of the…strange grotesque…applications of Ripper, Snorter, Coon, Possum, Boots, Horse…and many others like them…Few could get rid of them…barnacle-like they clung to their owners through the whole voyage of life.(41)

When one considers that it was overwhelmingly African labor and skill that cleared and worked the land, it is far from inconceivable that direct African American agency is partly responsible for the African linguistic impact on American toponyms. That is not to say it is easy to unmask. Vass provides a convincing example of an African name upon a massive, as well as famous geoscape: Suwanee River < *nsub'wanyi,* "my house" in Kongo, Mbundu, etc.(42) Other examples may be expected.

Africans escaping slavery did sometimes, indeed, establish settlements and towns in the North and West. The Abolition Movement, particularly through the Underground Railroad, was instrumental in helping Africans to escape to free states. They were not always welcomed, and met with white hostility and/or "white flight." So they, as a group, moved into or evolved into one-race towns, respectively. In 1840, Illinois saw the first of the all-black towns become established in the North. Originally named Lovejoy, after the area's most vocal abolitionist.(43) It was re-named Brooklyn later, and incorporated in 1910 with a black majority in political control. It survives to-date. One early settlement founded by runaways in Maine is Malaga Island. Established in 1847, its "early settlers are known to have maintained their ancestral languages and lived in caves" to avoid recapture.(44) As typical of many eastern island communities, they were squatters. In 1912, however, the inhabitants were dealt with in a ruthless and devastating manner. Forced wholesale by the state into the Maine School for the Feeble-Minded, the inhabitants were, along with their houses and gravesites, wiped from view.(45) An example of the effect of white hostility "out West" may be seen in the fortunes of Kentucky Ridge, established by African Americans in 1851. Established in the quartz mining regions, white vigilantes attacked the settlement, and by 1853, the inhabitants, with their founders, all moved to larger settlements nearby.(46)

From Black Reconstruction to the Great Depression

After a bloody and bitter upheaval across the southern U. S., the Civil War finally brought the 300-plus years old "peculiar institution" to a halt by 1865. Unfortunately, the African descendants' ecstatic Jubilees over their liberty, and "Black Reconstruction" lasted briefly. Bennett explains that it would be among "the first of many illusions and deceptions," as the parasitic exploitation of, and brutality against African Americans would be re-instituted in other guises; one of the first avenues for this reinstitution would be the infamous Black Codes of 1865-1866, to be followed by the notorious Compromise of 1877.(47)

By the opening of the Black Reconstruction period, most African descendants were speaking a set of regional, stable Anglo-African creoles. As they began to take on the status of "citizens," African Americans' language began decreolizing some toward Euro-American English. Decreolization proceeded more quickly among those who left the isolated rural south for metropolitan areas, received formal education, and lived among other in-group members who were "mainstream" speakers.(48) As was always true in the preceding era, they had acquired a repertoire of language varieties and registers to be used to their advantage.(49)

Because disparities in power and opportunity continued, code-switching continued to be practiced. One variety would maintain in-group solidarity, while a different variety would be used in interactions with out-group whites. African language use, per se, became even more restricted among the number of users, and in functional domains (e.g., storytelling) because, with the cessation of illegal African arrivals, there were no ancestral language reinforcements. Deep Anglo-African creoles continued to predominate in isolated enclaves (e.g., Gullah in South Carolina, and Gombo in Louisiana). Additionally, distinctive African American forms became more diffused into the language of Euro-Americans, as levels of intergroup contact increased.

Convinced early on of the non-repentant proclivities of whites, some tens of thousands migrated to Liberia. Although many migrated northward or westward also, the large majority of African Americans stayed in the rural south. Pointing to songs, tales, and other lore of "Slave Row" culture, V. P. Franklin concludes that, with freedom having been considered the ultimate goal of their individual and collective struggles under slavery, it was logical that "self determination and social advancement" would become defining values among African Americans. Whenever amenable, they became vastly more involved in government, schooling, and accumulation of land and property. But, with the spirit of the late 1800s and early 1900s settling on widespread racial hostility toward them, African Americans placed increasingly more emphasis on self-help, mutual aid, racial solidarity, emigration, separatism, and attempts to create all-black communities.(50) These efforts were established within and beyond the confederate states, and in all-black towns or black enclaves of other towns.

The Homestead Act of 1866 brought many of the freedmen into areas more sparsely settled prior to the Civil War; and black towns were created within the former confederacy and without. Land acquisition through the Freedmen's Bureau was woefully insufficient, so most African Americans who managed to acquire land had given up the wait for "40 acres and a mule," and some resolved to make their own land purchases.

Even with 40 acres awarded, or lands collectively purchased, there was no guarantee African Americans would be able to keep it. A wide array of obstacles could be faced, including white opposition. Such was the case that spawned Belle Ville in McIntosh County, GA. As an outcome of General William Sherman's Special Field Order #15, two brothers were awarded land on St. Catherine's Island. Their colony was broken up during the backlash, which returned the properties to the former slaving planters.(51) But, so determined was the group that they pooled their meager monies, formed themselves into the Belle Ville Farmers Association, and leased this acreage, when it was still a plantation. Soon after, they bought it, and their town was incorporated on March 4, 1867.(52)

In December 1875, a national black convention was held in New Orleans. Learning how widespread were racist depredations, the delegates formed "Colonization councils" that helped collect names of African Americans in their representative areas who were interested in leaving. Henry Adams, one of the delegates from what is now Shreveport, LA, wrote, in a letter to the U. S. Attorney General in late 1878:

> "I trust God that the United States will give us some Territory to our selves—and let us leave these Slaveholders to work their own land, for they are killing our race by the hundreds every day and night."

But the "violence, intimidation, fraud and terrorism continued…and by April 1879 the Colonization Council had collected more than 98,000 names of people willing to migrate to the North or West, as well as to emigrate to Liberia."(53)

In the late 1870s, when Benjamin "Pap" Singleton, and other promoters of westward migration, needed names of willing persons, the Council was one of the groups providing them leads. Estimates are "that during the spring and summer 1879 and 1880, nearly 60,000 blacks left Northern Louisiana, North Carolina, Texas, Mississippi, and Alabama for Kansas and Indiana to take advantage of the federal government's offer of land for homesteading.(54) Morris Turner calls this period, ending in 1881, the "Black Exodus."(55)

The Black Exoduster towns came to have names such as Abila, Blackdom, Tullahassee, and Three Creeks. Though scant, some literature about this era addressed onomastic Africanism. Personal names, rather than place names was the subject, though in may still be found instructive for the study of the place names of these post-Civil War black towns. Some African descendants consciously maintained their Africanness. Cudjo Lewis, for example, became a leader of ex-slaves captured form Togo. He also retained his African forename, Cudjo < *koJo,* 'male born on Monday.'(56)

An ironic, but interesting phenomenon served to erode the corpus of surface forms of African names while maintaining African deep structure onomastics simultaneously. Persons reported that in order to inculcate the status of

free citizen, they must discard their slavery time name in favor of a free citizen name, in effect, an Euro-American name. Thusly, they practiced the African postulate of marking life's significant events through bestowal of additional names. African influence was not always masked by this process, because some acquired new names that are English words based on common semantic and/or syntactic categories common in African names; an example found was a calque-phrase name, Try and See.(57)

Having not experienced "a marked improvement in their status from the end of Reconstruction to the onset World War I," black workers were enticed northward, Bennett explains, by "hard pressed" industrialists. Previously, these northern industrialists had severely restricted blacks' employment, preferring white European immigrants, who were now detoured by the war. To take advantage of increased job opportunities, massive numbers of African Americans moved in two "Great Migrations," 1915-1920, and 1920-1924. By 1930, they numbered "more than two million." Marking the first major shift in their overriding status as servants, laborers, and peasants since the 1600s, more than one-third of black workers were employed in industrial occupations. Cohesive black communities developed in these industrial centers; and a northern black professional class emerged.(58) V. P. Franklin described the "complex social networks" developed by African Americans of the Great Migrations, who shared the values of self-determination and freedom with the earlier black-town pioneers:

> With the influx of large numbers of rural blacks into northern and southern urban centers during the last two decades of the nineteenth century, Black churches, separate schools, fraternal institutions, voluntary associations and advancement groups sprouted up to meet their social and cultural needs. The expanding populations of African Americans found that they could become a part of a wide array of organizations in which blacks exercised complete control. As long as these institutions functioned, there was little need of the discrimination practiced in white-dominated public and private [ones].(59)

This became the overriding mode until the Great Depression in the 1930s, which forced thousands of self-help organizations to disband. Afterward, African Americans seemed to have thought it was best to pursue integration "into white-dominated programs and institutions, especially those programs offered by the New Deal."(60)

Turner collected copious linguistic data in the 1930s and 1940s from Gullah speakers (a.k.a. Geechees), African descendants who had not migrated, but remained continuously over all the centuries on largely isolated (island) enclaves along the southeastern Atlantic coasts of Georgia and South Carolina. His data analyses culminated in the seminal work, *Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect.* It showed decisively the richness of African onomastics in this deep creole language variety. Gullahs/Geechees have an official name, plus an alternate, or "basket" name that was kept secret. The basket names were found nearly always to be African homophones. But, there were also some calques which related to weather, physical or emotional state, life situation, or time of birth.(61)

Even though his informants did not remember the meanings of their names, most of which were also personal names in West African languages, they continued to use them, because their older relatives and friends had. Curious about those whose forenames and surnames were both African, it was explained to Turner, by informants who were ex-slaves that "[a]fter slavery, many of them refused to use any longer the name of their former enslavers."(62) In those words, one finds the evidence of a self-determining identity expressed in language. Turner took only slight note of Gullah/Geechee agency in bestowals of place-name Africanisms.(63) His nine examples include Peedee, Tybee, and Wassaw. A native observer of Edisto Island (a Gullah enclave) reportedly said that "the Sea Island Negro is most fertile in naming everything, giving particular names even to the narrow saltwater drains or gutters interlacing the marshes when they are dry at low tide."(64)

From the Post Depression to the Present

Appearing to be fewer in number than those founded by previous black pioneers and exodusters of the post-Reconstruction period, thousands of African Americans settled "suburban" towns for themselves prior to the 1960s.(65) Most of these were established in subsequent migrations from the urban town centers, which were not only white controlled, but also becoming "havens of overcrowding, unemployment, and crime." Weise interprets this black out-migration as having been part of the "national trend toward urban expansion and suburban decentralization," except that they retained a southern rural flavor in the years before World War II.(66) Real estate prices and home ownership were significantly less expensive than in the big cities, and most were blue-collar workers. Their place names include Lincoln Heights, Glenarden, and Kinloch. The professional

class African Americans, not proscribed to slums, overwhelmingly preferred the central city.

Numbering more than 3,500,000 people across this country, African American migration to the suburbs from 1960 to 1980 was "unprecedented."(67) On the heels of civil rights legislation, many opted for integration into more affluent, white suburbs. They generally shunned the older black suburban towns with rural flavor. However, some did, and do, move into a few of the older suburbs, which have managed to thrive and up-grade housing-stocks (e.g., Glenarden, Maryland). During this interval, the migrations were concentrated in and around 12 cities, with the concentrations of greatest magnitude in Washington, DC, Los Angeles, and Atlanta. So, from the close of Reconstruction to the contemporary era, it is clear that through "the act of migration, …families and entire communities moved [in order] to control their own destinies and to give greater meaning and substance to the cultural value of black freedom."(68)

Throughout the post-Depression era, intergroup tensions have persisted, due in large part to continued Euro-American resistance to full freedom, justice, and equality for African Americans. The tension is posed against some highly visible easements in racial discrimination, in the aftermath of the Civil Rights movement. Bennett locates the progress of this period in the "middle of the economy." We find the eradication of overt Jim Crow laws, return of blacks to elective offices, diversification of career opportunities, and non-proscription of mobility and inter-ethnic personal relations. He calls this state of affairs a "central paradox" of American life; that is,

> [E]verything has changed in Black America, and yet nothing has changed. This means, among other things, that we have not yet gotten to the bottom line: the integration of the money and the power and the resources. The great movement of the [1960s] …did not and could not at that time destroy the invisible institutional manifestations of racism.(69)

This bi-polarity (and escalating ethnic duality) increases social identity ambivalence that is mirrored in African American language. On the one hand, more African American speakers have shifted closer to Euro-American varieties, (e.g., employing increased denasalization). On the other hand, heightened ethnic distinctiveness has emerged in certain syntactic forms and speech events (e.g., specific subject/verb co-occurrences and rap/rhyme respectively). The in-group vernacular, most popularly referred to as Ebonics or Black English, enhances group solidarity, identity, and/or esteem.(70) Depending on socio-familial background, African American variation along the continuum between "talkin' black" and "talkin' white" is probably more of a conscious choice than in previous eras. And again, it is seen that some distinctive African American forms have become infused into "mainstream" vernaculars. So salient is "black talk" as an American pop culture resource (like jazz or blues), it seems much more likely that some of the most stable African American speech markers (e.g., habitual aspect "be") will cross racial boundaries rather than become extinct.

The advocacy for reclamation of African identity and esteem in this era has definitely impacted personal names. In her study of African American personal names, Kashif found that onomastic Africanisms occur not only as African homophones, but also in the form of calques and hybrids. These hybrids have never been discussed in the research literature.

> a. African Homophones, e.g., Keisha < *kishia*, jealousy in Hausa, also a nickname given to the second wife who is always seen as a rival of the first;
>
> b. African Calques (semantic content transfer), e.g., Prince < *Eze,* Igbo, 'prince' name for one whose grandparent is a hereditary ruler in eastern Nigeria; the informant for this name attests that he uses the English equivalent word to while in the U.S., but reverts to Eze when traveling back home;(71) and,
>
> c. African Hybrids, e.g., Kawanda < *Ka* + *wanda* < *Ka-,* an Ovimbundu prefix used very frequently to form female names from common nouns; *wanda,* a Hausa pluralizer for 'who' or which; or, e.g., ShaKiethia < Sha + Kieth + a < *'Sho,* Yoruba for 'seer or wizard', a male for female name prefix for this major cultural class of names (e.g., Shoyinka); *Kieth,* the male, Euro-American name; *-(y)a,* Arabic, feminizer.

There is also some evidence, in the contemporary era, for conscious revivals of African influenced place names; for example, Oyotunji Village became the name of a black cultural hamlet, founded in the late 1970s, in South Carolina; and the historic town of Prichard, Alabama officially reclaimed one of its former names, Africatown.

So, it is shown that, across the centuries of African American history, non-linguistic factors have interacted with linguistic ones in the evolution African language. The western and central African polyglot of the antebellum era, under influence mostly from English and Scot-Irish dialects, was largely replaced by a set of creolized speech varieties among African descendants. The historical evidence is that African descendants exercised the prerogative of naming settlements, land masses, and other geo-

graphical features in their environs, beginning even during the era in which they were held in bondage, denied the status of free citizens, or landowners. Following Emancipation, African American creoles shifted closer, over the centuries, toward Euro-American codes. But, due to the psychosocial distinctiveness of African descendants, and the internal vitality of African American language, now more than 500 years old, enough features of the supplanted ancestral African language elements have survived to form an African stratum. Intermittently, various linguistic Africanisms have been revived, consciously and unconsciously. Under the influence of a bi-polar psychosocial continuum from assimilationists to separatists, African Americans code-mix and code-switching along the linguistic continuum, ranging from deep creoles (e.g., Gullah and Gombo) to mesolects (e.g., Ebonics or Black Vernacular) to arcolects (e.g., Standard Black English [SBE] or Standard English).(72)

Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to expand the identifications of America's African influenced toponyms, especially in terms of their varied manifestations. Propelled by the persisting Black Studies movement, and influenced greatly by the work of Lorenzo Dow Turner's *Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect,* there is a noticeable increase in the number of contemporary researchers seriously addressing the subject of Africanisms. These studies address African influence within, and beyond the African American collective. Few of these discuss onomastics, but when one considers the literature on the response of names to extended language contact, and the history of Africa's descendants in America, there should be a greater body of such studies. Those that do focus on African American onomastics, deal with personal names almost exclusively.

Vass is the one researcher who has made place names one of the focal points of her efforts to identify Africanisms in American language. Her chapter in a 1993 work she co-edited, "Bantu Place Names in Nine Southern States," expands an earlier publication, which, itself, was an outgrowth of her master's thesis in mass communications. The Bantu branch of African languages covers almost all of central and southern Africa. The Bantu languages of particular import for African Americans include Fang, Kongo, Luba, and Mbundu. Arguing for a predominance of Bantu language influence over all other African language branches, Vass sought to identify retentions from the latter two, predominant in Angola and Zaire/Congo. She was raised in Zaire, the child of Caucasian missionaries. A glance at Turner's small collection of toponyms, taken from the Gullah/Geechee region, and only in South Carolina and Georgia, alerts one very quickly that much is left to discern.

Using the corpus of all the town names in each of nine confederate states, she compared their pronunciations to words and phrases in the Bantu languages. She expanded the corpus to include names of rivers/streams, mountains, locales, and populations; the working definitions of the latter two terms are not provided. To build her case for an Africanism, Vass included elaborations on meanings or emotional character denoted by the proposed Bantu source words. She notes that in Zaire, place names commonly denote "significant human experience, emotion, or action."(73) Too often, she conjectures or sets forth imagined scenarios that the African descendants may have been engaged in or encountered, then proceeds to extrapolate upon the conjectures as if they were attested facts. This was especially problematic when there were more than a few sound differences between the toponym and her proposed Bantu source. She was much less careful than Turner; in order for an African form to be posed as a source by Turner, it had to be "phonetically identical with or strikingly similar to" the Gullah name, emphasizing thereby a "strong probability that the [selected Gullah] names are African words."(74)

However, many of the toponyms Vass proposed as Africanisms are convincing when based on close sound similarities coupled with transparent, rather than conjectured, meanings, and/or when a locality's historian admits that the toponym has an unknown origin or meaning. Another puzzle is that Vass's findings from a random sample of Zaire toponym denotations do not comport with the findings of Cheikh Anta Diop, an African toponym expert of international repute. He found that an African toponym is most typically the personal name of the founder of the town or settlement. Perhaps the difference is explained by whether or not inhabitants migrated to a site; or a pattern shift may have occurred on the Continent with the cessation of the antebellum slave trade.

Theoretical Perspective on Research Needs

As was done in the writer's discoveries of patterns of Africanisms in generations of African American personal names, the methodology employed within amounts to card stacking, i.e., using as many linguistic and non-linguistic facts available which are relevant to African provenance for each selected place-name Africanism.(75) Using racial/ethnic history and make-up of a region is one of

the most convincing card-stacking strategies. Turner targeted Gullah Sea Island habitats and Vass widened the target areas to nine confederate states. So the geopolitical history serves as indirect attestation of African linguistic provenance. The argument for African influence is also more convincing when historians of a locale have found the etymology of its toponym unsure or obscure; it is common in place-name texts to express no consideration whatsoever of African language sources. The analyses within

1. Avoids some of Vass's weaknesses shown in positing a U. S. place name as a Bantu Africanism or Bantuism; she

• often did not identify the specific Bantu language(s) of a posited source, thereby leaving one to assume that she means perhaps all Bantu languages;

• provided no explanation of guidelines for deciding the extent of phonetic similarity necessary between a place-name and its posited Bantu source; this resulted in posited African sources that seem counter intuitive, and therefore unconvincing.

2. Moves beyond "Bantu" language sources so that place names derived from the other African languages, including converging source words, may be identified.

3. Moves beyond African homophones to include other types of Africanisms, as described above.

4. Identifies toponym Africanisms beyond the South, analyzing "autonomous" black towns and settlements across the U. S., from as early as the era of maroonage.

Methodology

Toponym, or place-name Africanisms, were addressed in terms of language mixture resulting from language contact phenomena. These are issues of concern in sociology, anthropology, linguistics, history, and social psychology, among others. The identification of a toponym as African influenced is based on its linguistic similarities to, and modification of, African forms and structures. A purposive sample of African American toponyms was collected from historical, geographical, journalistic and linguistic surveys. The study began with a central focus on Florida, because it is found to have the longest history of African agency and struggle of any state in the now United States. 164 place names of towns identified in the available literature as having been established and/or founded by African American were collected.

The researcher identified and classified into transfer types all of the African American toponyms which (in their morphological, phonological and semantic characteristics) correspond to or appear modeled upon African names, words, morphological processes, and toponym motifs. Several types of changes in African words toward American English phonology were predictable, e.g., (a) deletion of tones, or (b) simplification of co-articulated stops (ng-, kp- > g, p or n, k, respectively).

The selected African American toponyms were divided into Africanism types: African homophone, African hybrid, and African semantic transfer. They are to be understood as follows:

1. African homophone, the toponym's phone or sound sequence matches that of (an) African source(s); a match means that the sound segments of the African American toponym have undergone no more than two changes that are unexplainable by common American English phonological processes (as those noted above).

2. African hybrid, the toponym conjoins (a) two or more African source words or word-parts or (b) an African source word or word-part and non-African one.

3. African semantic transfer, the toponym is a calque or word(s) in English that shows transfer of an African motif or semantic content of the following type:

(a) town or settlement founder or inspirer,

(b) ethnic/ linguistic group reference,

(c) duplication of another toponym, or

(d) commentary on human state-of-affairs.

The four subcategories typify, but are not exclusive to, African place-name onomastics. However it is firmly established in the language contact literature that ancestral language retentions occur in these "translated" forms. One way that convergence with a non-African language may be unmasked is through comparison of the preponderance of each name type among the non-African language speakers in the contact environment.

Findings and Interpretations

Entry Guide

Below, an alphabetically arranged roster with toponym glosses is provided for each toponym identified as an Africanism. Symbols are to be interpreted as follows:

< is a form of or has its source in

> changed to

[ ] approximate pronunciation is indicated within the brackets (Note: An informal pronunciation guide of broadly represented sounds)

Abbreviations

Sources from the Reference list

Ath, Athearn

Br, Brown

Dp, Diop, 1978

Lmg, Laeming

Ln, Landers

Mc, McCarthy

MTr, Turner 1998

Od, Oduyoye

Rv, Rivers, 2000

Tr, Turner, 1949

Sources from personal communication

Al, Albury, A., 7/00

Ay, Ayittey, G,10/90

CBr, Brown, C., 11/00

Ctr, Carter, W., 1/88

Nj, Njokunma, A., 4/00

Languages

Ak, Akan (Ewe, Fante, Twi)

Egy, Egyptiam or Khemetic

B, Bambara

Bb, Bobangi

Bml, Bamilike

Bn, Bantu (Fang, Kongo, Luba and Mbundu)

Dj, Djerma

K, Kongo

Mdg, Manding(k)o(a)

T, Twi

Yor, Yoruba

Alafia River, FL < *alafia* Yor ' health, peace', a common greeting (Tr, 49, Al). By the 1880's economic decline "many ex-slaves stayed in the [Tampa, FL] area to farm and homestead the land. A group of them established the community of Bealsville, near the Alafia River (Mc, 306).

Angola, FL - same name as that of the central African country. So-called by Cuban fisherman making a land claim in the area in 1821, referring to a "Negro maroon settlement on the Manatee River, across the Sarasota Bay (CBr). Population consisted of hundreds of black men, women and children (CB, 8-9); one of the last refuges for black warriors, having served with Britain in the War of 1812. Also contained escaped slaves from Mobile, AL; Pensacola, FL; St. Augustine, FL; and, Georgia (see Ln, 230-237); disrupted by 1821 Creek raid (Rv, 195).

Boley, OK < [bolee] B 'a fetish'; 'to run'; 'to desert' (Tr, 66). Established in 1903, one of the largest all-black exoduster towns. The city is reportedly named after one of the white founders of the town, but Boley is not found in American surname books, suggesting that the founder referred to may not have been.

Booker, TX < [bokaw] E 'a diviner, priest' (Tr, 67); [boh-oka] K 'to heal (Tr, 68). One of the all-black exoduster towns (MTr, 142).

Bucker Woman's Town, FL < see "Bucker" above. One of the important maroon settlements of free blacks in central Florida, 1814-1840s; aka Buckra…, lead by the sister to the dead Seminole chiefs, Kings Payne and Bowlegs, and mother of Billy Bowlegs. By 1923, transferred her cattle operations and black vassals to creek flowing westward into Peace River, 15 miles below Minatti (Ln, 236, Rv, 195-97) in the Big Hammock, between today's Hernando and Pasco counties.

Coffeyville, KS < *Kofi,* Ak; personal name, male, when born on Friday. An Exoduster colony that lasted only one year (Ath, 78).

Congo **Village**, NC < same as name of the country and language in central Africa. One of the settlements in the Dismal Swamp, NC, its leader, Congo Jonah, was called King Jonah by those of other settlements. He probably was from a noble family of the Congo region (Lmg, 289).

Coosaw, Island/River, SC < [kusaw] Dj 'dusty' (Tr, f.n. 7, 307). Located on the Gullah/Geechee sea islands.

Cudjoe Key, FL < [ko-joe], [kawjoe], [kwajoe] Ak, personal name, male, for 'one born on Monday' '(Tr, 115 & 119). An isolated key out from Key West; etymology of name unknown in Florida place name texts.(76) During the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the Keys were a major destination of slave ships, and the site of the infamous 1701 shipwreck of the slaver, Henrietta Marie. The Keys were well known for working thousands of enslaved Africans harshly, and prosecuting a zealous abolitionist who tried to secure their escapees well as notoriety over the efforts of a (Mc, 146-153).

Ellaville, FL < [eh-la] Yor 'one of the root sources of life in Yoruba cosmology'; *ela,* K 'catch, throw, or pour out'.(77) A settlement along the Suwanee River in Florida, the land was given to an African woman, formerly a favored servant to the landowner, a Florida government official. The town was wiped out by Ku Klux Klan hordes when the residents lobbied to get a school.

Hayti, NC < [ay-yi-ti] Ga 'name for the first-born son of Ayi, 'a person who brings fulfillment'(Ay); [ati] Twi, name of a deity (Tr, 54); *Ity* Egy 'sovereign, con-

querer'.(78) An African American settlement near Durham, since at least 1877 (MTtr, 121).

[kawkaw], SC < K, 'to judge unjustly'. A place-name on Gullah/Geechee coast (Tr, 113 and f.n. 6,307). *KaoKao,* an important, ancient ethnic group that migrated to Senegal from the Nile Valley (Dp, 92).

Kush, MS - same as that of the ancient Nile civilization. So named by the Republic of New Afrika, this is a district consisting of 25 black counties along the Mississippi River from Memphis to Louisiana (Ctr).

LaVilla, FL < [luh-VEE-la] K, 'relationship, family, clan' (Tr, 126). A freedmen's town (1866-1887)that was pressured into annexation by the larger, predominantly white city of Jacksonville. It was begun through the protection and assistance of a Freedmen's Bureau unit stationed in the area, and is now designated a historic district.(79)

Little **Coney** Colony, LA < [koh-nee] T, personal name, 'speechless, absolutely still'. Exoduster town incorporated in 1881. Led by A. Fairfax, who had been elected to the LA Congress but forced to flee by mob of protesting Democrats (MTr, 85).

Bayou **Malo,** LA < *malo* B, 'shame; reason'; Mdn personal name, 'hippopotamus' (Tr, 128) the name is given to a leader who defies the status quo to benefit society through the use of special powers. One of a network of maroon settlements led by Malo in LA during the late 1700s.(80)

Black **Mingo** Pocosin < [MING-go] Bml, a surname, in French speaking Cameroon; *mingo* Bb 'they'. A swamp in border areas of NC and VA, near Roanoke; "living here were 'black indians' (Lmg, 286)."(81)

Minatti, FL < referring to the huge "sea-cow"; first recording of the term in European texts occurred in 1555; Moloney's *West African Fisheries* is one of the OED citation sources. Coastal West Africans were reported to have high appreciation for its flesh.(82) A maroon settlement located northeast of Tampa Bay's Negro Point maroon settlement north of Bartow in present-day Polk county (Br,39-40); "housed Creek Chief Oponay's slaves and later some of Angola's refugees (Rv, 195)."

Fort **Mose** [moh-say], FL< [maw-say] Vai personal, name, male (Tr, 133); cf., [moosah] Mndn 'name of the prophet' personal name, male, (Tr,134). A fortified town established in 1728 by Spanish about two miles north of present-day St. Augustine in territory they held in Florida. "[T]he old Indian place-name" according to Landers, but no language or ethnic group source given (Ln 294). Complete form of the name, Gracia Real de Santa Theresa de Mose (Ln, 29).

New **Eufala,** FL < [ya-law-fa] Yor, 'to obtain as a pawn (Tr, 184); deemed to have unknown meaning.(83) Seminole maroon plantation established in west central Florida by 1821. Near present day Brooksville, it was led by Simaka.(84)

Ocala (from Ocali, the name of an older Seminole nation encompassing all of Marion County), FL < [awkala-kala], E. Igbo, the judge over land disputes; 'The case is settled!' (Nj); [oko-ah-lay] Yor 'an afternoon's farm work' (Tr, 143).(85) Meaning reported to be obscure though many meanings suggested (Mc,208).(86)

Okatee River, SC < [okati] Umbundu, 'middle, interior'. A river in Gullah/Geechee sea islands area (Tr, f.n.,307).

Oyotunji Village, SC- Yor 'return of the ancient Oyo kingdom' (Al). settlement near Beaufort, established by African Americans for traditional Yoruba cultural practices.

Peedee River,SC < [mpeedee] K, in Angola, 'a species of viper'(Tr, 307). Name for two rivers in Gullah/Geechee region.

Suwannee Old Town, FL < *Suwane,* > Mndg, personal name; [suu-waa-naa] Hausa 'which one's' (Tr, 163); Bn, *nsub wanyi;* 'my house, home'.(87) One of the Seminole-African refugee settlement along this great river, wiped out in 1818 by Andrew Jackson' forces in the opening of the first Seminole War (Rv, 195).(88)

[teetee], SC — Gulla/Geechee place-name (Tr, f.n. 7, 307).

Tybee Island/Creek,SC < /tai bi; Hausa 'an especially fertile, low-lying farmland' (3Tr, f.n. 7,07). An island and a creek in the Gullah/Geechee region.

Wahoo Island/River, SC < /wa-hu/ Yor 'to trill the voice' (Tr, 307). Located in the Geechee/Gullah region.

Wahoo Swamp, FL < see above. Site of Seminole maroon settlements and battles in the 1800s. It lies 80 miles northeast of Tampa, in present-day Sumter County, above the bend in the Withlacoochee River.(89)

Wando River, SC < *Kwando River,* K, a river running from Angola, through Botswanna and Zambia, also name of a large city in Angola (Bk, 292); Hausa, [wan-doh] 'trousers'. A river in the Gullah/Geechee region (Tr, 307).

Wassaw Island/Sound, SC < [wassaw] Twi, a district, tribe, and dialect of the Gold Coast. Located in the Gullah/Geechee region (Tr, 307).

African Homophones

Of the 172 toponyms in the corpus, 31 were found to be African homophones. Multiple or additional African sources were posited for some of them. This strengthens the argument for each proposed Africanism, especially when its semantic field content is opaque, i.e., no longer transparent. Identified in earlier works of Vass and Turner, Suwanee River and Wando, respectively, are two of the Africanisms for which the researcher was able to posit additional African sources. Concerning Suwannee, Vass had derived it from *nsub'wanyi,* Bn, 'my house, home'. Though its semantic field content is a powerful argument in itself, the Mandingo, *Suwane,* argues for a more powerful influence for two reasons. *Suwane* [suh-wah-nee?] (1) requires no or fewer sound changes vs. *nsub'wanyi;* (2) is an African personal name; and, (3) is nearly the same as the attested name, *Suwanna,* found among Gullah/Geechee females when Turner was collecting their names in the late 1930s. Since a town founder's name is the most typical toponym of migrating Africans, Suwane could easily have been, like the legendary Malo of colonial Louisiana, the maroon founder and leader of the earlier swampy settlements along the famous river. The Hausa [suu-waa-naa]'which one's?' does not have the force of the other two sources, but evokes a picture of Suwane's followers asking which sites along the river should be settled.

Turner derives Wando from the Hausa [wan-doh] 'trousers'. Even though it shares an apparent one-to-one sound correspondence with the Africanism, [wan-doh] is easily subordinated in favor of *Kwando* as the predominant African source; *Kwando* not only has a strong sound correspondence with Wando, but shares one-to-one semantic correspondence in its designation of the geographical feature, 'river'. Though not the only one, combined sound-meaning correspondence is always the stronger one. For this reason, some of the homophone toponyms were posited without reference to multiple language sources. This may apply whether the semantic content of the African source (1) has persisted in semantic field content in the Africanism; or, (2) conveys canonical African principles of place naming.

Florida's Wahoo Swamp and LaVilla, are illustrative. Wahoo has maintained the semantic field of creation of marked sounds from its Yoruba source. It is through consideration of the historical context that the case is sealed. The historical reality is that fleeing and warring bands of Seminole-African maroons had to set up and hide in difficult to access areas, as are swamps; and a war band would have a designee whose role was to give out a special whoop to signal attack. The Seminole soldier, Jumper was documented to have done such in the Dade Massacre.(90) Perhaps the same-named river and island in South Carolina were sites of maroon activity or the founder of the Wahoo Swamp was a fugitive who escaped from South Carolina. Also, Wahoo is very likey the root word for *yahoo* and *yehaw.*

LaVilla (pronounced luh-VIh-luh) shows only a few sound changes in the Kongo source word, [lu-Vee- la]. As is typical, the vowels have been reduced in this homophone Africanism; but the meaning of the Kongo source word, 'relationship, family, clan', shares the semantic field content, 'an ethnic group' with the African principle, thereby stacking the cards more heavily in favor of the homophone's selection.(91) As Yai explained, an African place name is often the same as one's ethnic group and language name.

LaVilla is also interesting because it exemplifies convergence or masking, another expected phenomenon in cultural retention in a contact situation. Its orthography suggests a romance language word. Even the fact of a non-Latin pronunciation would just barely attract attention. Its pronunciation has probably been thought of as simply interference from the English sound system. But the history of LaVilla as an all-black town coupled with the salient sound-meaning correspondences unmasks the Africanism.

African Hybrids

From this corpus, only one hybrid form, Black Mingo Pocosin, was found to occur. It is analyzed as Black + Mingo Pocosin; the racial/color reference *black* is a toponym Africanism that has been translated into a semantically transparent English "equivalent" and conjoined to African forms that are retained opaque homophones. It is expected that, with a completed analysis of *pocosin,* it may be found that the toponym is an independent clause or sentence, "They are the black buffaloes." This recalls that African men, serving in America's western cavalries were called "Buffalo Soldiers." These Dismal Swamp maroons successfully resisted destruction, and were not assimilated into the American polity until the end of the Civil War. If the selection of pocosin (with the gloss "buffalo") becomes solidified, it would be an even more powerful Africanism, announcing ethnic identity and dominion over a geographic space in a complete sentence.

There were no admixtures within an indivisible homophone such as that which can be found in African American personal names (as shown above). However, nineteen of the African homophones do co-occur with European

Toponyms by Motif or Semantic Content

Founders or Memorable Africans

Abraham's Town,FL
AdderleyTown, FL
Allensworth CA
Beckwourth, CA
Belltown, DE
Bobtown, LA
**Bookertee, OK
Ceasar's Creek, FL
Coit Mountain, NH
Daniel Votaw Colony, KS
Dempsey, AL
Douglas City, OK
Eldridge, MI
Estill's Station, KY
Ferguson
Haney, OK
Harry's Bay, FL
Hoggstown, KS
James City, NC
King Heijah Town, FL
Langston, OK
Lovejoy*, IL
Montgomery, ND
Mulattoe Girl's Town, FL
Mulatto King's Town*, FL
Nero's Town, FL
*Nicodemus, KS
Payne's Town, FL
Penneytown, MI
Princeville, NC
Rhodes Creek, ID
Singleton Colony, KS
*St. Maurice Colony, LA
*Wild Cat, OK
Winstonville, MS

Ethnic/Color Reference

African Bar, CA
Africky Town, AL
Arkansas Colored, OK
Bayou Marron, LA
Blackdom,NM
Black Star,CT
Blackville,* AR
Brownlee, NA
Canadian Colored*, OK
Darky Spring, ND
Freemanville, FL
Freedmantown, TX
Negro Bar, CA
Negro Point, FL
Negro Slide, CA
Nigger Heaven, CA
North Fork Colored,
Tullahassee, OK
Yemassee, FL

State of Affairs-(emotions,experiences, actions, attitudes)

Belle Ville, GA
Bullet Town, NC
Dearfield, CO
Freedom Hill*, NC
Free Haven, NJ*
Liberty, OK
Little Hell, DE
Lost Creek, IN
Mystery Hill, CO
New Discovery, DE
Parting Ways, MA
Peace, AR
Scuffle Town, KS
Southern Improvement,
AL

Duplicate Place Name

Africa,* FL
Kentucky Ridge, CA
Kush, MS
*Little Africa, NY
Mississippi Town, KS
New Africa, MS
Rusk, OK
Tennessee Town, KS

*Indicates that the name was reported to have been eventually changed.

words, affixes, and modifiers that mostly signal a collective of persons under a system of governance (e.g., town, colony or -ville). Because these are highly transportable and unmarked, and place names are not "required" to have transparent meanings, their co-occurrence with the Africanism has an effect of leveling it toward American English.

African Semantic Transfers

The toponyms which fit into the four African semantic fields are listed by category in the table opposite.

With 39 towns and settlements having been named after African American town/settlement founders, Diop's characterization of the typical African place-name is also true for African Americans. Therefore, this propensity among African Americans is an Africanism. Of the 39 though, three were illustrious figures admired by the founders: Nicodemus, Bookertee, and St. Maurice. Because all three are African, they may just as easily have fit into the ethnic/racial category by indirection. The list of town founders actually exceeds 39 because there were white and Native American ones, e.g., Eatonville, FL, or Payne's Town, FL. There were 11 in the corpus. "Lincoln" far outnumbers them all (e.g., Lincoln City, OK, Lincoln Heights, OH, Lincolnville, FL). Washington and Jefferson do make an impression, though. The listing firmly suggests African Americans' desire to exercise self-determination.

Further, Diop and Yai both argued ethnic designating toponyms are also to be commonly found among Africa's toponyms.(92) There were 17 African American toponyms that corresponded with this semantic content. In could even be argued that toponyms such as Kush and Africa, in the context of American race relations, are indirect ethnic/racial self-references, though here they are grouped under "duplicated place-name" category above. This tendency toward ethnic self reference is an Africanism that predicts such contemporary appellations as "Chocolate City." With a toponyms using the "N-word" and "Darky" we are witnessing, no doubt, that words may elevate or deteriorate in their connotations. Evidently, they were not always slur words among African descendants, like the personal name Africanisms Sambo or Bimbo. An interesting finding was that native American ethnic group names occurred. This occurrence confirms the development of an authentic "Black Indian" identity in America. Both the Tullahassee and Yamassee were known to have integrated and sometimes assimilated with Africans who were exceptional and pivotal as warriors. It is most likely that these towns were so-named because the town founders and some of its inhabitants had been closely affiliated before forced removal to the west.

The same number (17) of toponyms referred to natural environmental features, but the researcher is not yet prepared to list such occurrences as Africanisms. Such names included Cedar Lake, Mud Town and Three Creeks.(93) Yai did provide an example of natural feature toponyms for Fons migrating to Yoruba districts, but he did not suggest they were just as numerous as ethnic references, but ethnic references, in these names, are naturally designators of Africanness. A methodology to show a propensity for such assignations when compared to other ethnic/racial groups needs to be investigated.

With 13 toponyms falling into the category, state-of-affairs commentary, Vass's position was lent some support. Names in this category, like Bullet Town or Parting Ways do evoke a picture of the inhabitants' attitudes and experiences, but contrary to Vass's prediction that the type would predominate was not supported. Diop, with his assertion about town founders' had found the most powerful explanation. However, Vass's explanation that toponym Africanisms were marked by the absence of animal reference was firmly supported. Only two occurred on the entire list, Cow Creek and Hare Valley.

The phenomenon wherein African American towns and settlements undergo a series of name changes seems to confirm that toponyms may parallel the stages of creolization evident in other levels of African American language (e.g., syntax). These changes seem to fit along the creole continuum (see also above). The case of Sandy Ground, NY is illustrative.(94) Sandy Ground was settled in 1833 by African American oystermen who chose self-determination and freedom from industry restrictions in Maryland. These settlers first named their town, Harrisville, after one of the founders, and became "the first free black community in New York." Their district is reported to have run a station on the Underground Railroad. Later, they changed the town's name to "Little Africa". Eventually, the town changed to its current name to reflect the "poor quality of soil in the area." Turning to the creole continuun, we may place the original name at the first stage, the Basilect. At this stage the toponym, Harrisville results from the canonical African principle that a town is named after its founder. Since it is a creole, its name becomes mixed by the conjoining of the "Americanism", *-ville.* The name change to "Little Africa" is at a mid-stage, the Mesolect. The name changes to a characteristic that is common, but not predominant in African place-naming, i.e., ethnic and/or duplication of another place-name; it is also mixed through the co-occurrence of the English word,

"Little." Then it shifts to the last stage—the Acrolect, decreolizing to "Sandy Ground." The name refers to natural environmental features, not a defining characteristic of African toponyms. With a movement toward ethnolinguistic distinctiveness, as that being sustained in the current era. It is expected that African revivalist toponyms will emerge. Oyotunji Village ('return of the Oyo kingdom') is clearly such a revival.

Overall, it was found that African influence is identifiable in African American toponyms or place names of the United States, not only in the form of African homophones, but also in the form of hybrids and semantic transfers. Further, a range of Kwa and Bantu languages have contributed over the centuries to African retention. This is so because the overwhelming majority of the ancestors of America's African descendents were brought, so woefully over the centuries, from cultural zone complexes of west and central Africa. Interestingly enough, Cheikh Anta Diop's long standing argument of a fundamental cultural unity of Africans is substantiated by the fact that several widely dispersed African languages provided source words for a single place name. When debates about African American language variety erupt, and consideration is given to Gullah, or Ebonics, or Standard Black Vernacular, the body of African American toponyms belong in those exchanges. The results from this study of African American place names confirm the importance of onomastics in the effort to identify and describe America's African heritage.

Notes

1. The public firestorm over "Ebonics" in the late 1990s is a recent testament to that popular interest.

2. Lorenzo Dow Turner, *Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect* (Chicago: University of Chicago, 1949); Annette Kashif, "Generations of African Influenced Names Among African Americans: Forms and Meanings" (Ph.D dissertation, Howard University, 1991); J. Holloway and W. Vass, eds. *The African Heritage of American English* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press); S. Mufwene, ed., *Africanisms in Afro-American Language Varieties* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1993).

3. D. Crystal, *The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Language and Linguistics* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1991), 114-115.

4. The study of the etymology and use of proper names. See Crystal, *Cambridge Encyclopedia,* 426.

5. Ibid, 114.

6. Annette Kashif, personal communication with Dorothy Shabazz, January 2000.

7. T. Obenga, "Who Am I?", *in African World History Project,* J. Carruthers and L. Harris, eds., 31-44 (Los Angeles: ASCAC, 1997), 43.

8. N. Akbar, "The Mummy is Out of the Tomb," lecture given in Washington, DC, 1989.

9. A. N. Wilson, *The Falsification of Afrikan Consciousness* (New York: Afrikan World InfoSystems, 1993), 22.

10. S. Mufwene, "Dictionaries and Proper Names," in *International Journal of Lexicography* 13(3)(1988): 268-283.

11. T. Alegeo, *On Defining the Proper Name* (Ganiesville: Uniersity of Florida Press, 1973), 83.

12. Crystal, *Cambridge Encyclopedia,* 114.

13. See B. Blount, "Luo Personal Names: Reference and Meaning," Paper presented at the annual meeting of the African Studies Association, Atlanta, GA, 1989

14. D. Biebuyck, S. Kelliher, and L. McRae, *African Ethnonyms: Index to Art-Producing Peoples of Africa* (New York: G. K. Hall, 1996), xiii.

15. C. A. Diop, "A Methodology for the Study of Migrations," in *African Ethnonyms and Toponyms,* 86-109 (Paris: United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, 1984), 105.

16. O. Yai, "African Ethnonymy and Toponomy: Reflections on Decolonization," in *African Ethnonyms and Toponyms,* 39-50 (Pairs: United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, 1984), 41.

17. Ibid, 41-42.

18. A "creole" language means, within a mixed language, crystallized at a stage intermediate between an ancestor language, and a targeted successor language that has a second or later generation of speakers.

19. R. Jeffers and I. Lehiste, *Principles and Methods for Historical Linguistics* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press), 52.

20. Crystal, *Cambridge Encyclopedia,* 114.

21. A "pidgin" is a language with a reduced range of structure and use, characterized in the first stages of language shift. Ibid, 428.

22. Diop, "A Methodology for the Study of Migrations," 15; J. Harris, *Africans and Their History* (New York: Penguin Group, 1998), 50.

23. G. Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University, 1992), 121.

24. Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana,* 133.

25. Ibid, 155.

26. Ibid, 142.

27. K. Bilby and D. B. N'diaye, "Creativity and Resistance: Maroon Culture in the Americas," in *Festival of American Folklife,* P. Seitel, ed. (Washington, DC: Smithsonian, 1992), 54-58.

28. H. Aptheker, "Maroons Within the Present Limits of the United States," in *Maroons Societies: Rebel Slave Communities in the Americas,* R. Price, ed., 151-167 (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1979), 152.

29. Margaret W. Creel, *A Peculiar People: Slave Religion and Community-Culture Among the Gullahs* (New York: New York University Press, 1988), 114.

30. Ibid, 116.

31. Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana,* 212.

32. Ibid, 145-166.

33. Kevin McCarthy, *The Hippocrene U.S.A. Guide to Black Florida* (New York: Hippocrene Books, 1995), 44.

34. McCarthy, *Guide to Black Florida,* 42-44.

35. L. Rivers, *Slavery in Florida: Territorial Days to Emancipation* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 2000), 203.

36. Rivers, *Slavery in Florida,* 204.

37. H. Laemming, *Hidden Americans: Maroons of Virginia and North Carolina* (New York: Garland, 1995).

38. Aptheker, "Maroons Within the Present Limits of the United States," 152.

39. Laemming, *Hidden Americans,* 286-293.

40. George Stewart, *Names on the Land* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), 329.

41. William Stewart, "Acculturative Processes and the Language of the American Negro," in *Language in its Social Setting,* W. Gage, ed., 1-46 (Washington, DC: The Anthropological Society, 1974), 20.

42. Holloway and Vass, *African Heritage of American English,* 134.

43. Ibid, 367.

44. Morris Turner, *America's Black Towns and Settlements: V.1* (Rohnert Park, CA: Missing Pages Productions, 1998), 92.

45. Ibid, 94.

46. Ibid, 41-42.

47. L. Bennett, Jr., *The Shaping of Black America* (New York: Penguin Group, 1993) 170, 252; V. P. Franklin, *Black Self-Determination: A Cultural History of the Faith of the Fathers* (Westport, CT: Lawerence Hill, Co., 1984), 111-112.

48. Kashif, "Generations of African Influenced Names," 20.

49. One language which is modified from formal to informal based on the social context of communication.

50. M. Berry and J. Blassingame, *Long Memory: The Black Experience in America* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1982), 403.

51. See Bennett, *The Shaping of Black America,* 187-191.

52. P. Cimbala, *Under the Guardianship of the Nation* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1997), 288, footnote 35.

53. Franklin, *Black Self-Determination,* 127-142.

54. Ibid, 132.

55. Turner, *America's Black Towns,* 12.

56. Kashif, "Generations of African Influenced Names," 21.

57. Ibid, 22.

58. Bennett, *The Shaping of Black America,* 267-269.

59. Franklin, *Black Self-Determination,* 143.

60. Ibid, 144.

61. Turner, *Africanisms in the Gullah Dialect,* 40.

62. Ibid.

63. Ibid, 307, footnote 8.

64. Holloway and Vass, *African Heritage of American English,* 108.

65. A. Weise, "Places of Our Own: Suburban Black Towns Before 1960," in *Journal of Urban History* 19(3)(1993): 50.

66. Weise, "Places of Our Own," 31.

67. Ibid, 30.

68. Franklin, *Black Self-Determination,* 126.

69. Bennett, *The Shaping of Black America,* 341.

70. M. R. Hoover, "Community Attitudes Toward Black English," in *Language In Society* 1(1978): 65-87.

71. It must be remembered that those of royal lineage were not spared the Middle Passage during the devastation of slavery, and are most probably, the original sources of the popularity of this name as an official one among African Americans.

72. Mesolect is a theorized "midpoint" between a deep creole and disparate prestige-dialect target. SBE, Standard Black English, is defined by the use of codified standard English syntax, but with the maintenance of distinctive phonological features and stylistic devices.

73. Holloway and Vass, *The African Heritage of American English,* 108.

74. Ibid, 42.

75. Kashif, "Generations of African Influenced Names."

76. A. Morris, *Florida Place Names* (Sarasota, FL: Pineapple Press), 61.

77. Holloway and Vass, *The African Heritage of American English,* 129.

78. An analysis for "Pocosin" has not yet finalized; the Kongo word, mpakasa, is a strong possibility.

79. P. Kenney, "LaVilla, Florida, 1866-1887: Reconstruction Dreams and the Formation of a Black Community," in *The African American Heritage of Florida,* D. Colburn and J. Landers, eds. (Gainesville: University of Florida Press), 185.

80. Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana,* 214-16.

81. Wimby, R., Roberts, R., and Carruthers, J., *Mdt rn Kmt: Kemetic Name Book* (Chicago: The Kemetic Institute, 1987), 8.

82. Sir Alfred Cornelius Moloney, *West African Fisheries,* (London: W. Clowes and Sons, Ltd., 1883).

83. Holloway and Vass, *The African Heritage of American English,* 130.

84. J. Covington, *The Seminoles of Florida* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1993), 15-48.

85. T. Tamuno, "Traditional Police in Nigeria," in *Traditional Religion in West Africa,* in A. Adegbola, ed. (Ibadan, Nigeria: Daystar Press, 1983), 181.

86. F. Abate, ed., *American Places Dictionary* (Detroit: Omnigraphics, 1974), 151.

87. Holloway and Vass, *The African Heritage of American English,* 134.

88. D. Littlefield, *Africans and Creeks* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1979), 76.

89. Covington, *The Seminoles of Florida,* 80-89,98-99.

90. Ibid, 79.

91. Kashif, *Generations of African Influenced Names,* 60.

92. Diop, "A Methodology for the Study of Migrations," 92.

93. Toponyms referring to natural features: Beech Bottoms, NC; Cedarlake, AL; Fairmount Heights; Greenwood Village, AL; Highland Beach, MD; Lakeview, AR; Lawncrest, NJ; Mound Bayou, MS; Mud Town, KS; Plateau, AL; Sandy Ground, NY; Star Hill, DE; Three Creeks, MI; Urbancrest, OH; Cow Creek, MI; Hare Valley, VA; Clearview, OK; Small Farms, AL.

94. M. Turner, *America's Black Towns,* 116.

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Autobio-*graphic* Space: Reconciling African American Identity with the (In)Visible Past

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Space, like language, is socially constructed; and like the syntax of language, the spatial arrangements of our buildings and communities reflect and reinforce the nature of gender, race, and class relations in society. The uses of both language and space contribute to the power of some groups over others and the maintenance of human inequality.(1)

In this project, I explore what I call "Autobio-*graphic* Architecture," and the ways in which it can facilitate a reconciliation of African American identity today with its (In)Visible Past. The social construction of space and language, pointed out by Leslie Karnes Weisman, is crucial to understanding the role of autobiography in recovering and designing (re)presentations of African American architecture. Thus, our stories and identities need to be recovered and told—both through language, and spatial constructs. While emphasizing that we should learn from the past in order to embrace our present *identities,* I will argue for designing structures that construct American identity as "reconciling" with, and reflecting inclusive and egalitarian spaces for a diverse and multivalent society. The journey I present here is an autobiographical account of my search for an architecture that expresses and constructs identity beyond the stereotypes of "race" and hegemonic "culture," while also celebrating what LaVerne Wells-Bowie calls "rooted[ness] in actual cultural experience and racial memory."(2)

As William L. Andrews stated in his introduction to *African American Autobiography: A Collection of Critical Essays,* "autobiography holds a position of priority, indeed many would say preeminence, among the narrative traditions of black America." Indeed, "ours is an extraordinarily self-reflexive tradition."(3) As I want to argue, this self-reflectivity ought to become an important feature of the "education of an architect." If we are ever to go beyond hegemonic pedagogues and professional practices that replicates them, we must learn how to engage in what bell hooks terms "recall[ing] yourself."(4) Such a shift in how we view architecture implies a decisive revision of how we define our whole discipline, and our roles and identities in it. In Wells-Bowie's words, we should "want…[our] relationship to space to evoke architecture as it is informed by the humanities, not architecture simply as a technical art."(5)

While employing Toni Morrison's creed that "the past is more infinite than the future," I argue, then, that architecture, like literature, writes its own narratives, which reflect specific constructions of identity. For example, Toni Morrison and Ralph Ellison, consciously wanted "space" to find themselves in American literary tradition, in which they were invisible. Like architects, like masters of language, they had to construct it for themselves. Ellison's novel, *Invisible Man,* and Morrison's *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination,* show that it is possible to reconcile past and present. These works—a novel and a series of literary critical essays—can be read as African American autobio-*graphic* proofs that we can heal the wounds caused by the legacy of slavery, and construct a space where an all-inclusive *American identity can be recalled.* In these writers, such a reconciliation involves an autobiographical examination of the ways in which knowledge that has been passed on to us can, as Toni Morrison says, "[be] transformed from invasion and conquest to revelation and choice."(6) Again, such unlearning, or decolonization of one's mind, is a desired goal for the "education of the architect/designer."

Like Morrison, who wrote her books because she wanted to read about people like herself, I find myself in search of a similar "space," revelation,

Figure 1. View from the African slave auction hall at Elimna Castle in Elimna, Ghana

Figure 2. "Door of no return." Entry to the male slave dungeon

Figure 3. The first Anglican Chapel in Ghana above and the entry to the male slave dungeon below.

Images courtesy of coleman a. jordan.

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and choice that can house and express African American identity today. Through my autobiographical architectural constructs, I want to reach into the past to reconstruct the present, and create spaces and details in which there are no "invisible" people. A solid foundation reinforces the sustainability of most structures. To blacks in America, that foundation has been obstructed, a *scab*(7), by the social constructions of "race" and racialized definition of American identity. The following statement qualifies this paradox of African American identity:

> Think of how much a black person has to sell of himself/ (herself) to try to get race not to matter… You have to ignore the insults. You have to ignore the natural loyalties. You have to ignore your past. In a sense, you have to just about deny yourself.(8)

Such denial means erasure of one's identity, and thus, of one's roots in the past, not to mention one's cultural heritage in the present. This should be unacceptable, not only to blacks, but to all Americans. In effect, "race matters,"(9) is the corner stone of my work that spans the continents of North America and Africa. By looking into the narratives inscribed into African slave structures, I attempt to construct architecture of African American identity. As bell hooks says, "It is the telling of our history that enables political [and architectural] self-recovery."(10) My autobiographical narrative today recovers Cape Coast Castle in Ghana, West Africa, as a space for reconciliation between the past and present constructs, and the new awareness of African American and American identity.

"Sankofa," a Call to the "Motherland."(11)

This project employs the results of my research in Ghana, while I participated in a preservation program sponsored by US/ICOMOS (United States/International Committee on Monuments and Sites), and my recent work in both Charleston, SC and Liverpool, England. As multinational slave trade centers, the African slave castles provided meeting spaces and "contact zones," as Mary Louise Pratt would call it, for the cultures of North and South Americas, and Europe.(12) This coming together of diverse European and "American," traders in "African gold/human flesh" inspired my inquiry into the specific national and ethnic cultures, whose histories were inscribed into the castles. These cultures were subsumed under all-encompassing geographic, and thus, in a sense, spatial generalizations—i.e., American, African, European.

My research of the slave structures focuses on the ways in which they represent more specific cultural identities and power relations. More important, I examine the stories of survival of the oppressed, and the power/arrogance of the oppressors that were imprinted on the slave castles. My scholarly, and autobiographical, project in Ghana is closely linked to my study of repressed and "invisible" identities encoded in American structures, and the practice and teaching of architecture. I hope to show that the architectural legacy of the African Diaspora should provide a context for reading structures that represent dominant American identity. By examining the conspicuous erasures and absences of the Africanist presence from legacies such as Thomas Jefferson, an architect in his own right who America has structurally memorialized:

> For all this the enforcers of white supremacy claimed, and with justice, a mandate in Thomas Jefferson's well-known doctrine that there was no place for free blacks in American society. If blacks were emancipated and yet remained in America and in the South, then they had to be brought under restraint.(13)

e. g., the Jefferson Memorial, we can begin to reconstruct American identity, to "recall" its true cultural heritage.

Although I was in Ghana to research the preservation efforts concerning numerous castles and forts that served the African slave trade along Ghana's West Coast, I could not resist the call of my ancestors from whence they came. And "come" is not exactly the verb that reflects the historical facts of their removal.

My focus, Cape Coast Castle, one of three appellation castles, was first constructed by the Swedes in 1653. (Figure 1) It was later occupied by the British and the Dutch, due to a change of hands following battles for trade positioning. From this castle trade expanded to the Caribbean, England, and the United States. The castle site was strategically planned, with its foundation upon a rock bed pier on the water's edge of Cape Coast City, the former capital of Ghana during the colonial period when it was governed by England.(14) The dominant scale of the castle is overwhelming, compared to other nearby structures. However, those near-by structures tend to face inland, or away from the castle, as if to deny its presence. The castle's appearance, though imposing in scale, is often ignored by the inhabitants of the area. The form seems to be left alone, desolate, and meaningless. But humbled it is not, as it still stands proud, as a painful reminder of the past but also a "space" where reunion and return are now

possible. As a space that embodies and requires autobio-*graphic* architectural revisions, it can teach us much about the painful and guilt-ridden origins of what we today call African American identity as well as American identity.

"White-washed history" is a term that has been used by those activists opposing the preservation efforts to describe the renovated facades as having suffered an erasure of their characteristic historic texture and authenticity. This argument stems from good evidence, as visitors often question, "is this a new building?" when referring to the castles and forts that have been preserved or renovated like that. Cape Coast Castle was no exception, and I, too, was taken by the "white-washed" vibrant nuance of the facade. Just as the erasure and erosion of these structures were setting in, the erasure of education about the history they represented was also undergoing a process of "white-washing." Astonishingly enough, because of their colonized education in the past, many Ghanaians in the present have not learned the stories of the castles that dominate their coastal landscape.

The authenticity of Cape Coast Castle's facade—the stone and brick from the eighteenth century—has been painted over and, in some cases, parts have been replaced without any account having been left of the old texture. The contrast of images "before preservation" and "after" may, in effect, be indicating that these monuments, that carry much historical depth, seem to have been vandalized. After all, these castles contain the history of many cultures, not to mention that they sustained many European and American economies for centuries. For example, Charleston, South Carolina, where two thirds of America's African slave population landed, succeeded to break free of recession due to productivity of African slaves tending to its numerous fields and plantations. Like South Carolina plantations, the castles and forts in Ghana are now seen as tourist attractions. They are controlled by organizations like GMMB (Ghana's Monuments and Museum Board) and individual European investors that seem to capitalize on their painful history. Even worse, these exploiters of historic spaces often eagerly erase their character under the guise of preservation, which is often conducted without much sympathy for those to whom these spaces embody their sacred past.

For example, there were proposals to convert the slave castles into hotels and restaurants, which were abandoned only after heavy protest from Ghana's African American community and Africanists from the West Indies. Thanks to these protests, many of the structures will become historical museums that are needed to educate both the inhabitants of the areas around them, and the tourists who will come to visit them. Looking at historic slave structures as possibilities for capitalist investments only proves that their original oppressive functions still prevail. Thus the painful history of the "other" is overlooked and, in some cases, identities that are rooted in them irrevocably lost. As John Michael Vlach argues for his research of such structures, it is important to "recover the dimensions of southern architectural history that have…been too long overlooked and unreported."(15) Only when more Americans realize the critical nature of knowing their inter-connected roles in history, will identity politics become an issue of the past. America must become accountable for and face its own identity.

Such coming face to face with their identity means, among other things, that Americans preserve not only the past of slavery at home but also "go back to Africa" to study the structures there. Thus, while keeping in mind that we need to inquire, as Vlach says, "[in] back of the big house," let us leap from the American South back to Cape Coast Castle in Ghana.(16) The plan of this form, outside of the defensive post along the ridge of the castle, is introverted in design as to focus all attention on the inside courtyard, where slaves were routinely brought in, and where the traders came to make their purchases. Designed as early shopping malls, the castles became markets for booming trade in weapons and gold/human flesh. Their functions dictated their design—it had to help separate and sort the humans for sale, and to communicate the power and might that defended their precious contents.

The Governor's Quarters, the master-controller's space of power and indolence was situated overlooking the courtyard on the central axis in line of the entry gate and the exit into the sea. He was positioned in order to always know who entered and who exited. The inhabitants in charge of these structures were governors and officers, as well as their soldiers or crewmen sent from European countries to purchase, sell, and protect their merchandise. For example, the Danish castle, Christianborg Castle, which is located in Accra, Ghana, documents its officers as, "outcast at home, convicts released from Copenhagen jails, bankrupts, or plain rejects from a Danish society eager to get rid of them."

In their "castles" overseas, such "masters," then, "could lead a life of indolence, with little or no restraint. There they might indulge nearly every human passion with utter freedom, whether it be confirmed drunkenness, or unrestrained intercourse with Negro girls. They knew that the deadly climate

was likely to claim them, so it was a 'short life and a merry one' for many of these outcasts." (17)

As mentioned before, overlooking the courtyard and on axis to it, as if to manage or maintain order within the castle, was the governor's quarters. Its central location allowed a view all around with a constant breeze to cool the inhabitants. Cape Coast Castle saw many Governors of different European nationalities. The setting was elaborate compared to settings for the rest of the castle population, enabling them to lay in comfort of both conscience and greed, far from the scenes of pain and torture.

The Store Room often revealed a secret passageway to the women's dungeon. The secret and dark spaces, "passages" and pleasures of hidden power are suggested here. Apart from house wines and objects of personal value, the governor's store room thus also had in store a raw passageway to the women's dungeon, where the master could choose to go for personal pleasure. Female slaves were routinely selected for such "inspection of goods." In these spaces, the governor could play out his dual role of master-leader and rapist.

Palaver Hall, the auction hall, was where merchants/shippers came to purchase their goods. The stillness of this room was as if suspended in time. The ghostly presence of the past howled through this empty room with gaping, arched windows positioned along the side for ventilation and light. Ventilation was provided for the buyers, so that they could breathe easily as they chose their purchases; there was light so that they could see the best of the human stock. Then there is "the wall" that, like the whole room, seems suspended in time, the wall which used to be the backdrop against which the enslaved were sold. A stage of sorts, it celebrated dehumanization; it is a platform, where the slaves appeared with no name, no identity, no life, where they were paraded as mere objects. I grew curious about the effects and emotions of tourists who were in the room with me—both the descendants of the Diaspora as well as the descendants of the oppressors. After all, our "common," painful heritage was all around us….

"On Being Brought
from Africa to America"(18)

'Twas mercy brought me
from my *Pagan* land,
Taught my benighted soul to understand
That there's a God,
there's a *Saviour* too;
Once I redemption neither
sought nor knew.
Some view our sable race
with scornful eye,
"Their colour is a diabolic die."
Remember, *Christians, Negroes,*
black as *Cain* (19),
May be refin'd, and join th' angelic train.

The Chapel, the first Anglican church in Ghana, was located in Cape Coast Castle. Christianity was the "white" religion that saved only a chosen few. Might the presence of the chapel signify, though, that maybe there was a conscience to be found in the traders after all? Upon closer examination a paradox is revealed. The chapel is founded/supported by the walls of the male slave dungeons. The entry's greedy "mouth" is directly below the floor of the chapel. The chapel's windows seem to be "eyes" placed above a mouth which resembles, in yet another architectural inter-text, the famous entry and portal of *Palazzetto Zuccari* in Rome. Rasmussen calls Zuccari's portal the "gaping jaws of a giant."(20) A similar association can be made with the dungeon entrance at Cape Coast Castle, windows-eyes peering atop the gaping mouth-entry as if to watch those entering with a "scornful eye." We may want to ask, after Phyllis Wheatley's poem, on whose shoulders, sweat and blood are the church foundations constructed and who receives the burden of redemption?

In the Dungeons…
A charnel stench,
effluvium of living death
spreads outward from the hold,
where the living and the dead,
the horribly dying,
lie interlocked,
lie foul with blood and excrement.(21)

Suffocation, suffocation from lack of air and suffocation from lack of life (or do we dare say "identity"?). The odor, the odorous presence of flesh, stale blood, pain, and death. The excrement and decayed bones that have lain unsettled for centuries are there to this day, they are the floor we walked on. Imagine thousands of slaves packed in overcrowded spaces with no light, no ventilation, no contact with the outside. The dungeons and the structure itself seem to preserve the imprint of their presence. As we know, many had been raped, tortured; some women bore the children of their rapists there, never to see them again after they had been separated from the mothers on the auction block. Millions died in the dungeons from poisonous sewage, tropical diseases, trauma, fear, claustrophobia, and suffocation.

If this feels like a journey, it is because it was one for me.(22)

Like a conclusion or climax, the coldness of the gate at the end of the castle was poignant. I felt this doorway, this "doorway of no return", stared at me, followed me around as if to draw me to it. In this sense it clearly provided a frame and an end to the narrative of our passage. Indeed it is referred to as the "doorway of no return"—the final exit for a slave before she or he reached the destiny in a new land or died at

sea. (Figure 2) As I was told about this final exit by a tour guide during my first visit, I heard that this passage was the exit through which my ancestors were never to return to this place. I immediately looked him the eye and stated, "well, I guess I've returned."

Sankofa!
That bird is wise,
Look. Its beak, back turned, picks
For the present, what is best
from ancient eyes,
Then steps forward, on ahead
To meet the future, undeterred.(23)

Like stories from the past, the monuments, buildings, and sites inscribe not only (his)story but also (our)story as the descendants of Africans in Diaspora. Just as structures are supported on foundations, our origins still inform the present. They are silently whispering the truth about both "his" story and "ours" in white-dominated, patriarchal America. Once the space and detail are created, or corrupted, in the structure, the erasure or distortion of stories and people are etched within the walls.

The entry into the male dungeon at Cape Coast Castle, an entry into our past, is a symbolic construct of a womb/wound of the "motherland" who was raped, deprived of her identity, and who has never healed. This dungeon-"mouth" expelled and devoured many African lives.(Figure 3) It is a space where both death and survival coexisted, much like they do in other sites that witnessed martyrology and genocide.(24)

The stories of the present, are the effects of what was erected and erased in the past. More inclusive education and the communication age have allowed the "other" to see through the deceptions and contradictions that are still often called "tradition." Today we are thus, the descendants of those whose histories sketched and drafted "us," wrote us into who we are. But our present identity still raises questions and creates a need to unlearn and reconstruct traditional knowledge about origins and functions of identity.

In embracing the past we can at least try to come to terms with who we are and how we have been represented. The healing must begin with the desire to know and learn about each other. For example, Nana Cofu Robinson, an African American, lives in-sync with the people of Ghana by embracing their culture and understanding his own.

In "our" stories to come, the future, we attempt to construct an ideal identity by mapping and transforming into positive material the past pain, cruelty, and redemption. In my work, I have realized that I am also retracing a profound Diasporic journey. However, this journey is not simply "back to Africa." My narrative is located between Ghana and the United States and maps one of many routes of self-study that can help both African Americans and all Americans alike to reconcile a difficult past with an uneasy present in a multiethnic culture. It is a look at autobiographical readings of space as erected by and erecting American identity.

I was inspired by the Nsibidi symbols of African origins about which you can read in Robert Farris Thompson's, *Flash of the Spirit: African and Afro-American Art and Philosophy.* This symbol is a metaphorical representation of strength that I have derived from my journey thus far. The original symbol means "all the country belongs to me." It was one of the many symbols used to communicate by Africans in Diaspora. I now (re)interpret it as my logo to mean, his land belongs to me—*and*—us. It's all inclusive!

bell hooks emphasizes that "overall, we have to think deeply about the cultural legacies that can sustain us, that can protect us against the cultural genocide that is daily destroying our past. We need to document the existence of living traditions, both past and present, that can heal our wounds and offer us a space of opportunity where our lives can be transformed."(25)

The appearance of the slave castles as such spaces for transformation of identity can be very deceiving, as the preservation efforts are unclear in their goals. These castles relate different meanings to different people and the reactions to them vary widely. Yet the question remains—why is this part of world history unknown and unclear to so many? It was W. E. B. DuBois who said, "millions of Black men (and women) in Africa, America and the Islands of the Sea…are bound to have great influence upon the world in the future." That future is now, but I want to stress that we must continue "mapping" the past so that we can live together in the more honest and egalitarian present.

As I have shown, the Diasporic roots of many American blacks are architecturally represented by slave castles in West Africa. In my discussion, I have focused on the preservation efforts in Ghana, West Africa, that have enabled many black Americans like myself to visit the slave castles as tourists who seek structures that symbolize their past and cultural roots. While emphasizing that we should learn from the past in order to embrace our present *identities,* I thus hope to design structures that construct American identity as "reconciling" with and reflecting inclusive and egalitarian spaces for a diverse and multivalent society. Thus the journey I have presented here is an autobiographical account of a search for my architecture, one that expresses and constructs identity beyond the stereotypes of "race" and hegemonic "culture."

Notes

1. Leslie Kanes Weisman, *Discrimination by Design: A Feminist Critique of the Man-Made Environment* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, Illini Books edition, 1994), 2.

2. Wells-Bowie's quote comes from the chapter "Talking Black Space," in bell hooks, *Art On My Mind: Visual Politics* (New York: The New Press, 1995), 153.

3. William L. Andrews, *African American Autobiography: A Collection of Critical Essays* (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc. 1993), 1. Henry Louis Gates, Jr., quoted after Andrews, p.1.

4. hooks, *Art On My Mind,* 153

5. Wells-Bowie quoted in hooks, *Art On My Mind,* 154.

6. Toni Morrison, *Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination* (New York: The New Press, 1995), 8.

7. Lebbeus Woods, "War and Architecture," in *Pamphlet Architecture* 15, (Princeton Architectural Press, 1993), 24.

8. Mark Whitaker, "White and Black Lies." *Newsweek,* 15 November, (1993).

9. Cornell West, *Race Matters* (Boston: Beacon Press, 1993).

10. bell hooks, *Black Looks: Race and Representation* (Boston: South End Press, 1992), 176.

11. This term is used in the description of a Ghanaian Adinkra (a past king of Gyaman, now Ivory Coast) symbol which means, "It is no taboo to return and fetch it when you forget."

12. Mary Louis Pratt, "Acts of the Contact Zone" in *Profession* 91 (1991): 34.

13. Morrison, *Playing in the Dark.*

14. Albert van Datzig, *Forts and Castles of Ghana* (Accra, Ghana: Sedco Publishing Limited, 1980).

15. John Michael Vlach, *Back of the Big House: The Architecture of Plantation Slavery* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1993), xii.

16. Vlach, *Back of the Big House.*

17. Isodor Paiewonsky, *Eyewitness Accounts of Slavery in the Danish West Indies: Also Graphic Tales of Other Slave Happenings on Ships and Plantations* (New York: Fordham University Press, 1989), 15-16.

18. Phyllis Wheatley, "On Being Brought from Africa to America" in *The Norton Anthology: African American Literature* (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1997), 170.

19. Cain is said to have been "marked" by God. Some readers of the Bible thought that Cain thereby became the first black man.

20. Steen Eiler Rasmussen, *Experiencing Architecture* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1993), 38.

21. Robert Hayden, "Middle Passage," in *The Norton Anthology: African American Literature,* 104-107th verse (New York and London: W.W. Norton and Company, 1997), 1504.

22. A term originally used by Nana Cofu Robinson and Queen Mother Robinson to describe the final departure gate for African slaves from the castles and forts.

23. Albert W. Kayper-Mensah, *Sankofa: Adinkra Poems* (Tema: The Ghana Publishing Corporation, 1976), 4.

24. Although not included in this paper, I have begun to make comparative studies to architectural structures of martyrology, such as Auschwitz, and African slave entry ports in Liverpool, England.

25. hooks, *Art On My Mind,* 162.

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Session Two:

AGRICULTURAL LIFEWAYS AND TECHNOLOGIES

African traditions helped develop agricultural methods that enriched the Americas. These traditions or lifeways shaped the tenor of rural life during periods of slavery, sharecropping, and black-owned farms. Africans implanted their technological "know-how" and cultural traditions on the rural landscape and agricultural industry.

Rice, Slaves, and Landscapes of Cultural Memory

Judith Carney

By 1860 rice cultivation in the U.S. South extended over 100,000 acres along the coastal plain from North Carolina's Cape Fear River to the St. Johns River in Florida.(1) (Figure 1) Large landholdings and a sizeable labor force characterized the ante-bellum rice economy, with plantations concentrated in the hands of some 550 planters and worked by 125,000 slaves.(2) On the eve of the Civil War, Georgia, representing less than one-third of the total land in rice (30,000 acres), accounted for 28% (52.5 million pounds) of the region's total output: 187.2 million pounds.(3)

The rice plantation economy of South Carolina and Georgia has received considerable historical and geographical attention for its role in the regional economic development of the antebellum South. A nostalgic view of the rice economy persisted long past the cessation of planting in the 1920s due to numerous commentaries that documented the lifeways of planters, their achievements as well as their ingenuity in shaping a profitable landscape from malarial swamps.(4) In these accounts, slaves are presented as having contributed little but unskilled labor to the creation of the rice economy. In 1974 this planter-based view changed dramatically with the research of historian, Peter Wood, who carefully examined the role of slaves in the Carolina plantation system during the colonial period. His scholarship recast the prevalent view of slaves as mere field hands, to one which showed that they contributed agronomic expertise as well as skilled labor to the emergent plantation economy.

Wood's argument rested upon several threads of archival evidence, namely: the presence of slaves in South Carolina from the onset of settlement in 1670, early colonial references suggesting that bondsmen produced their own subsistence crops, the lack of prior knowledge of rice farming by the English and French Huguenot planters, but its familiarity to many of the colony's African-born slaves.(5) Further support for Wood's pathbreaking research occurred in 1981 when another historian, Daniel Littlefield, drew attention to the antiquity of African rice farming practices as well as the demographic basis for South Carolina's slaves during the early colonial period. Littlefield showed that 40% of the slaves entering the state during the initial decades of rice experimentation and development originated in the area of West Africa where the crop's cultivation predates the arrival of Europeans.(6)

While this scholarship has resulted in a revised view of the rice plantation economy as one of both European and African influences, the role of African slaves in its evolution is still debated. Current scholarship questions whether planters recruited slaves from West Africa's rice coast to help them develop a crop whose potential they independently discovered, or whether African-born slaves initiated rice planting in South Carolina by teaching planters to grow a preferred food crop. Further understanding is hampered by the absence of archival materials that document a tutorial role for African slaves. But the silence of the historical record on a critical role for slaves in teaching planters rice cultivation is, perhaps, unsurprising given the paucity of materials available in general for the early colonial period as well as the fact that accounts of slaves' lives were placed in the hands of white society who justified slavery by denying the intellectual capacity of its victims.

This paper adds a geographical perspective to the historical research initiated by Wood, in order to examine the likely contributions of African-born slaves to the colonial rice economy. Attention

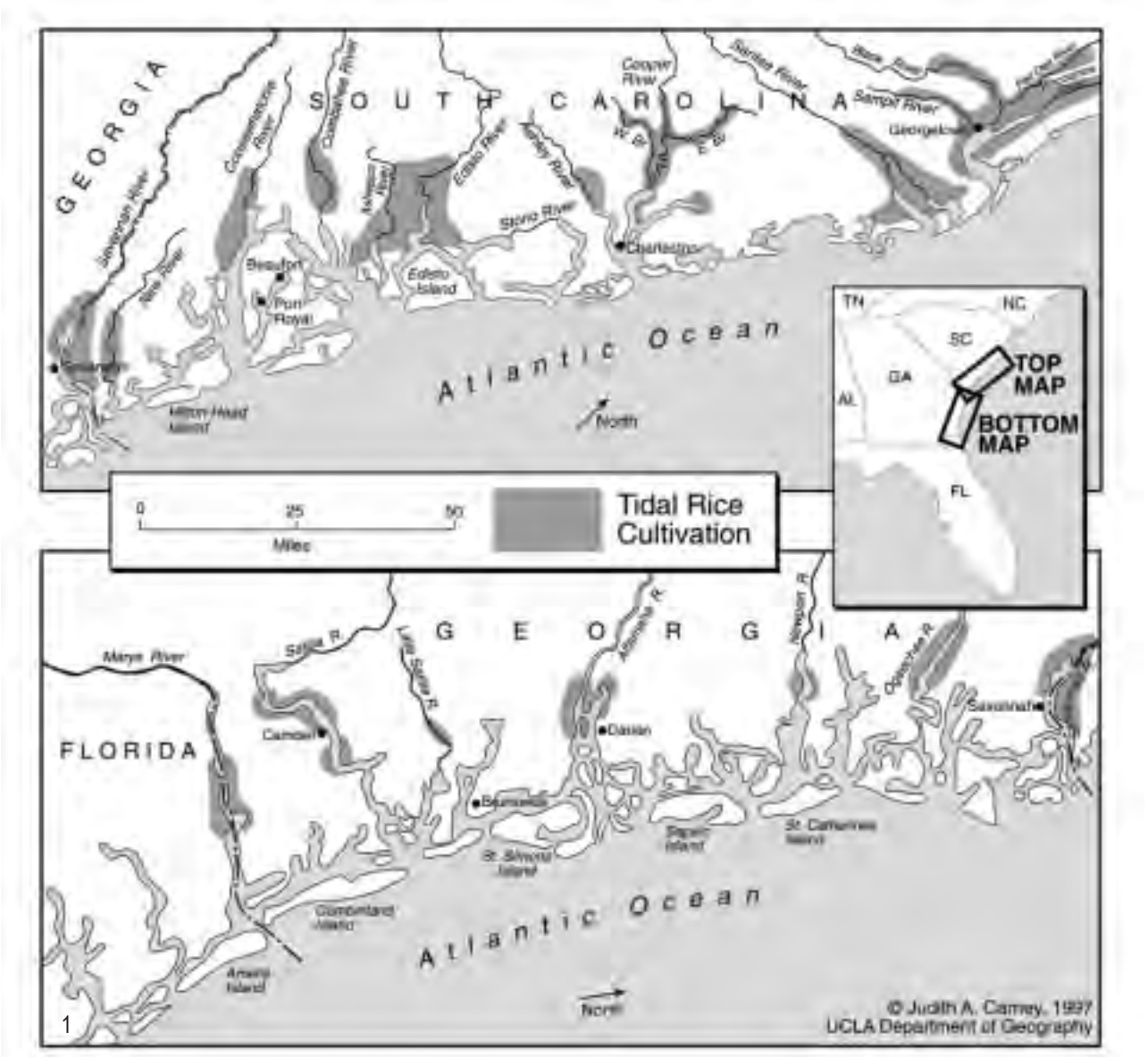


Figure 1. Map of Coastal South Carolina tidal rice cultivation.

focuses on the principal environments planted to rice on both sides of the Atlantic, and the techniques developed for soil and water management. Emphasis is placed on the initial century of rice development in South Carolina, 1670-1770, from the colony's initial settlement by planters and slaves to the crop's expansion into Georgia.

The paper begins by identifying the primary lowland environments where rice was planted on each side of the Atlantic, which are presented in a classification system based on the principal water regime regulating cultivation. The discussion next shifts to the historical evidence for the presence of such systems in West Africa from the earliest contact with Europeans, and the existence of key principles of soil and water management that were to resurface later in Carolina rice systems. In the third

section, the discussion shifts to South Carolina and Georgia where the rice economy unfolded over time from rainfed to inland swamp production, and culminated in the tidewater system.

Rice Cultivation Systems in the Atlantic Basin

When the Portuguese arrived along the West African coast in the mid-fifteenth century, they encountered rice cultivation over a broad area from Senegal to Liberia.(Figure 2) Rice *(Oryza glaberrima)* is an ancient West African cultivar that was domesticated independently of Asian rice *(Oryza sativa)* some two thousand years ago along the floodplain and inland delta of the Upper Niger River in Mali.(7) The Atlantic slave trade led to the introduction of some Asian *O. sativa* varieties to Africa's west coast, but their diffusion remained limited until Europeans promoted them during the twentieth century with colonialism.(8)

Rainfall in the West African rice zone averages between 800-2000 millimeters, encompassing a wider range than that found in the cultivated area of coastal South Carolina and Georgia (1100-1600 mm).(9) Within the West African rice region precipitation increases steadily from north to south, with slightly higher averages along the coast. African cultivation is not, however, limited by rainfall constraints. Over the past two millennia farmers carefully adapted rice planting to other forms of water availability by growing the crop in moisture-holding soils, depressions fed by subterranean water sources, and floodplains inundated by tidal flow. Consequently, rice planting occurs in a variety of environments, which include mangrove estuaries, alluvial floodplains, low-lying depressions, grassland savannas, and upland forests.

Three major water regimes are used for rice cultivation: rainfall; artesian springs, perched water tables, or catchment run-off that keep inland swamps wet; and, river tides that flow over floodplains and coastal estuaries.(10) By the 1730s each of these systems and their sub-types had also emerged in South Carolina.

As the form of water availability for rice planting is a response to the cropping system's location along a landscape, West African cultivation can be visualized as occurring along a lowland to upland gradient of changing ecological conditions. Planting takes place simultaneously in distinct environments—a practice that enables farmers to manipulate one or more moisture regimes for crop production.(11)(Figure 3)

The longstanding practice of growing rice in distinct environments from plateau, slope, and valley bottom to floodplain confers several advantages. By taking advantage of multiple water regimes, farmers extend rice growing beyond the limits of the precipitation cycle. In so doing, they reduce potential labor bottlenecks since cropping demands (field preparation, weeding, and harvesting) in each environment occur at different periods during the agricultural season. Reliance on several forms of water availability, moreover, enhances subsistence security by minimizing the risk of crop failure in any given year.

Of the three forms of rice cultivation, rainfed rice depends solely on rainfall for cropping. It is planted at the top of the landscape gradient, hence its frequent designation, upland rice. West African farmers commonly cultivate the crop on soils supporting mixed woodland vegetation that is partly cleared and burned of surface debris. Cattle form a critical part of the rainfed rice system, as the animals are seasonally herded into the field to graze the stubble after the harvest,

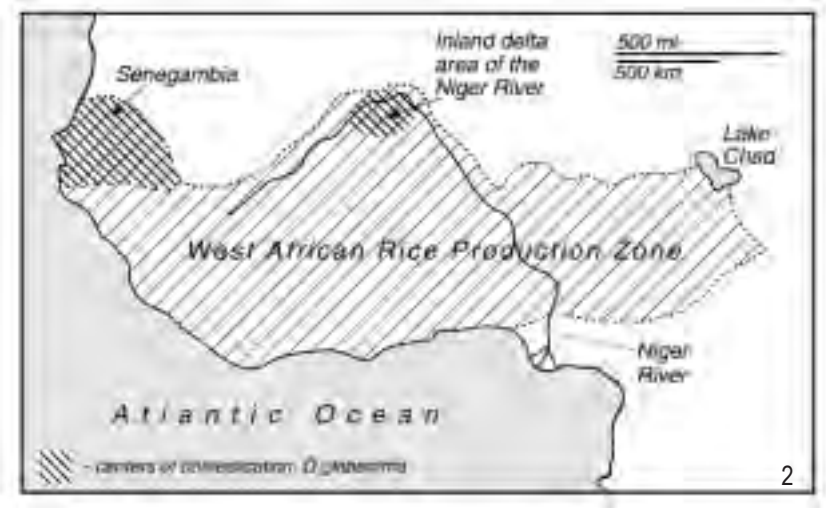
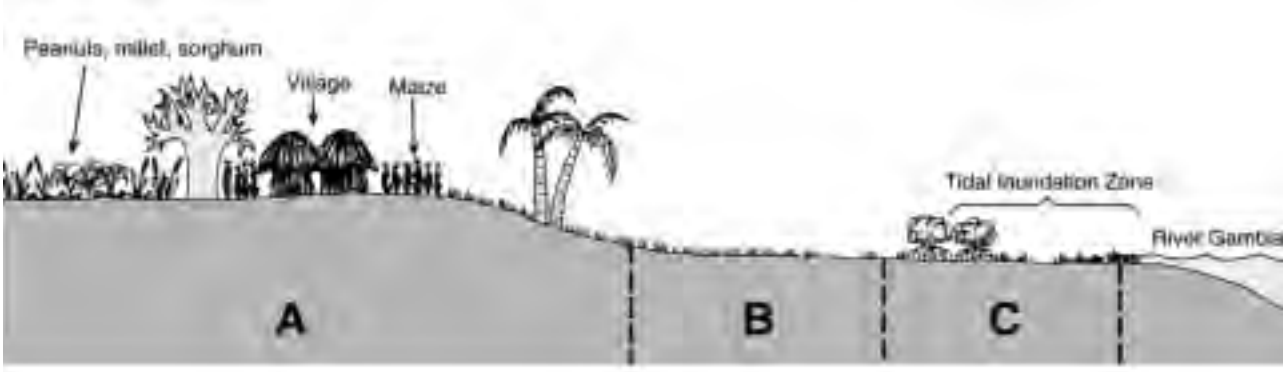


Figure 2. West African rice production zone. Adapted from P. Richards, "Upland and Swamp Rice Farming Systems in Sierra Leone: An Evolutionary Transition?" in Comparative Farming Systems, *eds. B.L. Turner and S. Brush (New York, 1987), p. 157.*



3 Upland Inland swamp Tidal

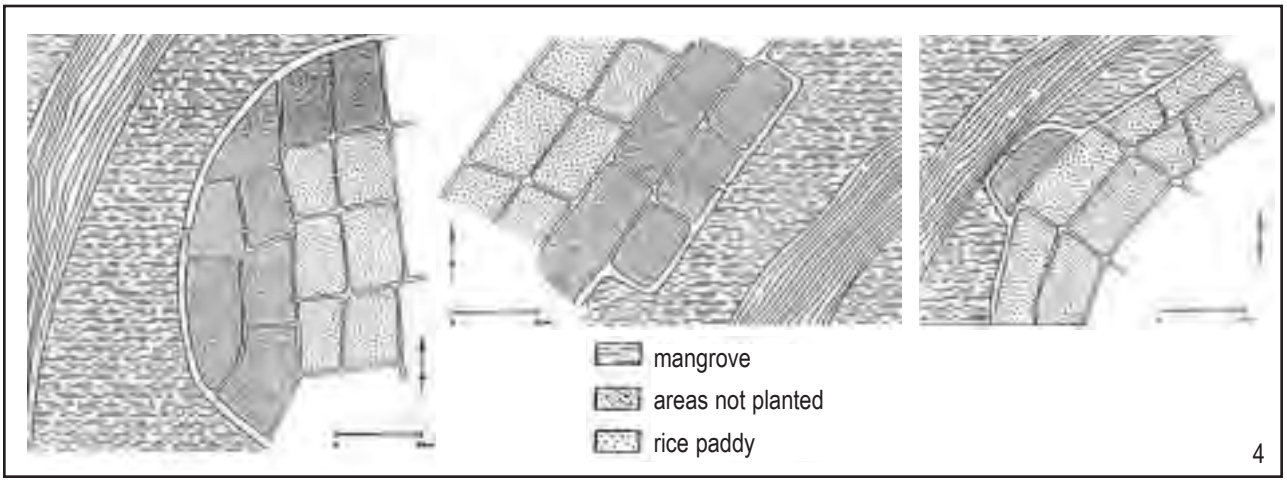


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Figure 3. Rice cultivation along a landscape gradient in central Gambia.

Figure 4. Earthen embankment protects ricefields from tidal action.

Figure 5. Use of bamboo for Sluices in rice field, Guinea-Bissau. Photo: J. Carney.

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their manure fertilizing the soil. When the cropping cycle ends, the field's land use shifts to cattle pasture.

Rice planted in inland swamps, the second system, enables the capture of groundwater from artesian springs, perched water tables, or catchment run-off. Plots are often enclosed with small earthen embankments to trap rainwater or stream run-off for soil saturation during drier cycles of the cropping season. Water level within the field can be lowered by piercing the plot bunds.

The remaining major African production system occurs in areas of tidal flow, on floodplains of rivers and estuaries. Dependent upon tides to flood and/or drain the fields, tidal cultivation involves a range of techniques from those requiring little or no environmental manipulation (planting on freshwater floodplains) to ones demanding considerable landscape modification (mangrove rice cultivation along coastal estuaries). The complex water and soil management principles embodied in tidal production are critical for examining the plausibility of African agency in the transfer of rice cultivation to the Americas.

Tidal rice cultivation occurs in three distinct floodplain environments: i) freshwater rivers, ii) seasonally saline rivers, and iii) coastal estuaries or the lower reaches of rivers affected by permanent marine water conditions. The first two involve similar methods of production—letting river tides flow over the floodplain rice fields—while the third system combines principles of each major rice system for planting under more challenging soil and water conditions. The floodplain is composed of two distinct micro-environments: the one adjoining the river and irrigated by daily tides, and another located at the inner margin, where the landscape gradient begins its rise and is reached only during high tides.(Figure 3) Rice cultivation, moreover, occurs in floodplains influenced by seasonal or permanent river salinity. In the first, planting occurs after the rains push the saltwater interface downstream for at least the three months needed to complete a cycle of cultivation.

In tidal areas of permanent salinity (known as mangrove rice), the most sophisticated West African production techniques are in evidence. This system has received insufficient attention by historians of rice development, who have looked to West Africa for potential influences in South Carolina and Georgia.(12) Comparisons between rice systems on both sides of the Atlantic Basin have understandably focused on tidal freshwater rivers, like those planted to rice in South Carolina and Georgia. But by separating out one floodplain system for comparison from the totality of those planted, the full range and complexity of agronomic knowledge that informs West African rice cultivation is missed.

Unaware of the complex principles Africans have long deployed to plant different types of floodplains, historians of rice origins in the South have minimized the real contribution of slave knowledge to the development of the tidewater system because the similar production environment along West African freshwater rivers involves very little landscape transformation.(13) The emergence of the sophisticated tidewater system that led to Carolina and Georgia's economic prominence remains unchallenged as the product of European technological mastery and ingenuity. Yet, a careful consideration of the mangrove rice system along coast estuaries in West Africa illuminates the agency of Africans in developing principles later deployed in the tidewater system.

West African rice production in tidal estuaries occurs south of the Gambia River in areas of permanently saline water conditions where rainfall generally averages 1500 mm annually. These are environments mantled by extensive stretches of mangroves, whose aerial roots trap alluvium carried by marine tides. The deposited organic matter makes these soils among the most fertile of the West African rice zone, but they require careful management to prevent oxidation and their transformation into a toxic acid-sulfate condition. By manipulating several water regimes and developing extensive drainage systems for its control, the mangrove rice system reveals the complex assemblage of knowledge that would transfer to the tidewater rice fields of the South.

Rice established in coastal estuaries depends upon enclosing the site chosen for cultivation with an earthen embankment, which acts as a barrier against the flow of marine tides.(Figure 4) Careful attention to landscape guides the location of the principal drainage canals, which are used to capture rainfall for irrigation. The perimeter is divided into individual rice fields by forming a series of lower embankments or berms perpendicular to the main one, again to assist in water control. Seedlings are established upon the furrows of individual plots.

The mangrove rice system combines the two principles of water control that later emerged in Southern tidewater production. Rainfall is captured by laying out a system of canals for irrigation as well as controlled flooding to drown unwanted weeds. Sluices built into the berms and main embankment enable control over water flow for field submersion as well as drainage. Fitted with valves made from hollow tree trunks and plugged with palm thatch, sluices in the individual plots drain into the principal one built into the embankment.(Figure 5)

Impounding rainwater, which is evacuated into the estuary at low tide, floods the field. Several years of rainfall are required before the field is initially desalinated, with the process at times hastened by directing the flow of seasonal freshwater springs into the perimeter to leach out salt residues.(14) Cultivation commences once desalination is completed although farmers depend annually on the rains to rinse accumulated dry season salt residues.

Each year soil fertility is renewed during the dry season by periodically opening the sluices at high tide to enable the entry of marine water. This action results in the deposition of organic matter, albeit of saline origin, but importantly, prevents the oxidation that leads to acid-sulfate soil formation. In the month or so prior to the onset of the rainy season, the sluices are once again closed to bar the entry of saltwater. A new cycle of production ensues by layering the ridges with accumulated deposits of swamp mud. Considerable effort is devoted annually to maintaining the system's earthworks, but yields exceeding two tons per hectare make the mangrove system among the most productive traditional African rice system ever developed.(15)

The complex soil and water management embodied in growing rice in multiple micro-environments, along a landscape continuum, formed the basis for a sophisticated knowledge system that was in place long before the Atlantic slave trade. The adroit manipulation of numerous landscapes that characterized West African rice cultivation reveals numerous affinities with the process of technology development in tidal rice, the antebellum era's quintessential production system.

Historical and Geographical Continuities Across the Atlantic

When Islamic scholars followed preexisting overland trade routes to the Malian Empire in the fourteenth century, they arrived in the heart of West African rice domestication where food surpluses had sustained empire formation from the ninth century.(16) These earliest commentaries on the crop's cultivation note its abundant harvests and the sale of surpluses regionally.(17) More detailed descriptions of West African rice systems came later, with the arrival of Portuguese vessels along the Atlantic Coast from 1453. Portuguese vessels established the pattern of rice purchases that would later increase demand for African surpluses for provisioning slave ships across the Middle Passage.(18)

The proximity of the mangrove rice system to Portuguese navigation routes elicited considerable attention from an early date. When a prolonged cycle of drought disrupted mangrove rice cultivation in the Sine-Saloum estuary north of the Gambia River in the fifteenth century, land use shifted to collecting the accumulated salt deposits. Diogo Gomes, the first Portuguese captain to enter the estuaries of the Geba (Guinea-Bissau) and Gambia Rivers in 1456, observed that the regional trade in a red salt originated on such abandoned rice fields.(19) De Almada, in 1594, provided a more detailed description of the mangrove rice system that characterizes rice planting in coastal estuaries south of the Gambia River to this day. He noted the use of embankments and canals to impound rainwater for seedling submersion and desalination as well as ridging to improve soil aeration.(20) Thus, long before the permanent settlement of South Carolina, De Almada's description reveals the existence of the principles of irrigated, or mangrove, rice cultivation from the earliest period of contact with Europeans. The eighteenth century slave captain, Samuel Gamble, so marveled at the complex system that he provided a diagram of field layout to accompany his description of water management techniques.(21)(Figure 6)

Discussion of the rainfed and inland swamp cultivation systems away from coastal and riverine access routes is documented, ca. 1640, in a manuscript published by an Amsterdam geographer, Olfert Dapper. Relying upon information supplied by Dutch traders operating in the region currently known as Sierra Leone and Liberia, Dapper reported rice cultivation along a lowland to upland landscape gradient in low-lying swamps as well as with rainfall.(22) Direct observation of these systems, however, only came later in the mid-eighteenth century when Europeans financed overland expeditions for exploration, trade, and science.(23)

The growing dispersal of Europeans into the West African interior during the nineteenth century brought more detailed commentaries on the burning of forests for rainfed rice, the field's subsequent rotation for cattle grazing, as well as the use of earthen reservoirs in inland swamps for water impoundment against drought.(24) This form of irrigation drew the interest of the French explorer, Caillié, who in 1830, noted:

> "As the country is flat, they take care to form channels to drain off the water. When the inundation is very great, they take advantage of it and fill their little reservoirs, that they may provide against the drought and supply the rice with the moisture it requires."(25)

Figure 6. Baga rice cultivation. Courtesy: National Maritime Museum, Greenwich, England.

Rice Cultivation in South Carolina

Slaves accompanied the first settlers to South Carolina in 1670; within two years they formed one fourth of the colony's population, their numbers surpassing whites as early as 1708.(26) By 1690, one plantation manager discussed experiments with sowing the cereal in 22 different locations in South Carolina.(27) The first rice exports are recorded in 1695 with one and one-fourth barrels shipped to Jamaica.(28) The economy was being increasingly oriented to rice, and in 1699 exports reached 330 tons; by the 1720s, rice had emerged the leading staple.(29)

What is significant about this early period of rice development is the documented presence in South Carolina by the 1730s of the three principal West African systems: rainfed, inland swamp, and tidal. But unlike West Africa, where these systems of production frequently occur simultaneously, their unfolding in colonial South Carolina represented a distinct stage in the evolution of its plantation economy. The initial emphasis on the rainfed system shifted in the early eighteenth century to the inland swamps and from the 1730s, increasingly to tidal (tidewater) cultivation.(30) The unfolding of rice cultivation in South Carolina and Georgia as an export crop for European and Caribbean markets embodied a different rationale than that in West Africa. Food security no longer required the planting of rice in distinct micro-environments. Instead, mercantile objectives rested on selecting a specific production environment for emphasis at different points in time.

The first production environment used for growing rice in South Carolina was the rainfed system which, as in West Africa, formed part of a land use system based on agriculture and cattle

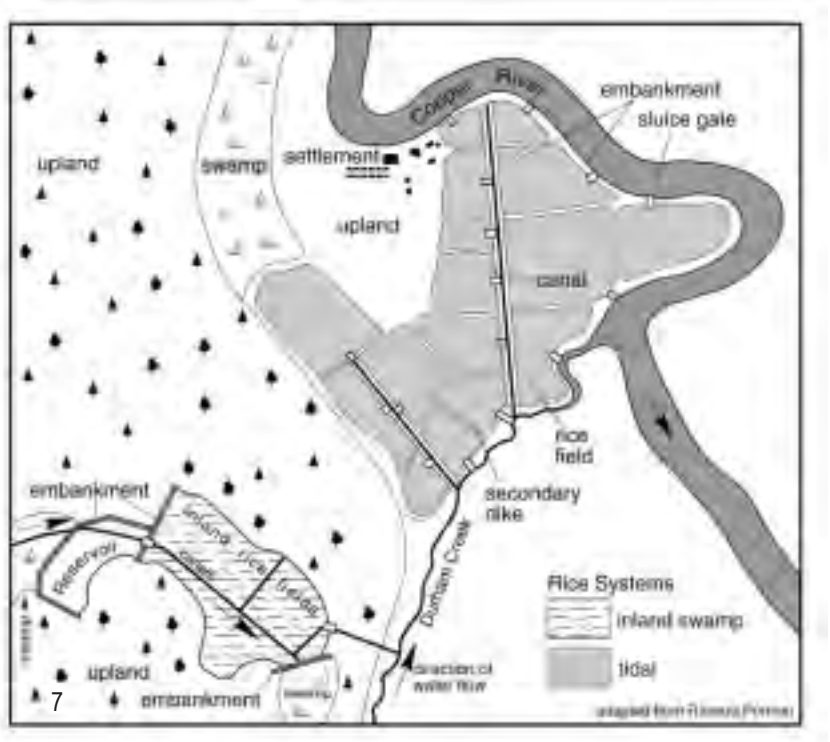

Figure 7. Inland and Tidewater rice system, South Carolina. Location: Western branch of the Cooper River. Courtesy: Richard Porcher.

grazing. Slaves cleared the forests, extracting the marketable pitch, tar, and resins from pines, and then planted subsistence crops, like rice, as a rotation with cattle, whose manure maintained soil fertility.(31) These activities resulted in the export of salted beef, deerskins, and naval stores which, in turn, generated the capital for additional slave imports. With the dramatic increase in the slave population from 3,000 (1703) to nearly 12,000 (1720) and 40,000 (1745) rice cultivation became the principal occupation of slave labor.(32)

During these decades of escalating slave imports, the land use system based on forest products and rainfed rice in rotation with cattle grazing, had shifted to cultivation in inland swamps.(33) The focus on inland swamp cultivation represented the first attempt to control water for irrigation in South Carolina rice fields, but increased the demand for slave labor to construct the berms, ridges, and sluices critical for water control. Like its counterpart in West Africa, inland swamp cultivation depended upon impounding water from rainfall, springs, high water tables, or catchment run-off. Small earthen embankments enabled water capture for irrigation or field flooding to depress the growth of opportunistic weeds, thereby reducing the onerous labor demand of weeding.

Field flooding for irrigation and weed control occurred in a variety of inland swamp environments. For instance, swamps located within reach of streams and springs had dikes placed at the high and low ends. The lower dike or embankment kept floodwaters on the field while the upper one enabled the passage of stream or creek water. Each dike was equipped with a sluice, the lower one used for draining the field as desired, the upper one allowing water to flow onto the field when needed.(34)

Rice planting could also occur in inland swamps formed on salt marshes.(35) Under special circumstances, such as the location of the saline swamp near the terminus of a freshwater stream, the plot could be desalinated and then planted to rice. In such cases, the embankment at the lower end of the swamp permanently blocked the entry of salt water, while a sluice in the upper embankment delivered stream water to the plot initially for desalination and then, for irrigation and weed control. This system functioned along the lower reaches of the Cooper River "nearly within sight of the ocean."(36)

The variation in these inland swamp systems embodied a range of principles that reappeared with the later shift to tidewater cultivation. Controlled flooding was perfected by constructing a separate reservoir and dam to receive freshwater flows from adjacent creeks and streams.(Figure 7) Reservoir water

reached the rice field through a canal that operated by gravity flow.(37) This water delivery system consequently enabled water storage for irrigation and weed control and its delivery on demand to rice fields positioned outside tidal flow. But the inland swamp system could fail in years of high river levels or low rainfall. The shift to tidewater cultivation would eventually represent but a fine tuning of the underlying principles of this inland swamp system.(38)

By the 1720s, the key methods of water and soil management, found in the rice growing systems of West Africa, were evident in the inland swamp systems of South Carolina. The next decade represented an extension and adjustment of these principles to the specific topographic and hydrological conditions of tidal rivers. By the mid-eighteenth century, rice production was steadily shifting to tidal river floodplains in South Carolina and into Georgia, just prior to repeal of the anti-slavery law in 1750.(39) A notice of a land sale by William Swinton of Winyah Bay, South Carolina provides one of the earliest references to the growing emphasis on tidewater production: "…that each [field] contains as much River Swamp, as will make two Fields for 20 Negroes, which is overflow'd with fresh Water, every high Tide, and of Consequence not subject to the Droughts."(40) By 1752 rich Carolina planters were converting inland swamps and tidal marshes along Georgia's Savannah and Ogeechee Rivers to rice fields.(41) The shift to tidewater production accelerated after the American Revolution and remained the basis of the region's economic prominence until the demise of cultivation in the 1920s.(42)

The environment favored for tidewater cultivation was the floodplain adjacent to an estuary where the diurnal variation in sea level resulted in flooding or draining a rice field.(43) Three factors determined where tidewater fields could be constructed: tidal amplitude, saltwater encroachment, and estuary size and shape. A location too near the ocean faced saltwater incursion, while one too far upstream removed a plantation from tidal influence. As in the West African mangrove rice system, a rising

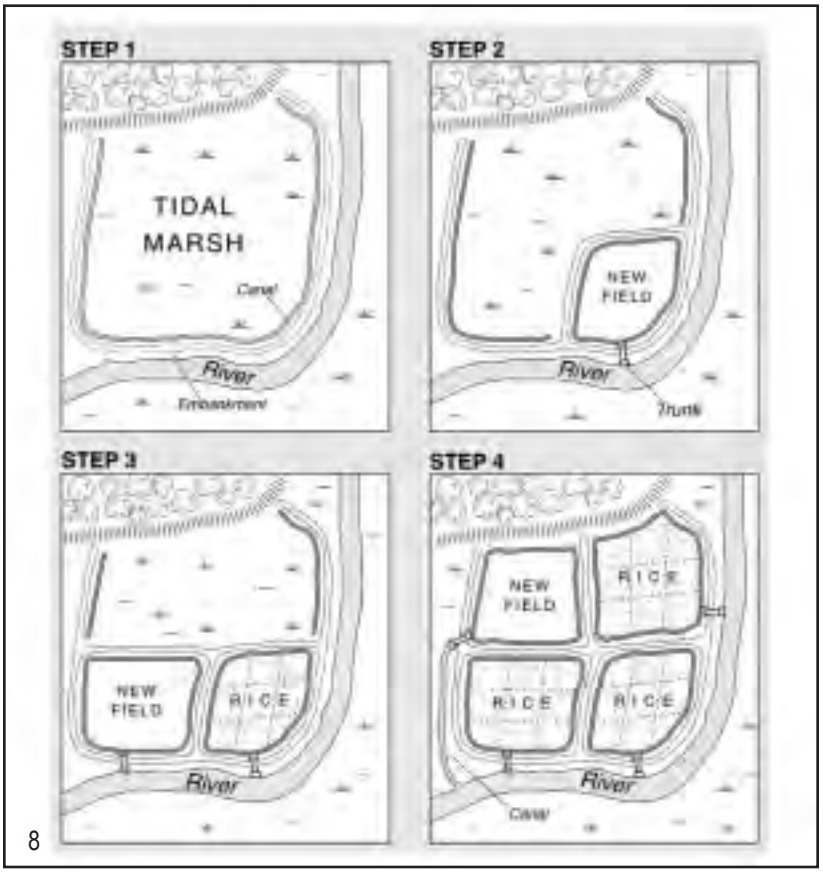

Figure 8. Tidal swamp conversion, South Carolina.

Figure 9. Floodgates on a Carolina tidal plantation, c. 1920. Courtesy: The Charleston Museum.


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tide flooded the fields while a falling tide was used for drainage. Tidal pitch varied between one to three feet—conditions usually found along riverine stretches ten to 35 miles upstream from the river's mouth.(44)

Estuary size and shape also proved important for the location of tidewater plantations for their effect on water mixing and thus salinity. For example, the downstream extension of tidal rice cultivation reflected differences in freshwater dynamics between rivers draining the uplands and those flowing inland from the sea. Since rivers of piedmont origin deliver freshwater within miles of the coast, tidal cultivation could occur within a short distance from the ocean.(see Figure 1) But other tidal rivers are arms of the sea and must reach further inland for freshwater supplies. Along such rivers the freshwater stream flow forms a pronounced layer on top of the heavier saltwater, enabling the former to be tapped for tidal irrigation.(45) The sites suitable for tidal cultivation consequently required skilled manipulation of tidal flows and saline-freshwater interactions to attain high levels of productivity. West African tidal rice farmers had already perfected such practices.

Preparation of a tidal floodplain for rice cultivation followed principles remarkably similar to the West African mangrove rice system (compare Figures 4 and 8). Placed next to a river, the rice field was embanked at sufficient height to prevent tidal spillover. The earth removed in the process resulted in an adjacent canal to irrigate and drain the swamp. Slaves subsequently cleared the dense vegetation for cultivation. The next step involved dividing the area into quarter sections (ten to 30 acres) that were fed by secondary ditches. Sluices built into the embankment and field sections operated as valves for water entry and evacuation much as they do in Africa's mangrove rice system.(Figure 8)

The shift to tidewater cultivation required considerable landscape modification and ever greater numbers of laborers. The near doubling of slave imports into South Carolina from 39,000 to 75,000 between 1750 and 1770 facilitated the transition from inland swamp cultivation.(46) The labor in transforming tidal swamps to rice fields was staggering as historical archaeologist, Leland

Figure 10. Women milling subsistence rice, Sapelo Island, Georgia, c. 1915. Courtesy: Georgia Department of Archives and History

Figure 11. Rice winnowing with fanner basket, South Carolina, c. 1935. Courtesy: the Charleston Museum.

Figure 12. Mandinka girl with rice winnowing basket, the Gambia. Photo: J. Carney.

Ferguson, vividly captures for South Carolina: "…these fields are surrounded by more than a mile of earthen dikes or 'banks' as they were called. Built by slaves, these banks…were taller than a person and up to 15 feet wide. By the turn of the eighteenth century, rice banks on the 12 1/2 mile stretch of the East Branch of Cooper River measured more than 55 miles long and contained more than 6.4 million cubic feet of earth…This means that…working in the water and muck with no more than shovels, hoes, and baskets…by 1850 Carolina slaves…on [tidal] plantations like Middleburg throughout the rice growing district had built a system of banks and canals…nearly three times the volume of Cheops, the world's largest pyramid."(47)

The tidewater plantation continued to make considerable demands on slave labor for maintaining the earthen infrastructure even if it reduced the labor demands for weeding. With full water control from an adjacent tidal river, the rice field could be flooded on demand for irrigation and weeding, and renewed annually by alluvial deposits. The historian, Lewis Gray, underscored the significance of tidal flow for irrigation, as well as weeding, in explaining the shift from rudimentary inland swamp systems to tidewater cultivation: "Only two flowings were employed as contrasted with the later period when systematic flowings came to be largely employed for destroying weeds, a process which is said to have doubled the average area cultivated per laborer…The later introduction of water culture [tidal] consisted in the development of methods making possible a greater degree of reliance than formerly on systematic raising and lowering of the water."(48) A slave was consequently able to manage five acres instead of the two typically assigned with inland rice cultivation.(49)

The systematic lifting and lowering of water was achieved by the sluices, located in the field's embankment and secondary dikes.(Figure 9) Sluices eventually assumed the form of hanging floodgates, but retained the nomenclature, "trunk", by Carolina planters. The continued use of the term through the antebellum period suggests that the technological expertise of Africans indeed proved crucial for establishing rice cultivation in an earlier era. During

the antebellum period trunks had become large floodgates that were buried in the embankment at a level above the usual low tide mark. Doors (gates) were positioned at both ends, which by pulling up or loosening would be allowed to swing. The inner doors would open in response to river pressure as it flowed through the raised outer door, and then close with receding waters. Field draining reversed the arrangement with the inner door raised and the outer door allowed to swing while water pressure in the field forced the door open at low tide.(50)

Curiosity over the origin of the term, trunk, for sluices or floodgates led one planter descendant, David Doar, to inadvertently stumble upon likely technology transfer from West Africa:

> For years the origin of this name bothered me. I asked every old planter I knew, but no one could enlighten me. One day a friend of mine who planted on one of the lowest places…said to me with a smiling face: "I have solved that little trunk question. In putting down another one, I unearthed the granddaddy of plug trunks made long before I was born." It was simply a hollow cypress log with a large hole from top to bottom. When it was to be stopped up a large plug was put in tightly and it acted on the same principle as a wooden spigot to a beer key.(51)

The earliest sluice system in South Carolina looked and functioned exactly like its African Counterpart.(see Figure 5)

African antecedents to Carolina rice culture are also evident in the use of the African mortar and pestle for husking and polishing the grain, which was accomplished by hand until it was mechanized on the eve of the American Revolution. The mortar and pestle used for milling rice continued among freed blacks for subsistence needs into the twentieth century.(Figure 10) Dale Rosengarten's historical research on basket origins in the lowcountry, moreover, indicates the prototypical one employed for winnowing derives from the Senegambian area of West Africa, where oval coiled baskets are still used to accomplish the task.(52) Figures 11 and 12 illustrate these winnowing baskets respectively in South Carolina during the 1930s and in contemporary Gambia. From cultivation to processing, the historical reconstruction of rice culture in South Carolina and Georgia resonates with linkages to Africa.

Conclusion

While the view of Africans as contributing little more than labor to the rice plantation system of South Carolina and Georgia has given way to recognizing their pre-existing skills and expertise in cultivation, debate still rages over the role of slaves in technology transfer. The cross-cultural and spatial perspective presented in this paper suggests that African-born slaves indeed provided critical expertise and technological know-how in the evolution of the rice cultivation system of South Carolina and Georgia. Evidence from the first 50 years of settlement in South Carolina suggests that technological development and innovation in the rice economy was the product of both African and European knowledge systems. These knowledge systems and their respective technological and agronomic heritages combined in new ways to shape rice cultivation along the Atlantic seaboard. The African contribution to rice development in South Carolina and Georgia should be featured as part of interpretive materials to educate the general public who visit historical parks created from former rice plantations.

Notes

1. Albert Virgil House, *Planter Management and Capitalism in Ante-Bellum Georgia* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1954); James Clifton, "Golden Grains of White: Rice Planting on the Lower Cape Fear," in *The North Carolina Historical Review* 50(1973): 365-393; Pat Morgan, "A Study of Tide Lands and Impoundments within a Three River Delta System—The South Edisto, Ashepoo, and Cumbahee Rivers of South Carolina," (masters thesis, University of South Carolina, 1974); Charles Gresham and Donal D. Hook, "Rice Fields of South Carolina: A Resource Inventory and Management Policy Evaluation," in *Coastal Zone Management Journal* 9(1982): 183-203; Julia Floyd Smith, *Slavery and Plantation Growth in Antebellum Florida 1821-1860* (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1973); idem, *Slavery and Rice Culture in Low Country Georgia 1750-1860* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1985); Betty Wood, *Slavery in Colonial Georgia* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1984).

2. James Clifton, *Life and Labor on Argyle Island* (Savannah, GA: Beehive Press, 1978).

3. House, *Planter Management and Capitalism,* 23; Douglas C. Wilms, "The Development of Rice Culture in 18th Century Georgia," in *Southeastern Geographer* 12(1972): 45-57; United States Census Office, *Agriculture of the U. S. 1860. 8th Census* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1864).

4. Urlich B. Phillips, *American Negro Slavery* (New York: D. Appleton and Co., 1918); A. S. Salley, "The Introduction of Rice Culture into South Carolina," in *Bulletin of the Historical Commission of South Carolina* 6 (Columbia, SC: State Company, 1919); Ralph Betts Flanders,

Plantation Slavery in Georgia (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1933); David Doar, *Rice and Rice Planting in the South Carolina Low Country* (Charleston, SC: Charleston Museum, 1970[1936]; Duncan Heyward, *Seed from Madagascar* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1927); Norman Hawley, "The Old Plantation in and Around the Santee Experimental Forest," in *Agricultural History* 23(1949): 86-91.

5. Peter Wood, *Black Majority* (New York: Norton, 1974).

6. Wood, in *Slavery in Colonial Georgia,* 103, also indicates a similar trend for Georgia, noting that three-fourths of the slaves shipped there during the critical period of tidewater rice expansion (1766-1771) originated from West Africa's rice coast. Also see Daniel Littlefield, *Rice and Slaves* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1981).

7. Roland Portères, "Primary Cradles of Agriculture in the African Continent," in *Papers in African Prehistory,* J. D. Fage and R. A. Oliver, eds. (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1970), 43-58; R. J. McIntosh and S. K. McIntosh, "The Inland Niger Delta before the Empire of Mali: Evidence from Jenne-jeno," in *Journal of African History* 22(1981): 1-22; Jack Harlan, J. De Wet, and A. Stemler, *Origins of African Plant Domestication* (Chicago: Aldine, 1976); R. Charbolin, "Rice in West Africa," in *Food Crops of the Lowland Tropics,* eds. C. L. A. Leakey and J. B. Wills (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1977), 7-25.

8. Portères, "Primary Cradles of Agriculture"; Harlan, et al, *Origins of African Plant Domestication.*

9. Charles Kovacik and John Winberry, *South Carolina. The Making of a Landscape* (Boulder, CO: Westview, 1987); Timothy Silver, *A New Face on the Countryside* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

10. F. R. Moorman and N. Van Breeman, *Rice: Soil, Water, Land* (Los Banos, Philippines: International Rice Research Institute, 1978); West African Rice Development Association, "Types of Rice Cultivation in West Africa," in *Occasional Paper* No. 2(1980), Monrovia, Liberia.

11. Paul Richards, *Coping with Hunger* (London: Allen and Unwin, 1986); W. Andriesse and L. O. Fresco, "A Characterization of Rice-Growing Environments in West Africa," in *Agriculture, Ecosystems and Environment* 33(1991): 377-395.

12. Littlefield, *Rice and Slaves;* Joyce Chaplin, *Anxious Pursuit. Agricultural Innovation and Modernity in the Lower South, 1730-1815* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1993).

13. Littlefield, *Rice and Slaves.*

14. Olga Linares, "From Tidal Swamp to Inland Valley: On the Social Organization of Wet Rice Cultivation among the Diola of Senegal," in *Africa* 5(1981): 557-594; idem, *Power, Prayer and Production* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1992).

15. The West African tidal rice yields are about the same as that recorded in South Carolina and Georgia during the ante-bellum period: about 1.7-2.2 tons per hectare. Doar, *Rice and Rice Planting,* 18.

16. H. A. R. Gibb, *Ibn Battuta. Travels in Asia and Africa* 1325-1354 (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1969); Graham Connah, *African Civilizations: Precolonial Cities and States in Tropical Africa – An Archaeological Perspective* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1987).

17. Tadeusz Lewicki, *West African Food in the Middle Ages* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1974).

18. Gomes Ennes de Azurara, *The Chronicle of the Discovery and Conquest of Guinea,* Vol. II (London: Hakluyt, 1899); G. R. Crone, *The Voyages of Cadamosto* (London: Hakluyt, 1937); Paul Pélissier, *Les Paysans du Sénégal: Les Civilisations Agraires du Cayor a la Casamance* (St. Yrieix: Imprimerie Fabreque, 1966); A. Donelha, *An Account of Sierra Leone and the Rivers of Guinea and Cape Verde* (Lisbon: Junta de Investigacoes Cienticados, 1977).

19. The Gomes observation appears in Th. Monod, R. Mauny, and G. Duval, "De la Première Découverte de la Guinée," in *Récit par Diogo Gomes (Fin XV siècle).* (Bissau, Guinea-Bissau: Centro de Estudos da Guiné Portuguesa, 1959), 42, 66. On the arid conditions over the period c. 1100 to c. 1500 in West Africa, see George Brooks, *Landlords and Strangers: Ecology, Society, and Trade in Western Africa, 1000-1630.* (Boulder, CO.: Westview Press, 1993), 7.

20. Valentim Fernandes, *Description de la Côte Accidentale d'Afrique* (Bissau: Centro de Estudos de Guiné Portuguêsa 1951; Pélissier, *Les Paysans du Sénégal;* Walter Rodney, *A History of the Upper Guinea Coast, 1545-1800* (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1970).

21. Note at the bottom of Figure 6 the drawing of an individual using the kayendo shovel for field preparation. This is still the principal implement utilized in mangrove rice cultivation.

22. Dapper noted: "Those who are hard-working can cultivate three rice-fields in one summer: they sow the first rice on low ground, the second a little higher and the third…on the high ground, each a month after the previous one, in order not to have all the rice ripe at the same time. This is the commonest [sic] practice throughout the country…The first or early rice, sown in low and damp areas…the second, sown on somewhat higher ground…the third, sown on the high ground…." Excerpt drawn from Paul Richards, "Culture & Community Values in the Selection & Maintenance of African Rice," in *Indigenous People and Intellectual Property Rights,* B. L. Turner and S. Brush, eds. (Washington, D.C.: Island Press, 1996), 213, based on a translation from the Dutch of Olfert Dapper's manuscript, *New Description of Africa.*

23. M. Adanson, *A Voyage to Senegal, the Isle of Goree and the River Gambia* (London: Nourse, 1759); Francis Moore, *Travels into the Inland Parts of Africa* (London: Edward Cave, 1738); G. Mollien, *Travels in Africa* (Londone: Sir Richard Phillips & Co., 1820); Mungo Park, *Travels into the Interior of Africa* (London: Eland, 1954[1799]); Pélissier, *Les Paysans du Sénégal.*

24. Rodney, *History of the Upper Guinea Coast;* Thomas Winterbottom, *An Account of the Native Africans in the Neighbourhood of Sierra Leone* (London: C. Whittingham, 1803); Rene Caillié, *Travels through Central Africa to Timbuctoo, and across the Great Desert, to Morocco, Performed in the Years 1824-1828* (London: Colburn & Bentley, 1830).

25. Caillié, *Travels through Central Africa,* 162.

26. Wood, *Black Majority,* 25-26,143.

27. Ibid, 25,57-58.

28. James Clifton, "The Rice Industry in Colonial America," in *Agricultural History* 55(1981); 266-283.

29. Wood, *Black Majority*, 26; Converse Clowse, *Economic Beginnings in Colonial South Carolina* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1981), 57-58; Clifton, "The Rice Industry in Colonial America," 274.

30. Doar, *Rice and Rice Planting;* Kovacik and Winberry, *South Carolina. The Making of a Landscape;* Judith Carney and Richard Porcher, "Geographies of the Past: Rice, Slaves and Technological Transfer in South Carolina," in *Southeastern Geographer* 33(1993): 127-147; Judith Carney, *Black Rice: The African Origins of Rice Cultivation in the Americas.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, Spring 2001.

31. John S. Otto, *The Southern Frontiers, 1607-1860* (New York: Greenwood, 1989); Wood, *Black Majority,* 162.

32. Wood, *Black Majority*, 55.

33. Thomas Nairne, "A Letter from South Carolina," in *Selling a New World: Two Colonial South Carolina Promotional Pamphlets,* ed. Jack Greene (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1989[1710], 33-73; Clifton, *Life and Labor on Argyle Island;* Clarence Ver Steeg, *Origins of a Southern Mosaic* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1984).

34. Clifton, "The Rice Industry," 275.

35. Hawley, "The Old Plantations."

36. John B. Irving, *A Day on the Cooper River* (Charleston, SC: R. K. Bryan Co., 1969),154.

37. Heyward, *Seeds from Madagascar;* Sam B. Hilliard, "Antebellum Tidewater Rice Culture in South Carolina and Georgia," in *European Settlement and Development in North America: Essays on Geographical Change in Honour and Memory to Andrew Hill Clark,* ed. James Gibson (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1978), 91-115; Richard Porcher, "Rice Culture in South Carolina: A Brief History, The Role of the Huguenots, and Preservation of Its Legacy," in *Transactions of the Huguenot Society of South Carolina* 92(1987): 11-22; David Whitten, "American Rice cultivation, 1680-1980: A Tercentenary Critique," in *Southern Studies* 21(1982): 5-26.

38. Heyward, *Seeds from Madagascar;* also, Hilliard, "Antebellum Tidewater Culture," 99, makes the point that during much of the eighteenth century both inland swamp fields with reservoirs and tidewater rice existed simultaneously and that freshwater reservoirs were common even on plantations situated within or near the tidal zone: "In many cases there must have been a blending of the two types of irrigation, for Solon Robinson observed a tidewater planter on the Cooper River who had '…ponds of fresh water covering 100 acres of upland, which are held in reserve to water the rice fields when the river is too salt'."

39. Wilms, "The Development of Rice Culture," 49.

40. "Advertisement for Tidal Land Sale," January 19, 1738, *South Carolina Gazette* (Charleston: South Carolina Historical Society, n. d.); Clifton, "The Rice Industry," 275-276.

41. Wilms, "The Development of Rice Culture," 49.

42. Clifton, "The Rice Industry," 276.

43. Hilliard, "Antebellum Tidewater Rice Culture," 100.

44. John Drayton, *A View of South Carolina, as Respects her Natural and Civil Conerns* (Spartanburg, SC: The Reprint Co., 1970[1802]), 36; Chaplin, *An Anxious Pursuit,* 231.

45. Hilliard, "Antebellum Tidewater Rice Culture."

46. Otto, *The Southern Frontiers,* 1607-1860, 41.

47. Leland Ferguson, *Uncommon Ground. Archaeology and Early African America, 1650-1800* (Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Institution, 1992), xxiv-xxv, footnote 3, 147.

48. Lewis Gray, *History of Agriculture in the Southern U. S. to 1860,* 2 vols. (Gloucester, MA: Peter Smith, 1958), 281.

49. R. F. W. Allston, "Essay on Sea Coast Crops." In *De Bow's Review* 16(1854); John Glen, "A Description of South Carolina: Containing Many Curious and Interesting Particulars Relating to the Civil, Natural and Commercial History of That Colony," in *Colonial South Carolina: Two Contemporary Descriptions,* ed. Chapman J. Milling (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1951[1761]), 15: Clifton, "The Rice Industry in Colonial America," 275; Whitten, "American Rice Cultivation," 9-15.

50. House, *Planter Management,* 25.

51. Doar, *Rice and Rice Planting,* 12.

52. Dale Rosengarten, "Social Origins of the African-American Lowcountry Basket" (Ph.D. dissertation, Harvard University, 1997).

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Bounded Yards and Fluid Boundaries: Landscapes of Slavery at Poplar Forest

Barbara J. Heath

In the spring of 1798, Thomas Jefferson's son-in-law informed him that several slaves had planted tobacco on his Albemarle County property without his permission. Randolph's refusal to let them raise it, and insistence that they grow something sanctioned by Jefferson in its place indicates that this tobacco was being cultivated on their allotted grounds, in their own time, and for their own profit. Jefferson's response to this entrepreneurial spirit was unambiguous.

> …I thank you for putting an end to the cultivation of tobacco as the peculium of the negroes. I have ever found it necessary to confine them to such articles as are not raised on the farm. There is no other way of drawing a line between what is theirs & mine….(1)

This exchange hints at the "after hours" activities of enslaved people living on plantations throughout Virginia and the limits placed upon them by slaveholders. While assigned tasks were often explicitly described in the historic record, activities that slaves organized and undertook for their own benefit and in their own time are often difficult to trace. Nevertheless hunting and gathering attest to an intimate understanding of the natural landscape, while through gardening people consciously shaped the land for ends that stood outside of an owner's control. Market gardening and poultry raising, perhaps more directly tied to the dominant plantation regimen, reveal how slaves used agriculture for their own purposes, and how they organized their labor to do so. Together, these economic actions, coupled with kinship networks and the mandatory requirements of servitude, combined to extend their world far beyond the plantation boundaries.

The consideration of a variety of evidence—archaeological traces of houses and yards, preserved fragments of seeds, artifacts, slave censuses, runaway advertisements, store accounts, and letters—is essential in reconstructing how one group of enslaved African Americans shaped the landscapes they inhabited.

By the time Thomas Jefferson was 31 years old, he held 187 men, women, and children in bondage. Although the population fluctuated over time with births, deaths, sales, and purchases, he remained one of the largest slave owners in central Virginia throughout his life. The number of individuals living at his Poplar Forest plantation ranged from a low of 27 in 1774 to a high of 94 in 1819. During this time, they created a community of extended, multi-generational families, tied by bonds of blood and friendship to the Monticello enslaved community and to a broader community spread across the region.(2)

African Americans living at Poplar Forest were, for the most part, two or more generations removed from the Old World. Clearly the social upheaval of the Middle Passage, institutionalized slavery, and the Anglo-American culture of the slaveholding class were important factors in the development of a creole culture. Equally important was the physical reality of the place. As Americans, they experienced climate, topography, and environmental factors quite different from those of their African ancestors. Together, these cultural and natural factors influenced the ways in which people reacted to and shaped the landscape around them.

Here, the term landscape is used in two ways. First, it refers to the physical result of the continuing interaction between people and nature. Second, landscape describes the real and perceived boundaries that limited one's experience of the world. Institutionalized slavery provided the overarching framework for these boundaries, but the network of

social and economic connections that individuals created could stretch or tighten these limits.

West Africans in Virginia

In discussing the identity of Poplar Forest slaves, it is important to outline the assumptions used concerning the origins of Africans brought to Virginia as slaves. The fragmentary and inexact nature of the source material has led scholars to disagree about the ethnicities and absolute numbers of individuals transported. However, most scholars believe that the majority of slaves imported into Virginia during the colonial period came from West Africa, with the largest numbers dominated by the Igbo cultural group from the region surrounding the Bight of Biafra. Akan-speakers from the Gold Coast made up the next largest proportion of transported Africans, followed by Senegambians.(3)

Clues about the origins of Jefferson's slaves survive in legal documents and in naming practices carried out within their community. Jefferson inherited the majority of his bondspeople from his father-in-law John Wayles, a large planter and entrepreneur who engaged in the transatlantic slave trade. The extent of Wayles's participation is unclear; however debts he incurred continued to plague his son-in-law nearly 25 years after his death.(4) It is possible that some of the men and women he held in bondage, and who Jefferson subsequently inherited, were transported by Wayles.

Slaves from 11 quarter farms, including "Guinea" and "Angola," made up the Wayles' legacy. Oral histories, the recorded ages of a few individuals and naming practices suggest direct ties to Africa. Akan day names survive alongside others suggestive of Fanti or Igbo origins in the slave censuses Jefferson kept. Many men and women had names suggestive of origins in the Spanish or Portuguese-speaking world.(5) Further analysis of family connections and naming practices is needed to determine the extent to which West African or Caribbean naming practices persisted within families through time.

Agricultural Traditions

Enslaved West Africans and their descendants formed the backbone of the tobacco and wheat-based plantation economies of colonial and antebellum Virginia. They came from regions with economies based on the cultivation of grains like millet and sorghum, root crops of yams and cocoyams, and starchy fruits like bananas and plantains. Agriculturists from Senegal to the Bight also commonly grew legumes, fruits, and bulbs. Maize, cassava, and tobacco from the New World reached West Africa beginning in the late fifteenth century and became important crops throughout the region.(6) Farmers made crop choices based primarily on the amount and dependability of rainfall. Grains that could be planted and harvested in fairly dry conditions predominated in the northern interior regions, while root crops were the staple foodstuffs of the south. Although some groups engaged in irrigated farming for rice, tree farming, and shifting cultivation in the region, West African farmers principally practiced rotational bush fallow in both the savanna and forest.(7)

In some societies, the care of individual crops was divided along gender lines, while in others work was divided by task rather than product, with men involved in clearing and tilling virgin land, and women employed in planting, tending and harvesting.(8) Farmers planted fields for periods ranging from three to six years, employing a variety of strategies to stretch fertility and yield. They planted multiple crops within the same plot, a strategy that served the dual function of discouraging weed growth and erosion and protecting their harvest if one crop should fail. Where rainfall allowed, farmers planted crops in succession to ensure a constant supply of food. Finally, they rotated plantings within each plot to slow down the depletion of nutrients in the soil. After several years of heavy cultivation, land was allowed to lie fallow and regenerate for four to ten years before planting resumed. In some areas, farmers planted fallow fields with carefully selected cover crops; in others they allowed fields to regenerate naturally, only intervening to prevent the regrowth of trees.(9)

Rotational bush fallow shared some important characteristics with Virginia land-use patterns of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Cycles of land clearance, use, and abandonment characterized tobacco cultivation for much of the Chesapeake, with Indian corn or wheat often replacing tobacco before fields were completely exhausted.(10) By the late eighteenth century, Jefferson and many of his contemporaries used strategies such as crop rotation, selected cover crops for soil regeneration, and intercropping to boost yields.(11) While the context of these practices may have differed between landowners and enslaved workers, the practices themselves would certainly have been familiar to West African farmers.

West Africans and Virginians also shared elements of farming technology. Hoes were an important tool on both sides of the Atlantic, and Africans most likely found the transition from digging sticks and machetes to dibbles and cuttoes an easy one.(12) Thus, while enslaved farmers in Virginia did not nec-

essarily introduce new agricultural methods to North America, their familiarity with the technology, crops, and land use patterns current in colonial Virginia made the transition from Old World to New an efficient one from the perspective of their owners.(13)

The Poplar Forest Landscape

The Poplar Forest landscape from the 1770s through the 1820s consisted of a changing mosaic of woodlands, farm fields, meadows, and waste grounds divided into quarter farms and punctuated by dispersed settlements. Networks of roads and footpaths connected these settlements, defined by an overseer's house, slave quarters, barns, and other outbuildings. Shared resources such as a blacksmith's shop, a tobacco prizing barn, and a grain threshing barn stood roughly equidistant to living quarters and convenient to public roads. Tobacco drying barns, cowsheds, and other farm structures adjoined fields and pastures within each quarter farm.(14)

Enslaved African Americans shaped fields and forests at Poplar Forest during their working hours to fulfill a variety of tasks. In their private time, they continued to alter this landscape to meet their own needs. Archaeological investigations of two sites—the North Hill and the Quarter—provide some important clues about after hours activities. Both slave quarters were associated with the "old plantation" complex nestled between the branches of the Tomahawk Creek near the center of the Poplar Forest tract. There, men constructed houses on the margins of eroded fields, a strategy perhaps mandated by overseers to ensure that the most productive land remained in cultivation.

Archaeologists discovered the remains of a subfloor pit at the North Hill. Such features are rectangular compartments set beneath cabin floors that slaves used for storing foodstuffs and other belongings. Artifacts found in the fill of the pit indicate that this dwelling was abandoned sometime before the mid-1780s. An erosion gully cut across the hillside southwest of the cabin, and residents filled it with trash in the final quarter of the eighteenth century. The fill of the gully was cut by the line of a palisade fence that formed a substantial enclosure. It is probably associated with another cabin located outside of the excavation area and dating to a slightly later period.

The Quarter was occupied between 1790 and 1812. Members of at least three households lived at the site. Their log houses aligned roughly southwest to northeast, but did not form part of a rigidly defined slave row. The cabins were bounded on the south by a possible garden enclosure, and on the north by work yards. One yard was enclosed and shared by the occupants of two of the dwellings.(15) The most intensively used areas of the site appear to be the northern yards that were sheltered from the surveillance of the overseer, whose house was located behind the cabins on the crest of the hill.(16)

Floral and faunal data from both sites provide important insights into the ways that residents exploited the surrounding landscape. Seeds and bones preserve evidence of foraging and possible gardening activities as well as hunting, trapping, and fishing, pointing to the development of distinctly African-American foodways.(17)

Some carbonized remains, such as corn kernels or sunflower seeds, represent food that was directly consumed. Others represent what slaves discarded after they used the leaves, stems, or roots of the plant. Evidence of at least 35 species was recovered at the North Hill. These included seven fruits, eight vegetables and grains, two to three nuts, nine edible herbs, four weeds, three grasses, one ornamental and one condiment.(18) Of these, nearly three-quarters represent domesticates. These may have arrived at the quarter in the form of provisions, or slaves may have raised them in kitchen gardens or allotted plots. Slightly more than one quarter of the plant remains represent native fruits, nuts and edible and medicinal herbs—species that clearly fell outside of the plantation provisioning system.

The subfloor pit in the North Hill cabin was particularly rich in carbonized floral remains, yielding nearly all of the grains and edible weeds, and just under half of the fruits. The erosion gully contained small quantities of grains and edible weeds, and half of the fruit seeds and pits.(19)

The variety of identified floral types recovered at the Quarter Site was less rich, consisting of only 15 species. These included six fruits, four vegetables and grains, two nuts, and three edible herbs. Most plant remains were associated with the fill of a single subfloor pit in one of the cabins.(20)

While the majority of plant remains identified at the Quarter Site to date represent domesticated species, just over 20% are gathered, native plants, including nuts, edible herbs, and native wild species. The proportion of domesticates to wild species is somewhat lower than that of the North Hill, but it nonetheless indicates the continuing importance of foraging.

How did slaves know which plants were valuable to gather? In discussing the transfer of African knowledge to the Caribbean landscape, anthropologist Merrick Posnansky has noted that plants from the same families were used in similar ways on both sides of the Atlantic.

> This does not mean that West Africans were necessarily the first to utilize such plants in the Caribbean, but it does mean that they were able to assimilate the knowledge of their Indian predecessors rapidly, grasp the potentialities of the plants on or near the plantation, and integrate this new information with their own considerable knowledge of plants and the pharmacopoeia of the obeah men and women.(21)

The similarities of usage between some native herbs on Jamaica and in the American South suggests such a transfer occurred in Virginia as well.(22)

All of these native plants grew in areas readily accessible to enslaved residents foraging within the plantation landscape. Many grew in open fields, disturbed grounds, and the edge zone separating forest from field. Others, like acorns and hickory nuts, could be collected in forested areas. Black walnut was a species valued by Jefferson, and most likely remained easily accessible as a garden tree after 1806 when he began landscaping the grounds around his house. Slaves may have encouraged the growth of fruit and nut trees near their quarters, a practice in keeping with the cultivation of fruit and nut-bearing trees in the Caribbean and West Africa.(23)

The native plants represented by carbonized remains served a variety of nutritional uses. Most could be directly consumed as greens, cooked as potherbs, or harvested for their seeds, which could be parched for cereal or ground for flour.(24) African Americans in the South used violets to make soup, and the plant became known as “wild okra."(25) Fruits could be distilled into alcohol or dried for later use.(26)

African Americans also used these plants, as well as domesticated species, to combat sickness. While Jefferson employed a neighboring physician to tend to the ill or injured, slaves chose to treat themselves or, in cases beyond their skill, to consult a local “negro doctor."(27) Leaves, roots, bark, and even pits held curative properties for a host of maladies.(28) While the use of native fruits and herbs was widespread among both blacks and whites in the South, the combination of plant use with West African beliefs about the causes and cures of sickness and disease formed a distinctly African-American approach to healing. Archaeologists working on other sites occupied by enslaved families and their descendants have discovered similar assemblages of wild plants, suggesting that strategies for approaching illness that developed under slavery continued in the post-Emancipation south.(29)

Enslaved gardeners may have also cultivated several of these plants around their cabins for their aesthetic qualities.(30) While archaeologists have investigated the retention of African traditions of yard sweeping, and scholars have discussed the appearance of yard-art in post-Emancipation settings, little is currently known about the extent to which enslaved peoples modified the landscape for beauty alone.(31) In the end, plants fulfilled multiple functions, and probably were valued for all of their properties.

While it is likely that slaves gathered the edible herbs, medicinal plants, and many of the native fruits in their own time, their source for domesticated plants is less clear. Corn and wheat were staples within the provisioning system. Jefferson’s records of provisions, however, indicate that he customarily allotted these grains as flour rather than raw ears and sheaves.(32) It is unclear to what extent slaves gathered corn, wheat, oats, and rye from plantation fields for their own use, and to what extent they raised these grains in their own plots.

Perhaps more intriguing is the presence of sorghum in the fill of the subfloor pit associated with the North Hill. A staple of the West African diet, the grain was unfamiliar to Jefferson, who called it “guinea corn” when he received a parcel of seeds from his friend James Madison in 1791.(33) Its association with the North Hill indicates that sorghum was in use at least six years prior to his acquaintance with it. This contradiction in evidence suggests that enslaved men and women were cultivating the crop for themselves without Jefferson’s knowledge.

Jefferson made no direct references to providing slaves with land for their own gardening efforts at Poplar Forest.(34) However, he recorded purchases of garden produce and poultry, as well as grass seed, hay, and fodder from enslaved men and women living on his own and neighboring plantations.(35) These activities were widespread throughout the Southeast and the Caribbean. Men tended to provide the majority of garden produce, animal skins, grasses, and fodder, while women provided the bulk of the eggs.(36)

Archaeologists recovered relatively small numbers of animal bones at each site that provide additional clues about residents’ diets and their after-hours engagement in hunting, trapping, and fishing.(37) Pigs provided the staple meat diet at both quarter sites. The predominance of foot, cranial, and long bone fragments indicates that slaves received less meaty portions of the animals that were distributed as part of their pork provisions.(38) Bones from other domesticated species, such as cows and chickens, were found in relatively small numbers.(39)

Faunal analyst Susan Andrews has noted that the highly fragmented mammal bones recovered at the North Hill may be attributed to the theory of the "one-pot meal," which is a method of cooking that is based on African traditions. This would presumably involve the breaking of bones into pieces small enough to fit into a cooking crock so that stews or dishes such as hoppin' john could be prepared.(40)

Wild species made up an additional portion of the slaves' meat diet. They consumed white tailed deer, eastern cottontail rabbits, eastern gray squirrels, opossums, a woodchuck, a raccoon, and a fresh water bass or sunfish.(41) While all of these species are edible, some of the small mammals may also have been hunted for their skins. These could be used at home or sold, traded, or bartered for goods.(42)

No significant variability was observed between the sites, although the North Hill appears to have had more diversity in wild species. Because of the poor preservation of the bones at both sites, it is impossible to establish whether the decline of diversity points to an increased reliance on provisions over time, or whether it simply reflects taphonomic biases.(43)

Archaeologists found lead shot of various weights and gunflints at both sites and a musket frizzen at the North Hill. Together with the variety of wild animals remains present, these artifacts indicate that some enslaved individuals had access to firearms and used them for hunting. Fishing, hunting, and trapping most likely took place during the evenings or on Sundays when slaves were dismissed from plantation labor. While all of the bones found represent animals that likely inhabited the Poplar Forest fields and woodlands, slaves might have had occasion to go further afield to find food.

Poplar Forest Slaves and the Broader Landscape

What do we know about the movement of enslaved men and women at Poplar Forest? While travel was legally restricted to those with permission to do so, boundaries appear to have been less rigid than the law implied. From a relatively early age, Jefferson's slaves knew of and experienced a landscape that extended far beyond the borders of their home plantation. Through a variety of mandatory assignments and voluntary choices, they left the plantation and experienced this wider community. Ties of kinship, economic activities, work assignments, and acts of rebellion, separately or in combination, influenced the frequency and distance of their travel.

Some men and women were separated from family members by "abroad marriages" or sales, and made travel a regular part of their weekly routine to visit spouses, children, and relations. Others left the plantation to pursue economic activities in local shops or markets, or to attend church services.(44) For many Poplar Forest slaves, travel was a part of their assigned work load. Wagoners carried goods to and from Lynchburg and area mills; messengers ran errands throughout the neighborhood.(45) These trips strengthened ties not only between landowners, but also between enslaved workers, who doubtlessly used such opportunities to renew acquaintances with their neighbors.

Because of the close ties between the two plantations, many Poplar Forest slaves traveled to Monticello, extending their knowledge of central Virginia far beyond the bounds of Lynchburg. As assigned by Jefferson and his overseers, they transported goods and livestock, provided labor at key points in the harvest cycle, and served apprenticeships.(46) People also voluntarily traveled between the two plantations to visit family members.(47)

The route, whether followed by wagon or on foot, wound through Buckingham County, fording the James River at Warren before entering Albemarle County for the final push to Monticello. Depending on the roads taken, the journey was between 93 and 116 miles, and could last as long as eight days.(48)

Through these trips, and the stops they entailed, enslaved travelers extended their social and economic networks in important ways. Acquaintances in neighboring counties shared a meal, exchanged news, goods, and services; and created new bonds that might provide shelter for a tired wagon driver or aid a runaway in negotiating hostile territory.

On those occasions when slaves traveled to escape bondage, family ties clearly figured in to where they fled. Runaway advertisements throughout the South are full of comments indicating that husbands sought out wives and sons returned to the plantations of their mothers. As families were broken up by sales, they nevertheless found ways of maintaining connections.(49)

For a small group of enslaved men, and a smaller number of women, the landscape beyond Monticello was also familiar. Watermen, transporting goods from the plantation to market in Richmond, were afforded an uncommon degree of free movement and association. These men likely played vital roles in maintaining family connections and sharing cultural knowledge across the region. Their familiarity with large stretches of territory, and the people that dwelled along the rivers, made them important sources of information for runaways and aided in running away themselves. One Poplar Forest slave, Jame

Hubbard, was "carried upriver" by a waterman. He remained free for a year before being captured in what is now West Virginia.(50)

A few Monticello-based slaves traveled beyond Virginia, serving Jefferson during his residence in Philadelphia, Washington, D.C., and Paris. While these places were far removed from the realities of daily life at Poplar Forest, they nevertheless played some part in the perception of the wider world shared by the men and women that lived there. Hannah, Jefferson's enslaved cook, was a literate woman. The only letter in her hand that survives is signed "Adieu." Exactly how she learned French will never be known, but it is interesting to speculate about the extent to which Jefferson's travels, and those of a few members of the enslaved community, affected the worldview of those who stayed behind.

Conclusions

Drawing on traditions from West Africa and conditions endured in the New World, enslaved men and women formed the backbone of agricultural labor in colonial and antebellum Virginia. While slaveholders ordered plantation landscapes for the production of cash crops, slaves modified and exploited them through foraging, gardening, poultry raising, hunting, and fishing. The landscape that African Americans inhabited at Poplar Forest shaped the rhythms of their working and private lives and formed a starting point for exploring the broader communities of Lynchburg, Bedford County, and beyond. Movement between neighboring plantations, shops, warehouses, and places of worship provided men and women with opportunities to share ideas, foster friendships and family ties, and plan for the future.

Slaves' familiarity with and reliance on the resources of the immediate landscape structured choices of foods and methods of preparing them, guided healing practices, influenced aesthetic preferences, and touched on many other aspects of daily life. These choices, made individually on thousands of plantations throughout the region, were shared and refined by the formal and informal exchanges of travelers. Beyond the boundaries of the plantation lay a world of possibilities: for finding a spouse, earning some money, sharing faith, or finding freedom. Through myriad contacts with the broader world, men and women received, developed, maintained and spread a regional African-American culture.

Notes

1. Edwin Morris Betts, *Thomas Jefferson's Farm Book,* (Charlottesville: The University Press of Virginia, 1987), 268-269.

2. Dumas Malone, *Jefferson the Virginian,* (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1948), 21, 31-32; Betts, *Jefferson's Farm Book,* 5-18; Barbara J. Heath, *Hidden Lives, The Archaeology of Slave Life at Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest,* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999), 10-13.

3. Donnan puts Angolans ahead of Senegambians, in Philip D. Curtin, *The Atlantic Slave Trade, A Census,* (Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1970), 157; Mechal Sobel, *The World They Made Together, Black and White Values in Eighteenth-Century Virginia,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987) 6, 244-245; Michael Mullin, *Africa in America, Slave Acculturation and Resistance in the American South and the British Caribbean 1736-1831,* (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1994), 24; Michael Gomez, *Exchanging Our Country Marks, The Transformation of African Identities in the Colonial and Antebellum South,* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press 1998), 150.

4. Wayles was a factor for a group of Bristol merchants whose ship, the 'Prince of Wales,' sailed for the coast of Africa in 1772 and delivered a cargo of 280 slaves to Virginia. Julian P. Boyd, editor, *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, Volume 15, March 1789-November 1789,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1958), 676-677; James A. Bear and Lucia C. Stanton, editors, "Jefferson's Memorandum Books, Accounts, with Legal Records and Miscellany, 1767-1826," in *The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, Second Series, volumes 1 and 2,* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1997), 752.

5. As recalled by her grandson Madison, Betty Hemings was the daughter of an African woman and a white ship's captain. She resided with her six children and grandson at Wayles's Guinea quarter before Jefferson became her owner and moved her family to Monticello in 1774. Betts, *Jefferson's Farm Book,* 9; Annette Gordon Reed, *Thomas Jefferson and Sally Hemings, An American Controversy* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1997), 23. The connection to Africa of others owned by Jefferson remains less clear. It is most likely that Squire, Judy and Goliah, all born between 1727 and 1731, were the children or grandchildren of survivors of the Middle Passage, or experienced it themselves.

Cuffey probably was derived from Kofi, Friday. Phoebe and Quash may have come from Efua (Friday), and Kwesi (Sunday), names that were later creolized. There can be no doubt that "black Sall's" son Quomina, who fled

with his mother and siblings to the British during the American Revolution, carried the Akan day name for Saturday (Kwamena). Other names are suggestive of Fanti or Igbo ethnicities: Beck may be derived from 'Beke,' Anthony from the tribal name 'Andoni,' and Jenny from 'Ginneh.' Laurie A. Wilkie, "Continuities in African Naming Practices Among the Slaves of Wade's Green Plantation, North Caicos." *Journal of Bahamas Historical Society* 15(1)(1993), 33-34. Anglicized names like Jack, Joe, and Abby, all common among Jefferson's slaves, may also be derivative of Akan day names. Ibid, 33.

Sanco, Luna, Isabel, Bella, Lucinda, Belinda, and Emanuel bore Hispanic names. The name Dilcy, given to two girls born in the 1760s (one at Shadwell and the other at Poplar Forest), may have been derived from the Spanish word dulce, meaning sweet. Later generations of men and women owned by Jefferson carried on these names, adding Flora, Amanda, Lucinda, Sophia, Melinda, Lania, Maria, Lovila, and Lovilo for children born into the community.

6. A.G. Hopkins, *An Economic History of West Africa* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1973), 30.

7. Hopkins, *An Economic History,* 33-34.

8. S. O. Babalola and Carolyne Dennis, "Returns to Women's Labour in Cash Crops in Nigeria," in *Agriculture, Women and Land, The African Experience,* edited by Jean Davidson (London: Westview Press, 1988), 82; Ifi Amadiume, *Male Daughters, Female Husbands, Gender and Sex in an African Society* (London: Zed Books, 1987), 29, 34; E. Francis White, "Women in West and West-Central Africa," in *Women in Sub-Saharan Africa,* edited by Iris Berger and E. Francis White, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999), 65; see also Miriam Goheen, "Land and the Household Economy: Women Farmers of the Grassfields Today," in *Agriculture, Women, and Land, the African Experience,* 90-105.

9. Hopkins, *An Economic History,* 33-34.

10. Rhys Isaac, *The Transformation of Virginia 1740-1790,* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1982), 22-24.

11. At both Poplar Forest and Monticello, corn and peas, and corn and potatoes shared the same fields. Edwin Morris Betts, *Thomas Jefferson's Garden Book,* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1944), 192-194, 517-518; Betts, *Jefferson's Farm Book,* 88, 312-317; Joel Yancey to Jefferson, February 7, 1820, MHi.

12. Hopkins, *An Economic History,* 36.

13. See Hopkins, 36-37, for discussion on why plows were not used in West Africa.

14. Barbara J. Heath, "Rediscovering an Historic Landscape: Archaeology, Documents and GIS at Poplar Forest" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Historical Archaeology Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology, Salt Lake City, UT, 1999).

15. Heath, *Hidden Lives,* 27-46; Barbara J. Heath and Amber Bennett, "'The little Spots allow'd them': The Archaeological Study of African-American Yards," in *Historical Archaeology* 34(2)(2000), 46-47.

16. Heath, *Hidden Lives,* 44. The three cabins excavated at the Quarter are designated Structures 1,2,and 3 in the analysis. Structure 1 measured 15 ft. x 25 ft., was divided into two rooms, contained three subfloor pits, and was raised off the ground on wooden and stone piers. Structure 2 measured 13 ft. square, contained no pits, and had an earthen floor. Structure 3 was badly preserved. It probably measured 18.5 ft. sq., and was raised off the ground on stone piers. It did not contain any subfloor pits, but had an extensive midden beneath it.

17. Leslie Raymer, "Macroplant Remains from the Jefferson's Poplar Forest Slave Quarter: A Study in African American Subsistence Practices," *New South Associates Technical Report* #402(1996), Stone Mountain, GA; idem, "Draft data from the Poplar Forest North Hill," (manuscript on file, Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest, Virginia, 2000); Heath, *Hidden Lives,* 59-60; Heath and Bennett, *Historical Archeology,* 46-48.

18. Plant remains from the site include blackberry, elderberry, grape, peach, persimmon, strawberry and sumac (fruits); common bean, maize, oats, rye, sorghum, sunflower, and wheat (vegetables and grains); acorn, hickory and hickory/walnut (nuts); bedstraw, carpetweed, dock, goosefoot, knotweed, pigweed, purslane, smartweed, and vervain (edible herbs); copperleaf, nightshade, prickly mallow, and ragweed (weeds); agropyrn, goosegrass, and an unidentified grass family (grasses); viola (ornamental/edible) and poppy (condiment). Raymer, "Draft data."

19. Raymer, "Draft data." The data break down as follows: 90% of the grain, 46% of the fruit, and 89% of the edible weed assemblages were recovered from the fill of the subfloor pit; 8% of the grain, 50% of the fruit, and 8% of the

edible weed assemblages came from the fill layers in the erosion gully that correspond with the occupation dates of the cabin. The remainder of the carbonized floral materials recovered from the site came from a small pit located just outside of the cabin (less than 2% overall) and the upper layers of gully fill (7%) and small isolated features (less than 2% overall).

20. The data in the following discussion of the Quarter site reflect floral remains from Structures 1 and 2 only. Analysis of Structure 3 is not yet complete, but a preliminary examination indicates no new species present. Floral remains include cherry, grape, huckleberry, peach, persimmon, and raspberry (fruits); common bean, maize, sunflower, and wheat (vegetables and grains); hickory and walnuts (nuts); and bedstraw, goosefoot, and smartweed (edible herbs). Distributions are consistent with the North Hill findings if peaches are excluded from the count. Nearly 73% of fruits, vegetables, and edible and medicinal herbs were recovered from the most intact subfloor pit in Structure 1, while the other two pits contained less than 1% of the assemblage. These features were extremely shallow, however, and it is likely that most of their contents were displaced by plowing. The floor of Structure 2 contained 25% of the edible assemblage excluding peach pits, which made up 79% of the total assemblage from this feature. See Raymer, *New South Technical Report* #402.

21. Merrick Posnansky, "West Africanist Reflections on African-American Archaeology," in *I, Too, Am America: Archaeological Studies of African-American Life,* edited by Theresa Singleton, (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1999), 32.

22. U. P. Hedrick, editor, *Sturtevant's Edible Plants of the World,* (New York: Dover Publications, Inc., 1972), 43.

23. Heath and Bennett, *Historical Archaeology,* 39-41. Remains of carbonized wood were systematically recovered from the fill of the subfloor pit in the North Hill cabin and the associated erosion gully fill. These were analyzed by Leslie Raymer of New South Associates. In all, 17 identifiable species of trees are represented in the wood charcoal assemblage. The ubiquity (expressed as a percentage of the total number of proveniences in which a given species is present) of such as walnut, sycamore, hophornbeam, elm/hackberry, dogwood, black locust, beech, basswood, ash, hickory, oak, and pine indicates that at this time, much of the land surrounding the cabin site was covered in hardwood forest, and had not been cleared for cultivation. Carbonized oak made up nearly 40% of all the charcoal recovered at the site, followed by hickory (7%), and beech (4%), suggesting that site residents preferred these woods with oak the clear favorite.

Charcoal samples recovered from the Quarter site indicate that by the first decade of the nineteenth century, the landscape around the "old plantation" had changed dramatically. The number of identifiable species recovered from features associated with two of the cabins shrank to three (hickory, oak, pine), with pine predominating. These are consistent with the regeneration of secondary growth in abandoned fields.

24. The young leaves of goosefoot, dock, nightshade, pigweed, and purslane were eaten as greens or cooked as potherbs, comparable in taste to spinach and asparagus. Dock, goosefoot, pigweed, purslane, and smartweed seeds provided flour or cereal. Hedrick, *Sturtevant's,* 43-44, 450-451, 512-514, 544; Leslie Raymer, "Macroplant Remains from Six Nineteenth-Century Cabins at the Hermitage, Tennessee: A Study of Antebellum and Early Emancipation Era African American Subsistence Patterns," in *New South Associates Technical Report* #376 (1997), Stone Mountain GA, 39-40, 42-44.

25. Hedrick, *Sturtevant's,* 598.

26. Ibid, 244, 522. Jefferson reported on the abundance of the peach harvests at Poplar Forest, noting that enslaved women dried and processed the fruits in a variety of ways. Peaches, persimmons, blackberries, grapes, and elderberries could be distilled for wine, beer, or spirits. See also Betts, *Jefferson's Garden Book,* 517-518; Joel Yancey to Jefferson, November 19, 1819, MHi.

27. Joel Yancey to Jefferson, April 10, 1819, MHi; Joel Yancey to Jefferson, July 1, 1819, MHi; see also Thomas M. Randolph to Jefferson, April 25, 1800, ViU.

28. Sumac cured worms, sores, yaws, and burns. See Pamela Forey and Ruth Lindsay, *An Instant Guide to Medicinal Plants* (New York: Gramercy Books, 1991), 101; Kay K. Moss, *Southern Folk Medicine 1750-1820* (Columbia: University of South Carolina, 1999), 77, 101, 104, 110, 132, 207. Raspberries, strawberries, blackberries, and persimmons served for kidney or bladder complaints, "looseness of the belly," and sores. Persimmon fruit was valued for its astringent qualities, and used to clean wounds. Virtually all parts of the peach served some curative purpose: the leaves and flowers acted as a purgative or, made into a poultice, diminished swelling; the stones aided sore throat and pain in the side. Flowers, roots, leaves, and bark of elderberry trees eased swelling, snakebite, toothache, burns, and the symptoms of

a skin irritation known as scald head. Taken internally, they could be used as a purgative, diuretic or emetic. See Moss, *Southern Folk Medicine,* 173, 182, 198, 199, 207.

Edible herbs also possessed medicinal qualities. Infusions of knotweed, smartweed, or pigweed stopped bleeding from ulcers, sores, piles, and relieved menstrual pain. See Forey and Lindsay, *Instant Guide to Medicinal Plants,* 23; Raymer, *New South Technical Report* #376, 40, 43; see also Betts, *Jefferson's Garden Book,* 644. Knotweed tea dispelled kidney stones, while bedstraw relieved throat and chest inflammations, and disorders of the kidneys. Moss, *Southern Folk Medicine,* 58, 94. Purslane was also known to have astringent properties, while the value of dock was in its ability to treat skin conditions, leprosy, venereal disease, and tumors. It also served as a laxative and blood purifier. See Raymer, *New South Technical Report* #376, 44; see also Moss, *Southern Folk Medicine,* 181.

The presence of jimsonweed at the North Hill hints at the possibility of its use medicinally. While all parts of the plant are poisonous, the seeds are especially toxic. Nevertheless, eighteenth and nineteenth century healers put it in salves and poultices to treat a variety of skin conditions. Its most important use, however, was in treating spasmodic coughing associated with asthma. The plant was burned and the smoke inhaled to relieve symptoms. See Raymer, *New South Technical Report* #376, 47; see also Betts, *Jefferson's Garden Book,* 644.

Jefferson also included malvaceae in his listing of medicinal plants native to Virginia (sida rhombifolia and sida abutilon), and a prickly mallow was recovered at the North Hill (sida spinosa). Raymer, "Draft data."

29. Charles B. Purdue, Jr., Thomas E. Barden and Robert K. Phillips, editors, *Weevils in the Wheat, Interviews with Virginia Ex-Slaves* (Charlottesville, University Press of Virginia, 1976), 73, 221-222, 263, 310; Ywone D. Edwards-Ingram, "An Inter-Disciplinary Approach to African-American Medicinal and Health Practices in Colonial America," in *The Watermark* 20(1997), 71; Raymer, *New South Technical Report* #376.

30. Poppies, violets, pigweed, and jimsonweed were commonly used as ornamentals by white gardeners of the period. Betts, *Jefferson's Garden Book,* 24, 644; Raymer, *New South Technical Report* #376, 40, 46-47.

31. Heath and Bennett, *Historical Archaeology,* 41-45.

32. Betts, *Jefferson's Farm Book,* 50, 52, 77, 163.

33. Idem, *Jefferson's Garden Book,* 166.

34. Subsequent owners of the estate made reference to provision grounds. Hutter Farm Journal, 1844-1854, (manuscript on file, Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest).

35. Barbara J. Heath, "Engendering Choice: Slavery and Consumerism in Central Virginia" (paper presented at the annual meeting of the Society for Historical Archaeology Conference on Historical and Underwater Archaeology, Atlanta, GA, 1998); see also Bear and Stanton, *Jefferson's Memorandum Books.*

36. Heath and Bennett, *Historical Archaeology,* 39-42; Heath, "Engendering Choice."

37. Because of the natural acidity of the Poplar Forest soils, bone preservation was relatively poor. Those bones that did survive represent the more durable ones (i.e. teeth or long bones) or fragments preserved in features whose soil chemistry had been altered historically by the addition of ash or other materials that neutralized the soil. Additionally, many bones suffered weathering, burning, butchering, gnawing, and other modifications, both intentional and natural, that made it impossible to identify them beyond broad categories such as "unidentified bird" or "unidentified mammal." Consequently, the following discussion provides a fairly sketchy assessment of the importance and variety of meat in the diets of enslaved residents of each site.

38. Susan Trevarthen Andrews, "Faunal Analysis of Slave Quarter Site at Poplar Forest" (manuscript on file, Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest, Virginia, 1993); Betts, *Jefferson's Garden Book,* 467; idem, *Jefferson's Farm Book,* 48.

39. Archaeologists did collect quantities of eggshells at both sites, suggesting the dietary importance of eggs, but raising questions about the low frequency of chicken bones.

40. Susan Trevarthen Andrews, "Faunal Analysis of North Hill Features, Poplar Forest," (manuscript on file, Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest, Virginia, 1999), 19.

41. Bones from eastern cottontail rabbits, eastern gray squirrels, opossums, a woodchuck, a raccoon, and a fresh water bass or sunfish were recovered at the North Hill; white tailed deer, opossum, rabbits, and gray squirrels were found at the Quarter. Andrews, "Faunal Analysis" 1993; idem, "Faunal Analysis for Poplar Forest Feature 1206" (manuscript on file, Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest, Virginia, 1995); idem, "Poplar Forest Quarter Site Faunal Analysis" (manuscript on file, Thomas

Jefferson's Poplar Forest, Virginia, 1996); idem, "Faunal Analysis of North Hill, Poplar Forest" (manuscript on file, Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest, Virginia, 1998); idem, "Faunal Analysis of North Hill Features" 1999.

42. Bear and Stanton, *Jefferson's Memorandum Book,* 500. Jefferson purchased squirrel skins from Jame Hubbard, an enslaved waterman in 1780. Heath notes in "Slavery and Consumerism: A Case Study from Central Virginia," in *African-American Archaeology Newsletter* 19 (1)(1997), 6, that a merchant who operated a store near Poplar Forest recorded purchasing raccoon skins from one of his enslaved customers.

43. Betts, *Jefferson's Garden Book,* 517-518; idem, *Jefferson's Farm Book,* 48, 58, 149, 417; Jefferson to Jeremiah Goodman, February 3, 1814, ViU; Jefferson to Patrick Gibson, November 3, 1814, NHi. In addition to corn, wheat, herring, and pork, Poplar Forest slaves received milk, salt, and whiskey.

44. Heath, *African-American Archaeology Newsletter;* Heath, "Engendering Choice." Will kept shop accounts in New London and Lynchburg. Joel Yancey to Jefferson, October 14, 1819, MHi. Others frequented the Lynchburg Sunday markets as buyers and sellers. When a Sunday cold snap threatened the tobacco crop in 1819, overseer Joel Yancey discovered "every man except Armstead at B. Creek had gone off and 2 of the women to Lynchburg, and 2 men and 2 women from Tomahawk…." See also John Early, "Diary of John Early, Bishop of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South," in *Virginia Magazine of History and Biography* 35 (1927), 7, on the African Meeting House in the Forest area.

45. Jefferson to James Lyle, April 5, 1811, MHi; Jefferson to Jeremiah Goodman, August 9, 1812, DLC; James A. Bear, editor, *Jefferson at Monticello* (Charlottesville: University Press of Virginia, 1967), 67-68. Jefferson's social and economic relationships within the local community necessitated the regular movement of slaves passing throughout the neighborhood conducting his business. Wagoners carried flour to local mills, tobacco to market, and supplies from the waterfront in Lynchburg back to the plantation.

Jefferson to Charles Clay, December 18, 1811, MHi; Jefferson to Charles Clay, December 14, 1812, DLC; Jefferson to Charles Clay, May 5, 1813, MHi, Charles Clay to Jefferson, September 5, 1810, MHi; Charles Clay to Jefferson, May 1, 1813, MHi. Messenger service seems to have been the task of teenage boys and girls. Over the course of three years, they delivered notes, surveying equipment, garden seeds, and a copy of Tacitus to Jefferson's friend, Charles Clay, who lived at nearby Ivy Hill. In return, Clay sent his own slaves to Poplar Forest carrying rye seeds, a basket of asparagus, and a variety of notes.

William Steptoe to Jefferson, July 24, 1819, MHi; Ellen Randolph to Martha Randolph, August 24, 1819, ViU. When Jefferson sent a messenger to physician William Steptoe, asking leave to borrow his syringe, Steptoe replied that the desired object was "so often lent and sent about the neighborhood that I am sorry to say I do not know who had it last. However I will dispatch a boy after it." Two enslaved maids belonging to Mrs. Walker, whose property bounded Poplar Forest to the west, made weekly deliveries of fruits, vegetables, sweetmeats, and lamb to Jefferson's granddaughters during the summer of 1819.

BCOB 1781, 333-334; BCSB1:351; BCSB2:166. Unsanctioned travel within the environs of Poplar Forest also occurred. In 1781, Jack and Will joined Peter, the slave of John Thompson, Sr., in breaking into the mill and stillhouse owned by Thompson's son. The three were caught, tried, and punished for their actions. Peter probably lived on Thompson's tract of land adjoining Poplar Forest to the east.

46. Jefferson to Jeremiah Goodman, December 31, 1811, ViU; Jefferson to Jeremiah Goodman, January 6, 1815, ViU; Jefferson to Joel Yancey, March 6, 1817, MHi; Jefferson to Joel Yancey, January 11, 1818, MHi; Joel Yancey to Jefferson, January 9, 1819, MHi; Joel Yancey to Jefferson, December 31, 1819, MHi; Jefferson to John Wayles Eppes, October 22, 1820, MHi; Betts, *Jefferson's Farm Book,* 42-44. In the years following Jefferson's retirement, wagoners made frequent journeys between the two properties, carrying furnishings, farm equipment and food from one plantation to another.

Jefferson to Edmund Bacon, December 5, 1811, DLC; Jefferson to Jeremiah Goodman, December 13, 1812, ViU; Jefferson to Jeremiah Goodman, January 8, 1813, ViU; Jefferson to Jeremiah Goodman, January 6, 1815, ViU; Betts *Jefferson's Garden Book,* 534-535. Workers moved between the two places when Jefferson needed extra hands at harvest or planting time. He also sent teenage boys and girls to Monticello to learn a trade in his nailery or textile factory. Enslaved men, as well as teenage boys drove cattle, hogs, and sheep from Bedford to Albemarle in the early winter for slaughter.

47. Heath, *Hidden Lives,* 16, 69, note 12. To create productive farms, Jefferson split most of the families that he owned between his two properties.

He granted family members to visit their kinspeople from time to time. Such visits usually took place at Christmas, and often individuals accompanied wagons bearing supplies to Poplar Forest, or aided in the driving of livestock on the return journey.

48. Jefferson to Martha Randolph, November 10, 1816, MHi; Joel Yancey to Jefferson January 9, 1819, MHi; Jefferson to Joel Yancey, January 17, 1819, MHi. While Johnny and Randall made the reverse trip in about three days, other slaves accompanying the wagon and herds of recalcitrant livestock northward might be on the road for eight days or longer.

Joel Yancey for Nace, March 12, 1812, MHi; Jeremiah Goodman to Jefferson, December 30, 1814, ViU; Jefferson to Jeremiah Goodman, January 6, 1815, ViU; Joel Yancey to Jefferson, October 14, 1819, MHi. It took Nace two days to traverse the thirty-seven miles from Poplar Forest to Henry Flood's tavern in Buckingham County when he traveled to Monticello on an early spring trip in 1821. Phil Hubbard made shorter work of the journey from Bedford to Albemarle, taking only two days to traverse the one hundred miles between the two plantations. His was an unauthorized trek, triggered by anger about an overseer's refusal to recognize his marriage. At Monticello, he sought, and gained Jefferson's support. Five years later, his nephew, William, ran to Monticello, this time to contest being asked to work on a Sunday.

Joel Yancey to Jefferson, December 24, 1818, MHi. Whether others apprehended between the two plantations had larger plans for freedom is unclear. In 1813, Hercules was detained in Buckingham jail and returned to Poplar Forest. Two other young Monticello men, Dick and Moses, arrived a Poplar Forest on stolen horses, and without a pass, at Christmas in 1818. When the owners of one horse arrived, Dick claimed that he had found the horse, and that they had come to Bedford to visit family. He was whipped for the offense. Moses declined to make excuses, escaping before he could be punished.

49. *Lynchburg Virginian,* August 31, 1824, 4. Bob, a young man who had been raised by Jefferson at Monticello, and subsequently sold, was employed by his fourth owner as a waterman. His owner, in drafting the advertisement for his return, recognized the importance of kinship, stating that "he has relations at Monticello, at Mr. Jefferson's plantation near Lynchburg, in Richmond…and at Wilton below Richmond." He added that it was most likely that Bob was making his way to Monticello or Poplar Forest. Whether he succeeded, or was captured and returned, is not known.

50. Reuben Perry to Jefferson, March 29, 1811, ViW; Jefferson to Reuben Perry, April 16, 1812, ViW; Daniel Meaders, *Advertisements for Runway Slaves in Virginia 1801-1820* (New York: Garland Publishing Inc., 1997), 161. In the spring of 1811, while Jefferson was visiting Poplar Forest, Jame Hubbard fled Monticello by boat with Harry, a waterman who belonged to Jefferson's son-in-law. In a previous flight, he had "attempted to get out of the state Northwardly" and had been apprehended. This time he made his way to Lexington, where he lived for nearly a year before he was discovered. He eluded capture, getting as far as Pendleton County, in what is now West Virginia, before he was arrested.

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Session Three:

BLACK CULTURAL LANDSCAPES AND INSTITUTIONS

Although many were enslaved well into the nineteenth century, people of African descent infused their African cultural traditions in domestic spaces, public and secret routes, the education of their young, burial practices, and other aspects of their physical and social environments. Related historic places include, but are not limited to, schools, churches, gardens, cemeteries, settlement patterns, places of spirituality and worship, houses, transportation routes, and places of assembly and social interaction.

Africanisms in the "Old Ship of Zion": What Are Their Forms and Why Do They Persist?

Audrey Brown

Interwoven Traditions: Archaeology at The Conjurer's Cabins and African American Cemetery at the Jordan and Frogmore Plantations

Kenneth Brown

Some Evidence of African Cultural Traditions Among the Residents of Black Church Centered Farming Communities in North Central Louisiana

Joe Lewis Caldwell

Africanisms in the "Old Ship of Zion": What Are These Forms and Why Do They Persist?

Audrey Brown

In 1980 my husband and I went to live with his mother's people in rural north central Florida. We left Interstate 75 at Ocala and headed west on SR 40 for about eight to ten miles. There, just off the road as it turned from asphalt to dirt, we found New Zion Baptist Church. We were in the heart of Zion, where African Americans have lived for at least 178 years, first as maroons, then as slaves, and then as free pioneers. Where they once homesteaded, now a few members of those families continue as a community, in a place of cultural memory, an African American ethnographic cultural landscape called Zion (pseudonym).(1)

The landscape concept derives from the art world where beginning in the sixteenth century painters depicted rural scenery as an idealized or imagined place where people lived divorced from the realities of the everyday real world.(2) Anthropologists use the concept of an ethnographic landscape as a framing convention, as they try to distinguish between the "objective" outsider's view of place and the insider's or "native's point of view." We describe the objective and interrogate how, as Setha Low put it, "place becomes space made culturally meaningful."(3) In this paper I aim to uncover how, in Zion, African Americans created and sustained such a place for generations. I argue that some of the "Africanisms" I found in Zion helped sustain this community for more than a century. The paper is based on primary source ethnographic and archival data I collected between 1980 and 1994 in Florida and other parts of the south and the Caribbean, along with comparative data derived from the literature on African American archeology.

Precinct 4

The place that people who live here call Zion, U.S. Census Population schedules call Precinct 4. Oral history, historical documents, tombstones, maps and references to the population from 1828 through 1875 suggests that most Zionites are descendants of maroons, freed slaves, and Seminole Indians.(4)

In 1828 J. C. Ley, a Methodist circuit rider was traveling through Florida preaching to settlers, their slaves, maroons and Seminoles. In his diary Ley says he heard about a group of blacks living with the Indians a few miles west of Camp King, the general location of present day Zion.(5) He set out to find them hoping they would translate his message to the Indians. Ley tells of finding the Indians and about 50 blacks who came out of the woods led by Pompey, the "father and grandfather and leader of them all."(6)

Early maps of Florida mark "Negro Town" at the mouth of the Withlachochee River, and Negro towns along the Suwanee River. Modern day Zion is geographically located between the Withlachochee and Oklawaha Rivers. Comparison of the 1860 and 1870 census schedules for Precinct 4 show a dramatic increase in the black population. This finding supports historical accounts that after the Afro-Seminole Wars some maroons went into hiding only to reemerge after the Civil War. It also supports oral history and written historical accounts of slaves leaving South Carolina and Georgia plantations during the final days of the Civil War, traveling by boat along the Georgia coastal waters down the St. John and Oklawaha Rivers to freedom in the isolated thickets of Central Florida.(7) Zion is an ethnographic cultural landscape full of structures, sites and places of memory

to descendants of seven African American families enumerated there in the U.S. Census of 1870 and the Florida State Census of 1875.(8)

Around 1863, my husband's great-grandparents, Abraham Lincoln and Melinda Johnson, run-a-way slaves from South Carolina, first camped in the woods of present day Zion. By 1870 one finds the Staggers, Mobleys, Austins, Robinsons, Carters, and Jacobs lived nearby. In the 1880s these seven families and their descendants, formally homesteaded the lands on which they settled. [Figure 1] The Lewis brothers joined them and married their daughters. The Wilson brothers and Joe Maeweathers did the same thing ten years later. One hundred years later, I recorded accounts of life in Zion as the children and grandchildren of these African American pioneers remembered it or as their elders recalled it to them.(9)

Between 1870 and 1880, "Uncle" Oliver Lewis, an ex-slave Baptist deacon from Virginia and "Aunt" Suzie Staggers, the community midwife, began to hold Baptist church meetings in Zion "peoples homes," then in "bush harbors." "Aunt" Suzie was the first Mother of the Church. The people built a log cabin church on land donated by Huldy Austin, who later

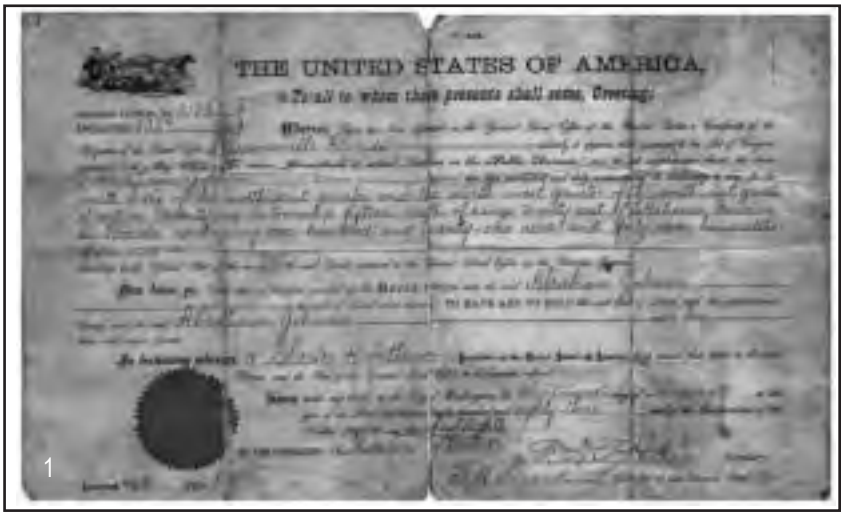

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Figure 1. Homestead Deed of Abraham Lincoln Johnson. Courtesy of the personal papers of James Brown, Jr.

Figure 2. Old Zion Church built circa 1900. Photo courtesy of James Brown, Jr. Figure 3. New Zion Baptist Church, Zion, FL, built circa 1950. Courtesy of Audrey L. Brown.

Figure 3. New Zion Baptist Church, Zion, Florida built circa 1950.

Figure 4. Friendship Church in Martel, Florida built circa 1900-1915 by people of Zion for migrant African American workers in lime quarries, on roads and railroads. Photo courtesy of Audrey L. Brown, 'Tis the Old Ship of Zion; Rituals and Oral Traditions of Afro-Baptist Churches in Florida, 1983-1986. *Ocala, FL: n.p., 1986.*

Figure 5. Women worked in the Fields. Photo courtesy of Dorothea Lange, America from the Great Depression to World War II: Black-and-White Photographs from the FSA-OWI, Division of Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress.

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became the second Mother of the Church. Huldy Austin was also a community midwife. Around 1885-1890 "Aunt" Suzie's son Reverend Henry Staggers was called to pastor the church. He continued to pastor there until his death in the 1940s. His daughter, "Cousin" Rea, the Mother of the Church when I lived in Zion, remembered her father holding services in a one-room frame church, before he built "Old Zion" around 1900. [Figure 2] "New" Zion church followed a half century later.[Figure 3] Zion settlement was named after the church. Zion church like other rural churches was originally a family church, with no outside membership. To keep it that way, one person told me the community men built another little church for "them boys who come down here to work in the turpentine stills and quarries."(10) [Figure 4]

Old Zion church like the other Baptist churches that mushroomed across the rural south after the Civil War, was the center of community life. From Old Zion and the other churches sprang schools, benevolent and mutual aid societies, social institutions that sustained community life. Between 1869 and 1889 Zion churchwomen were among the Afro-Baptist women who formed 28 women's societies in Florida to help ex-slaves.(11)

Over the first 40 years of the twentieth century the hamlet was at its zenith. During this time about 300 Zion people farmed over 1,700 acres of homestead land. They were mostly subsistence and small cash crop farmers of cowpeas, corn, and rice. The community grew as women birthed families of five to ten children. Taking their small babies with them, women worked the fields along side of the men.[Figure 5] Some tasks were the sole province of women such as delivering babies, caring for the elderly and children, and treating common illnesses with herbal remedies.(12) Even in the 1980s there were some women who still farmed and all women, regardless of education and occupation, were responsible for providing and cooking vegetables and other staple foods for the family, and caring for the elderly and the young.(13)

My husband and I first lived in one of three houses still found on his great-grandfather's homestead. It was a tin-roofed, cement-block house that had been built in 1959. The rooms ranged in size from eight feet by eight feet to 12 feet squared. The cabin behind it in the northeast was about a 12-feet squared room with another smaller room behind, and a little eight feet by eight feet room built out in front on one side of the porch. [Figure 6] It had wooden windows and an open hearth for cooking and warmth.(14) There was frame shotgun house behind our house on the southwest, back about 50 yards. [Figure 7] The rooms in the frame house were small, no larger than ten feet by ten feet. Like most houses in Zion, all three of these houses had porches.

The Staggers home about a half-mile east of where we lived was a modified shotgun house. There were two rooms built parallel to the basic two room, shed kitchen model seen in Figure 12. In 1980 it was still heated by an open hearth. Two of Suzie Stagger's granddaughters lived there along with their extended families. None of the rooms in this house exceed ten feet by ten feet. Nearby there were ruins of a building of the same design that had been home to another one of their sisters. About 50 feet away, a third building, that had housed their youngest brother had been torn down and replaced by a trailer.

The Mobley land began just beyond the Staggers'. When we first came to Zion there were seven Mobley home sites, four houses, one ruin, and two trailers. Malachi, whose mother was a

Figure 6. Side view of cabin on homestead of Abraham Lincoln Johnson, a founder of Zion, FL. Photo courtesy of Audrey L. Brown, 1984, Gimme that ol' time religion: Oral history Tapes. *Audiotapes and slides. Ocala FL: n.p., 1983-1984.*

Figure 7. Home of Turpentine worker near Cordele, AL. FSA- OWI, Division of Prints and Photographs, Library of Congress.

Figure 8. Malachi Green's Mothers House, circa 1930s, Zion, FL. Photo courtesy of Audrey L. Brown, 1984, Gimme that ol' time religion: Oral history Tapes. *Audiotapes and slides. Ocala FL: n.p., 1983-1984.*

Figure 9. Mud and log construction in old house originally built in the late 18th or early 19th century by free people of color, descendants of Marie Therese Coincoin, a freed slave who established Yucca Plantation, Natchitoches, LA. Courtesy of Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

Figure 10. Frame house on posts, former slave dwelling, Wray Plantation, Greene County, GA. Photo courtesy of Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

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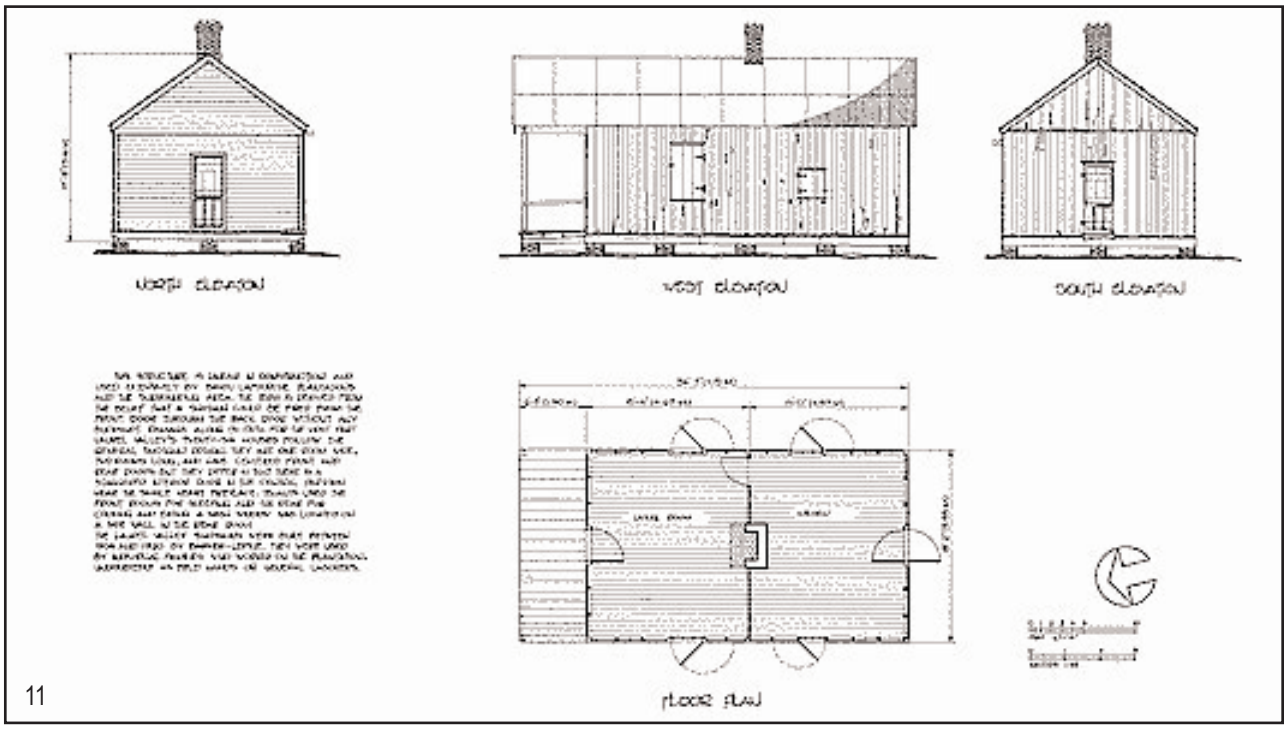

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Figure 11. Shotgun quarters at Laurel Valley Sugar Plantation, Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, LA. Drawings courtesy of Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Collection, Prints & Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

Figure 12. Shotgun quarters at Laurel Valley Sugar Plantation, Thibodaux, Lafourche Parish, LA. Photo courtesy of Jet Lowe, Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Collection, Prints & Photographs Division, Library of Congress.

Mobley, preserved his mother's home after her death. He lived next to it in a trailer about 25 feet away. Three other buildings on Mobley land were home to an elder Mobley man and his cousins, two elderly sisters. These homes, built about 25-30 feet apart, were the same design as Malachi's mother's house and about the same size. [Figure 8] They had small rooms about ten to 11 feet squared. After the elder Mobley's died the houses were torn down and four trailers erected. Although the trailers had larger rooms and they were located on several acres of land, the close settlement patterns persisted.

Younger people, like Pauline a school teacher and her husband, a retired military person, built their home with seven rooms and a porch, none of which exceed the 12 feet by 12 feet dimensions that we shall see was characteristic of colonial African American domiciles. In 1986, J.B.'s cousin Georgie, a retired postal worker, built her mother a "new" house. The rooms in the new home, built by a local African American contractor, are about 12 feet by 12 feet or less. I asked myself what does it mean that Zion people with the means to build spacious houses recreate rooms the same size as the houses built by their foreparents? What are the origins of the architectural styles and settlement patterns found in Zion? To answer that question I turned to the archeological record of colonial African American sites in Low Country South Carolina, the place of origins of almost all the people who settled Zion.(15)

Archeological Evidence

Yaughan and Curriboo plantations operated in an isolated area of South Carolina low country from 1740 through the 1820s. During the 1700s the ratio of Africans to Europeans was 15:1 and population increases resulted from fresh infusions of Africans. Natural increase resulted in the 27:1 ratio found after the Revolutionary War. During this period slave families were kept together even when estates were settled, a factor promoting stable family life. Left largely on their own under these conditions, Africans and their descendants had cultural autonomy that was reflected in their material culture.(16) They established and maintained a society that Berlin argues was based on an African model. The fact that Mintz and Price argued for a Caribbean model, Wheaton and Garrow comment, "does not change the fact, however, that the slaves who inhabited Yaughan and Curriboo maintained a material culture that was distinct from that extracted from Euro-American sites."(17)

House Architecture

Three distinct slave quarters were excavated, early Yaughan (1750-1780), later Yaughan (1780s-1820s), and one slave quarter at Curriboo occupied from the 1740s until shortly after 1800. The architectural features of these structures present a clear picture of change from mud-walled huts, evidenced by wall trenches with cob-wall construction in the earliest structures to frame houses constructed on posts after the Revolutionary War.[Figures 9,10] The Early Yaughan structures had no chimneys. Evidence of an open hearth directly on the earthen floor was found in one house along with the bottom of another hearth outside the houses.(18)

The dimensions of the Yaughan and Curriboo houses varied in size between periods: the earlier structures had ranged from 12.5 feet by 11 feet to 13.5 feet by 20 feet, three of the later structures were 14.5 feet by 9.8 feet to 15.5 by 10 feet in dimension. Most were rectangular and housed one family. (19)

Settlement Patterns

In the early slave quarter, one set of Yaughan houses are located approximately 25 -50 feet apart in a circle. The houses in a second set are adjacent to each other and approximately 25 feet apart. A third set of structures show a similar pattern. At Curriboo, houses are 50 feet or less apart. Wheaton and Garrow concluded that settlement patterns and architectural form of the buildings on Yaughan and Curriboo plantations appeared to have antecedents in West Africa, and "probably represents a West African architectural form."(20)

Other scholars commenting on architectural form and settlement patterns of eighteenth and early nineteenth century African Americans, both slave and free, agree that the patterns seen reflect West African origins. Vlach commenting on architectural form and settlement patterns on enslaved African American constructions noted the twelve-foot squared unit, the presence of porches and close settlement patterns resonates with houses constructed in Haiti and West Africa.(21) Deetz made similar comments about the closeness of settlement patterns in an excavation of houses built by free African Americans in Massachusetts. He concludes that the close settlement patterns at the site differed significantly from their Yankee contemporaries and that they "reflect a more corporate spirit than four Anglo-Americans might show under similar circumstances."(22)

By the late nineteenth and early twentieth century African American architecture featured the shotgun house, one room wide, two or three room deep house with a forward-facing gable and

porch. [Figures 11, 12] A modified shotgun house was built with two room additions along the side of the basic floor plan. The second Florida house we lived in followed this pattern with room sizes ranging from 10 to the 12 foot-squared dimension. It was located in a family clearing along with two trailers. One author comments that the close settlement patterns are African ways of expressing kinship and corporate closeness through physical nearness.(23) The persistence of small room size in African American architecture might also express the same kinds of African values.

Zion people still live in "micro-" settlements of extended families, their homes built close together. The older houses and some new ones replicate the architectural characteristics of their forepar-ents. History shows there were close connections between post-emancipation land use and familial and kin beliefs of freed men and women. Of particular concern to freed slaves were their "old and infirm Mothers and Fathers and our children."(24)

During the Great Migration people left Zion and over the years much of the land was sold to "outsiders," both African Americans and Whites. Today, relatively few Zionites actually live in the circumscribed area around the church building. Those that do are mostly middle age and elderly people. Yet Zion community and New Zion Baptist Church persist as a culturally meaningful place to Zionites across the state and the nation, connected by modern transportation and communication networks. Wherever they live people return periodically for church services. Some come annually for Homecoming Sunday in July. Others come only for Home-Going Celebrations when people die. The turnout for the Mother of the Church, Cousin Rea, in 1993 was one of the largest in recent years. Mothers Day services draw the largest congregations.

Kinship, community, and funeral celebrations are all significant aspects of West African culture. Along with the housing and settlement patterns, it seems to me there are also reflections of West African influences in the matrifocality I observed in Zion family and church life.

Matrifocality in the Social Organization of Zion

Zion family and church social organization are matrilocal, matrilfocal, and matrilineal. [Table 1] When asked, people say they live near their mother's people even though their father's people also live in the community. They attend their mother's church. Men who marry into the community attend their wife's mother's church. People venerate their mothers and motherhood. If women do not bear children they adopt them. Elderly mothers have the greatest prestige in Zion. Adult children will visit their mothers frequently and elderly mothers are visited daily. Women and men will provide physical care for their mothers as needed. When a daughter or granddaughter are unavailable to give care, other women, cousins, nieces, and daughter-in-laws help. If no one else is available a son will live with his or mother and take care of her. People reckon descent through their mothers, again even when their father's people live in the community.

The New Zion Baptist Church social organization is also characteristically matrilocal, matrifocal, and matrilineal. People attend their mother's church. Men who marry into the community attend their wife's mother's church. If a man from the community marries a woman from another church, at least one of his children, usually a daughter, will attend his mother's church, but the rest of the children attend their mother's church. A man or woman who marries into the community may be "funeralized" at New Zion but they are buried in the cemetery of their mother's church. Prestige in the church is determined by gender, age, descent, and religious commitment. Elderly women, who never left the church, called church mothers, have greater prestige than even the deacons. The church social organization is illustrated by the way Zion elders arranged themselves for photographs. [Figure 13] The oldest women are in front with those descended from the original families in the middle. Their younger sisters and cousins are on the second row. Cousin Rea, 93 years old, Mother of the Church and granddaughter of the first Mother, sits in the center in a white hat. "Aunt" Sister, the granddaughter of Huldy Austin, sits next to her dressed in white. The women on the ends of the front row are an "incomer" on the right and an "outsider," on the left. The men arranged themselves behind the women by age, then by family descent of their wives or mothers.

The most prestigious woman's role is Mother of the Church. Theoretically she is elected from among all the church mothers. However, a pattern of what seems to be matrilineal succession is evident among all the women who have been elected. [Figure 14](25)

"Africanisms" in American Culture: Women's Church Roles along the Continuum

Locating the presence of this African American cultural landscape was relatively straightforward. Linking house

Figure 13. New Zion Elders, 1985. Front Row: Left to Right, Sister Tot Bellamy; Sister Josephine Maeweathers Tindall; Deaconess Annie Staggers Jacobs ("Cousin" Rea, Mother of the Church); Deaconess Harriet Jacobs Lewis ("Aunt" Sister, Acting Mother of the Church); Mrs. Rosabelle Lewis Simms ("Cousin' Rosabelle); Mrs. Cecelia Carter; Mrs. Mary Mobley ("Miss" Mary). Second Row: Mrs. Hattie Staggers Butler (Present Mother of the Church); Mrs. Cora Maeweathers Beasley; Mrs. Crozella Mobley Jacobs (Presently on Mothers Board and Mother of the current pastor); Mrs. Victoria Bell (Former Pastor's Widow). Back Row: Chairman of Deacon Board, Deacon Edgar Simms; Reverend Henry Lewis; Deacon Prince "Doc" Brooks; Deacon Sebron Bellamy ; Deacon Irving Lewis; Mr. Isom Mobley. Photo courtesy of Audrey L. Brown, 1986, 'Tis the Old Ship of Zion; Rituals and Oral Traditions of Afro-Baptist Churches in Florida, 1983-1986. *Audio and videotapes. Ocala, FL: n.p.*

Figure 14. Mother of Church, Zion Baptist Church, 1880-2001. Chart courtesy of Audrey L. Brown.

Family and Church Social Organization

Social Organization	Family	Church
Matrilocal	People live near their mother's people	People attend their mother's church
Matrifocal	Veneration of motherhood and mothers.	Elderly women are called "church mothers."
	Expressed in biological of fictive motherhood.	Highest prestige accorded elected "Mother of the Church"
	Expressed in physical care for elderly mothers.	
Matrilineal	People reckon descent through their mother's family	Mother of the Church Office only held by female descendents of first and second Mothers of the Church (circa 1880-2001)

Table 1. Comparison of Family and Church Social Organization

architecture and settlement patterns to West African customs and material culture can be supported or refuted by observation. However, making the argument that matrifocality in Zion family and church social organization are "Africanisms" is more problematic. Social scientists question, if there are "Africanisms" in African American culture, how does one identify them and explain the persistence of some African cultural traditions and not others? Herskovits held that what he called "Survivalisms" are likely to be found in religious cultural forms and that one could best identify African patterns by comparing the intensity with which they present themselves along a continuum beginning in the Caribbean and ending in urban areas of North America. If the form was of African origin, he theorized, it would be most recognizable and intense in the Caribbean and least evident in the northern urban milieu.(26) Following his model I searched for the presence or absence of a woman with the title, role and functions like the "Mother of the Church." I looked at Jamaica Revivalists and Spiritual Baptists of Barbados,(27) two religious communities with ethnohistorical linkages to North American Afro Baptists dating back to the late 18th century.(28) I also searched for evidence of an emphasis on "Mother" in New Ferryfield Baptist Church on John's Island, South Carolina; Salem Baptist Church in Washington, DC and Kaighn Avenue Baptist Church in Camden, New Jersey.

I found the title of "Mother" used in different variations for elderly women of prestige was more or less emphasized in all of the religious communities except in New Jersey. Just as Herskovits predicted, the northern most, urban church demonstrated least evidence of the cultural form. Kaighn Avenue Baptist church, established in 1854, is one of the oldest Afro-Baptist congregations in New Jersey. In a 1986 interview the present pastor who told me there was no one with the title of Mother of the Church. At Salem Baptist Church, established in 1874 in Washington, DC, the Mother of the Church was the oldest living church member. She held the title but with no role-functions. At Ferryfield Baptist church, established in 1885, the Pastor's wife's mother was the Mother of the Church.

There were multiple "Mother" roles among the churchwomen in both Jamaica and Barbados. The Mother with the most Status in the Jamaica group had similar role-functions as those of the Florida Mother of the Church. [Figure 15] Much as Herskovits theorized, I found this social form had greatest intensity among the Spiritual Baptists in Barbados. There were greater numbers of Mother roles among them and probably most telling, the highest women's role was the Arch Mother. [Figure 16] The Arch Mother blesses the sea and sanctifies the beach where baptism takes place. The Arch Mother is also the sister of the group's leader evidence of matrilineal social organization.(29)

Matrifocality is clearly a West African cultural form. It was evident in the pre-contact social organization of ALL of the Sub-Saharan West African societies that were the provenance of the majority of the slaves coming to Barbados, Jamaica, the northern colonies and South Carolina between 1650 and 1806. The Mande, Akan, and the Kongo cultures were matrilineal. Even though Oyo, Benin and Dahomean social structure was patrilineal, females were central figures in their religious pantheons. Women held prestigious roles of religious ritual authority with the title of Mother, for example the Ilyorishas, or Mother of the Orishas [gods] among the Yoruba. Women were equal partners in the Ogboni and other secret societies that served as super-ordinate institutions for social control and whose members had great prestige.(30) In fact, matrifocal social forms within the context of religion, are among what Turner called "the same ideas, analogies and modes of association [which] underlie symbol formation and manipulation from the Senegal River to the Cape of Good Hope. They are symbols which remain extraordinarily viable," he noted, "and the themes they represent and embody are tenaciously rooted."(31) Herskovits suggested the tenacity of cultural patterns was related to the compelling nature of their cultural significance.

The Africanisms found in Zion are also expressed in a myriad of ways by African Americans in general. The cultural landscape I describe here is one where closeness and cooperation within and between families are as necessary now as they were 150 years ago. It seems to me that the social forms and material cultural Africanisms that continue to have salience in Zion are precisely those needed to sustain the community over time. Matrifocality in the family and the church expressed in roles and responsibilities of the Mother of the Church are, as Clifford Geertz put it, at once models for and of social reality, in this case what women had to do to maintain family and community integrity both physically and spiritually.(32) The West African architectural and settlement patterns promote living accommodations that seem to buttress the centrality of family. The primacy of family relationships and the closeness of family ties are forged in the intimacy of small size rooms, while the settlement patterns emphasize the necessity of closeness and cooperation between family groups.

The Africanisms in Zion are a microcosm of Africanisms in African America.

Figure 15. Episcopate Mother of a Revivalist Band Church, Kingston, Jamaica. Photo courtesy of Audrey L. Brown. 1988, REVIVAL! Kapo's Last Pentecost: Rituals and Oral Traditions of St. Michael's Tabernacle, a Jamaica Revivalist Band [Audiotapes, Slides and Videotapes] n.s., n.d.

Figure 16. Reverend Mother of Spiritual Baptist church, Ealings Grove, Barbados. Photo courtesy of Audrey L. Brown, 1989, Another Ark: Rituals and Oral Traditions of the Spiritual Baptists of Barbados 1988-1989, n.s., n.d.

One has only to observe the various award shows to be struck by the frequency with which Blacks receiving various awards, first give thanks to God and then to their family particularly their mothers. African American literature and ethnographies repeat themes and descriptions of settlement patterns in urban and rural settings that reinforce closeness and cooperation.(33) It seems to me that these discernable Africanisms in the cultural landscape of Zion represent values and belief systems that were and are necessary to sustain this particular community and African American communities in general. New Zion Baptist Church is still the central social institution in Zion as the church is still the central African American social institution. In Zion, Atlanta, and Harlem the family is in the church and families are the church.

When our politic representatives speak they use the idiom of the matrifocal family; a notable example is the referral to Rosa Parks as the "Mother " of the Civil Rights Movement. In the family and church, the emphasis on women as "mothers" in the church's social organization and their church roles of prestige, are African-derived cultural values and social forms which are materially significant to day-to-day family life that have sustained Zion over time, as a cultural landscape. A place of cultural memory, an imagined place where people can find respite from the realities of the everyday real world as well as not yet forgotten, if not always adhered to, principles to live by.

Endnotes

1. The paper is based on primary source ethnographic and archival data I collected between 1980 and 1994 in Florida, in other parts of the south, and the Caribbean, along with comparative data derived from the literature on African American archaeological sites. The research reported in this paper was funded by: National Endowment of the Humanities, Summer Seminar for College Teachers, Atlanta University, 1984; University of Florida Minority Graduate Student Fellowship, 1983-1984; National Institute of Health, NRSA, post-doctoral Advanced Research Training Grant, NU05738-01, 02, and 03, Department of Anthropology, University of Florida, 1984-1987; Fulbright Senior Research Fellowship, University of the West Indies, Cave Hill, 1988-1989; Thanks be to Grandma Winifred Foundation, 1993-1995; American University Graduate Student Fellowship, 1994-1996.

2. Eric Hirsh, "Introduction," in *The Anthropology of Landscape Perspectives in Time and Space,* eds., Eric Hirsh and Michael O'Hanlon, (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1995), 1-3.

3. Setha M. Low, "Cultural Conservation of Place," in *Conserving Culture: A New Discourse on Heritage,* ed., Mary Hufford (Chicago: University of Illinois, 1994), 66-67.

4. General D. L. Clinch, "Letterbook, 1834-1835, Fort King, FL," DLC; U.S. Territorial Census, 1840, "Alachua County, FL, Photo-reproduction of manuscript schedules. Tri-County Regional Library, Ocala FL.; U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1850. U.S. Census, Marion County FL. Microfilm of manuscript schedules, Tri-County Regional Library, Ocala FL; U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1860. U.S. Census, Marion County FL. Microfilm of manuscript schedules, Tri-County Regional Library, Ocala FL; U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1870. U.S. Census, Marion County FL. FL Photo-reproduction of manuscript schedules. Tri-County Regional Library, Ocala, FL; J. R. Giddings, *Exiles in Florida* (Columbus OH: n.p., 1858); Florida Bureau of Census. 1865. Florida State Census. Manuscript schedules. Tri-County Regional Library, Ocala FL; Florida Bureau of Census. 1885. Florida State Census. Manuscript schedules. Tri-County Regional Library, Ocala FL; J. C. Ley, *52 Years in Florida* (Nashville TN, Dallas TX: Publishing House of the M. E. Church South, Barbee and Smith, 1879); Kenneth Porter, "Florida Slaves and Free Negroes in the Seminole War, in *Journal of Negro History* 28(4)(1943): 390-421. Audrey L.Brown, "Gimme that Ol' Time Religion: Oral History Tapes, 1983-1984," Audiotapes and slides. (Marion County, Florida, n.s., n.d.)

5. Camp King came to be known as Fort King during the Afro-Seminole Wars. It was subsequently developed into the city of Ocala.

6. Ley, *52 Years in Florida,* 39-42.

7. Clinch, "Letterbook, 1834-1835," DLC; M. M. Cohen, *Notices of Florida and the Campaigns.* Florida State Museum Library (Gainesville: University of Florida Press, 1964[1863]).

8. US Bureau of the Census. 1870 US Census, marion County, FL, photo reproduction of manuscripts schedules. Tricounty Regional Library, Ocala, FL; Florida State Census, 1875, manuscript schedules. Tricounty Regional Library, Ocala, FL; Florida Bureau of the Census.

9. U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1870. U.S. Census, Marion County FL. Photo-reproduction of manuscript schedules. Tri-County Regional Library, Ocala FL Personal documents of the Abraham Lincoln Johnson Family 1883-1937; audiotapes of Malachi Green, Cora Maewathers Beasly, Mary Mobley, Willie Bostick, Harriet Jacob Lewis, Rosabelle Lewis Simms from Brown, "Gimme that Ol' Time Religion."

10. Audrey L. Brown, personal communication with "Doc" Prince Brooks.

11. George P. McKinney and Richard I. McKinney, *History of the Black Baptists of Florida 1850-1985* (Miami, FL: Florida Memorial College Press, 1987).

12. Brown, "Gimme that Ol' Time Religion."

13. According to oral history, the men were responsible for providing meats and fish in the past. Interestingly, in the 1980s they still were responsible for doing so just as they were when they hunted and fished for them.

14. Even though a nearby "horse farm," steadily encroaches upon these lands, buying up acreage whenever land came on the market to settle estates, much of the original hamlet is still evident in these old houses standing after new houses are built.

15. Brown, "Gimme that Ol' Time Religion"; and Census data

16. Amy Friedlander, "Establishing Historical Probabilities for Archeological Interpretations: Slave Demography of Two Plantations in the South Carolina Low Country, 1740-1820," in *The Archaeology of Slavery and Plantation Life,* ed. Theresa A. Singleton, 215-238 (Orlando, FL: Academic Press, 1985)

17. Thomas R. Wheaton and Patrick H. Garrow, "Acculturation and the Archaeological Record in the Carolina Low Country," in The Archaeology of Slavery and Plantation Life, ed. Theresa A. Singleton, 242, (Orlando, FL: Academic Press, 1985).

18. Wheaton and Garrow, "Acculturation and the Archaeological Record," 243-257.

19. Ibid, 243-247.

20. Ibid, 257.

21. S. Fiske Kelso, *Kingsmill Plantations,* 1619-1800 (New York: Academic Press, 1984); John M. Vlach, *By the Work of Their Hands: Studies in Afro-American Folk Life* (Ann Arbor, MI and London: UMI Research Press, 1991), 225.

22. James H. Deetz, *In Small Things Forgotten: The Archaeology of Early American Life* (New York: Doubleday, 1977).

23. Susan Denyer, *African Traditional Architecture: An Historical and Geographic Perspective* (New York: Africana Publishing Co., 1978) 18.

24. Herbert G. Gutman, *The Black Family in Slavery and Freedom 1750-1925* New York: Vintage Books, 1976), 209-210.

25. In 1993, after Cousin Rea died, the church conference elected Cousin Crozella Mobley Jacobs, a descendant of Abraham Lincoln Johnson through her father's mother. Cousin Crozella is also the mother of the current pastor. However she declined passing the title instead to Cousin Hattie Butler the granddaughter of Suzie Staggers.

26. Melville Herskovits, "Problems of Method and Theory in Afro-American Studies," in *The New World Negro*, ed., Frances Herskovits (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1966[1945]), 565-57.

27. The Revivalists evolved out of the Native Baptists, who were established by George Liele and Moses Baker, two ex-slave Afro-Baptist preachers from Georgia. Liele, who was born into slavery in Virginia in 1752, was converted and baptized by Matthew Moore, an ordained Baptist minister, becoming the first Black Baptist in Georgia. After being licensed to preach, between 1773-1775, he and his converts formed an Afro-Baptist church, on a plantation in Silver Bluff, South Carolina. In 1788, another of Liele's converts established the Bryan Street African Baptist Church in Savannah that was reorganized in 1794 as the First African Baptist Church.

Liele, freed in his master's will, traveled to Jamaica and Trinidad preaching to slaves and freedmen. Military companies of former slaves who fought for the Loyalists in the War of 1812 were freed in Trinidad. Liele traveled to Trinidad to preach to them and Africans still enslaved. The soldiers formed so called Company towns in Trinidad, where they practiced a more "Africanized" form of Baptist religion. They shared these communities with Yoruba peoples, who had also been freed by the British. The Spiritual Baptist religion evolved out of the syncretism between Yoruba orisha worship, called Shango in Trinidad, and the African American soldiers' spirited "African" form of the Baptist religion. See, Asram L. Stapelton, "The Birth and Growth of the Baptist Church in Trinidad and Tobago, and the Caribbean," (for the International Spiritual Baptist Ministerial Council, West Indies Pamphlet, West Indian Collection, U.W.I., Cave Hill, Barbados, 1982).

28. In 1988 I spent a week interviewing and videotaping at St. Michael's Revivalist Tabernacle, Kingston, Jamaica. I conducted participant observation in Barbados from October 1988 through May 1989 as an initiate of the Spiritual Baptist religious community.

29. Reverend Neverson of the St. Vincent Spiritual Baptist told me that Mother Reverend is the title of the highest woman's role in their religious community and she too is the church leader's sister.

30. Gwendolyn Midlo Hall, *Africans in Colonial Louisiana: Development of Afro-Creole Culture in the Eighteenth Century* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1992). Hall summarizes Germaine Dieterlen, *Essai sur la Religion Bambara* (Bruxelles, Belgique: Editions de l'Université de Bruxelles, 1988); Adu Boahen, with J.F. Ade Ajayi, and Michael Tidy, *Topics in West African History*, 2 nd ed (Edinburgh Gate, Harlow, Essex, England: Longman Group, 1986); Wyatt McGaffey, *Religion and Society in Central Africa: the Bakongo of Lower Zaire* (Chicago: Chicago University Press, 1986); Pascal Imperato, *Buffoons, Queens, and Wooden Horsemen; the Dyo and Gouan Societies of the Bambara of Mali* (New York: Kilima House, 1983); John M. Janzen, *Lemba, 1650-1930: a Drum of Affliction in Africa and the New World* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1982); Albert J. Raboteau, *Slave Religion : The "invisible institution" in the Antebellum South* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1978); W. T. Harris, and Harry Sawyer. *The Springs of Mende Belief and Conduct* (Freetown, Sierra Leone University Press [Distributed by the Oxford University Press, New York], 1968); E. Bolaji Idowu, *Olódùmarè; God in Yoruba Belief* (New York: Praeger, 1963); Karl Edvard Laman,. *The Kongo,* volume 4 (Upsala: Studia Ethnographica Upsaliensia, 1953-1968); Melville J. Herskovits, *Dahomey, an Ancient West African Kingdom* (New York: J.J. Augustin, 1938).

31. Victor W. Turner, "Symbols in African Ritual," in *Science* 179(1973): 1100-1105.

32. Clifford Geertz, "Religion as a Cultural System," in the *Interpretation of Cultures* (New York: Basic Books, 1973[1966]). For further discussion read: Audrey L. Brown, "Women & Ritual Authority in Afro-American Baptist churches of Florida," in *How Sweet the Sound: The Spirit of African American History,* Nancy E. Fitch, ed. (New York: Harcourt Brace Publishers, 2000); Idem, "Women & Ritual Authority in Afro-American Baptist Churches of Florida," in *Anthropology & Humanism Quarterly* 13(1)(1988): 2-10.

33. Zora Neal Hurston, *Dust Tracks on a Road: An Autobiography,* 2nd ed. (Urbana: University of Illinois Press 1984[1970]); Carol B. Stack, *All our Kin: Strategies for Survival in a Black Community* (New York, Harper & Row, 1974); Carol B. Stack, *Call to Home: African Americans Reclaim the Rural South,* (New York: Basic Books, 1996); Alice Walker, *The Color Purple: A Novel.* (New York: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1982); Melvin D. Williams, *On the Street Where I Lived* (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1981).

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Interwoven Traditions: Archaeology of the Conjurer's Cabins and the African American Cemetery at the Jordan and Frogmore Manor Plantations

Kenneth L. Brown

Within the past two decades a major focus of historical archaeology in North America has become the study of "people without history."(1) That is, historical archaeologists have begun to systematically investigate the lives, beliefs, and behaviors of people who left relatively few primary, readable written accounts despite their living within a "literate society." Thus, a written record of these "people without history" may exist. However, what is significant is that authors outside of the actual community under study produced that written record. For example, many written records describing the beliefs and behaviors, e.g., the culture, of enslaved Africans and African Americans exist, some even written and/or transcribed from the testimony of enslaved persons. However, the extant records discuss little to nothing concerning the details of the use and meaning conferred on the material culture or the landscape by enslaved and/or emancipated people of African descent. While oral testimony may add to our knowledge of this aspect of African American culture, detailed social archaeological investigation also has the potential to expand our knowledge well beyond the confines of people's inherited memories.

Unfortunately, much of the historical archaeological investigation of people of African descent in the New World has focused on questions related to the material items utilized by the enslaved. Included within these studies, one finds research focused upon the African origins of individual items from houses, tobacco pipes, the production of low-fired earthenware ceramics, the meaning of blue glass beads, and even the symbols placed on a number of these items.(2) Many of these studies were conducted with the explicit attempt to link African cultures with enslaved peoples in North America and/or the Caribbean. However, in a majority of these studies the actual meaning of these items and the symbols for peoples of African descent in the New World has been directly inferred from the Old World.(3) Only in very rare instances have the archaeological contexts for these objects been as systematically investigated. That is, what use and/or meaning did such objects have for people of African descent in North America, and this determination must be based upon the other directly associated artifacts. The question that needs to be addressed here relates to the construction of the culture of African Americans within the systems of enslavement and, later, freedom.

This paper represents an attempt to demonstrate the utility of archaeological research in defining use and meaning of objects recovered from sites occupied by both enslaved and free African Americans. This will also begin to define some of the use of space in, and, importantly, under the landscape of the sites. Within this paper, aspects of the archaeological record from two Quarters sites will be examined: The Levi Jordan Plantation, Brazoria County, Texas; and the Frogmore Manor Plantation, St. Helena Island, Beaufort County, South Carolina.

History and Archaeology of the Levi Jordan Plantation Quarters

Archaeological excavations, directed by the author, have been conducted within the slave and tenant quarters of the Levi Jordan Plantation, Brazoria County, Texas.(4) The Jordan Plantation Quarters Community was founded in this location in 1848. During the period from 1848 through the early 1870s, the plantation produced sugar and cotton as cash crops, along with wheat, corn, potatoes, and other subsistence foods. The work of the plantation was organized through the use of the gang labor regime. Jordan purchased the Texas land as the last in a series of plantations he bought, occupied, and sold stretching across the South, beginning in western South Carolina and continuing through Alabama, Louisiana, and Arkansas. At its pre-1865 height, the Jordan plantation had a resident enslaved population exceeding 140. After emancipation until the late 1880s, approximately 100 people resided within the tenant community occupying the old slave quarters. All of these individuals participated in agricultural activities as wage laborers, renters, and/or sharecroppers. A number of the members of the community practiced specialized occupations in addition to their farming activities, e.g., conjurer/mid-wife, carver, hunter, seamstress, blacksmith, and carpenter.

By the mid-1870s, sugar had been abandoned as a cash crop. However, cotton continued to be raised by tenants, sharecroppers, and wage laborers residing on, and around, the plantation through the late 1880s. Historical archaeological investigation of the plantation has focused on the recovery of detailed contextual information to permit the interpretation of the life of the enslaved people as well as the tenants who resided within the community. Historical research has demonstrated that the vast majority of the residents of the community during the post-emancipation period had previously been enslaved on the plantation.(5)

The Jordan Plantation investigation has been referred to as "the best known example" of an archaeological approach that has "…attempted to identify archaeological contexts and assemblages that represent religious behavior on the part of enslaved African Americans."(6) However, this research has developed evidence related to a much wider variety of behavioral patterns than is implied by the quote above. Economic, political, and social behaviors have been defined from the archaeological and historical research thus far conducted. The historical data concerning the continuity of population when combined with the archaeological evidence strongly supports the pre-emancipation nature of the behavioral patterns defined. Thus, this data, and its interpretation, has been employed to define a number of the adaptive responses made by members of the community to the conditions of both enslavement and freedom. While a number of historical archaeological studies have included the interpretation of African American ritual activities, the Jordan Community investigations (and recently concluded research at the Frogmore Manor Plantation on St. Helena Island, South Carolina) have identified a variety of archaeological contexts that aid in the definition of ritual activities and symbols for African American populations.(7) Several of these contexts at Jordan demonstrate the community-based nature of these religious, social, and economic behavioral patterns.

The research design for the Jordan Plantation slave and tenant quarters included a variety of activities. The standard excavation unit measured five feet by five feet. The stratigraphy of the site demonstrates that three broad levels were present within the artifact bearing deposit, each with its own depositional history and formation processes. The upper level included the modern topsoil and the brick rubble from the collapse of the walls of the structures over the past 110 years. The second level included a wide variety of artifacts, some whole, or that had entered the archaeological record whole and been broken after they were deposited. Further, within this level, a number of artifact types that would normally be employed together in an activity were found together in the ground. The third level contained small artifacts distributed in a somewhat more random fashion.

The artifacts contained in level two suggested that an intentional abandonment of the quarters had taken place at some point in the past. This abandonment was not known from any historical records we were (and are) aware of, nor did any members of the descendant families (black or white) have any information concerning such an event. However, the discovery of this artifact and context-rich zone forced an alteration of the excavation strategy.

Continuing with units that disturbed 25 square feet in this artifact and context rich zone did not appear to be an appropriate methodology. As the excavation grid had been imposed over the site, and several excavation units completed, the standard excavation unit remained five-feet by five-feet. However, immediately before excavating through the brick rubble layer, each of these units was divided into 25 one-foot by one-foot subunits. Further, unless the stratigraphy noted within a unit dictated otherwise, the standard level depth was 1/10th of a foot once the unit was placed into

subunits. The subunits and the level depth were maintained throughout the excavation of both the second and third artifact bearing zones. This methodology permitted the recording of highly specific provenience information, including actual maps, of the distribution of artifacts within zone two (the so-called "abandonment zone") and zone three (the so-called "sub-floor zone").

Archaeological investigation also included research within the African American cemetery on the original Jordan Plantation.(8) This research included the mapping and recording of surface features along with limited, though systematic, excavation. Initial surface survey involved establishing a grid over the cemetery area and mapping in the location of all apparent cultural features. The cultural features included on the map consisted of graves and other depressions, tomb markings, and plant types. This mapping project provided information on approximately 140 graves. The excavation was limited to testing ten percent of the unmarked grave shafts to determine if we were correct in our definition of these depressions as grave shafts. This investigation consisted of the excavation of one foot wide by five feet long units across the short axis of the depression. These units were excavated only as deep as was necessary to determine the presence or absence of a grave shaft. Any artifacts encountered in these excavation units were noted and left in place. No artifacts were collected or moved during this research. In all approximately 140 graves were recorded and mapped during this investigation. The data collected from the tombstones, oral history, and historic documents has permitted the identification of forty-eight of the individuals buried within this cemetery.

Throughout this project, historical and oral historical information has been collected related to the occupants of the plantation.(9) Black and white descendants have visited the site, viewed the data, were presented interpretation of structures and activities, and had their information recorded and incorporated into the interpretations. Federal census, county tax, and genealogical records have been investigated and analyzed in order to determine the families who occupied the plantation, and their roles within the community. The purpose of this portion of the investigation was to provide an active data source that could be employed to test, as well as interpret, the archaeological record. This active use of a number of legal records and family oral histories provided the apparent cause for the abandonment of the quarters between 1886 and 1888.(10)

Finally, the project's research design included the continual collection of ethnographic data from among the black and white descendants.(11) Additional ethnographic data has been obtained from reports of investigations conducted in Africa, the Caribbean, South America, and North America.(12) The ethnographic information has been utilized along with the historical data to interpret and test the artifacts and contexts recorded within the archaeological record of the Jordan Plantation's African American community.

The result of this approach has been data that can be utilized to define behavior and beliefs practiced and maintained by members of the Jordan Plantation community. Only those interpretations dealing with one occupational specialization, e.g., the Conjurer/Midwife, the determination of community membership, and spirituality practiced within the slave/tenant community will be summarized and discussed within this paper. However, a very brief description of some of the physical aspects of the Quarters area will be presented prior to this discussion. This description will provide some of the spatial organization of the residential portion of the community.

A Description of the Jordan Quarters

The Jordan Community was physically located approximately 350 feet north of the "Main House" area of the plantation. The area of the Jordan Plantation occupied by the community's cabins measures approximately 300 feet by 150 feet. The community members were housed in four blocks of paired "barracks-like" buildings. That is, each block consisted of two brick buildings set facing one another along a central hallway, with an in-ground cistern at the northern end of this hallway. Three (Blocks I, III, and IV) to four (Block II) individual cabins were contained in each of the buildings within the blocks. Thus, Blocks III, IV each contained six actual cabins, and I while Block II consisted of eight cabins. The exterior of the walls of each building was made of dry-laid bricks, while the interior divisions within and between the cabins were made of wood. Evidence suggests that a single, continuous roof covered each block. During the pre-1865 period, an additional "block" of three cabins was built near the Main House. The enslaved household staff occupied this set of cabins. After 1865, the occupants of this block who remained on the plantation took up residence within the 26 cabins of the Quarters.

Archaeology within the Quarters has suggested that within I, III, IV, and the Main House Block each cabin appears to have consisted of two rooms. The main room's floor space measured approximately 15 feet by 16 feet, and contained the hearth. The second room measured approximately six feet by 16 feet, and, in at least two cases these rooms function for both sleeping and

craft activities. Each hearth had its own chimney. In Block II, each of the eight cabins consisted of a single room measuring approximately 16 feet by 16 feet. While each cabin had its own hearth, the hearths in adjacent cabins in the same building shared a single chimney. The only "cabin" to vary from this pattern was cabin I-A-1, the Praise House discussed below. The reason for the different architecture of Block II may be that it was the first to be constructed, and may have been built prior to the Jordan's actually taking up residence on the plantation.

The Conjurer/ Midwife's Cabin (Cabin II-B-1)

The Conjurer/Midwife's residence is the northeast cabin in Block II of the slave and tenant quarters. This residence has been discussed in two previous publications, and appears to be best known as a result of the discovery of the so-called "Conjurer's Kit" located in the southeastern corner of the cabin.(13) The contents of this kit included a wide variety of artifacts including among other items five cast iron kettle bases, chalk, at least one sealed tube made of brass bullet casings, medicine bottles, and a thermometer. Adjacent to this deposit were water worn pebbles, mirror fragments, many square nails and spikes, several fake metal knife blades, a small doll, a concave metal disc, several ocean shells, and a number of blue glass beads. These artifacts have been interpreted as representing both the actual curing kit as well as the remains of an Nkisi similar to those found among the BiKongo peoples of West Africa. The Nkisi was employed as an integral part of the curing ritual among West African groups, but this represents its first interpreted presence in North America. Taken together, this full set of materials was utilized in the manipulation of the supernatural world for the benefit of the health of members of the community.

However, within this cabin there are at least four other ritual deposits, three of which, when combined with the conjurer's kit, form a cosmogram. The northern most of the three deposits consists of a set of seven silver coins. This set includes four quarters, two dimes, and a perforated half-dime. The coins had been deposited tightly wrapped together by cloth. Little of the cloth remained, but what was left appears to be coarsely woven cotton. The coins may have been ordered in a particular way within the cloth before being placed into a small hole, dug into the soil below the floor of the cabin. The set of coins was placed into the ground so that the coins were "standing" nearly vertically on their sides. They were oriented on a north-south axis. The perforated half-dime (dated 1853) was on the outside facing south, then came three quarters (two dated 1853 and one dated 1858), then the two dimes (one dated 1853 and the other 1858), followed by the last quarter (dated 1858). Thus, only two years were represented among the dates of these seven coins.

On the west side of the cabin was another interesting type of Nkisi deposit. The artifacts of this feature had been intentionally placed in a small pit dug into the soil adjacent to the brick foundation and under what appears to have been the doorway into the cabin. This set of materials included a wide variety of artifacts, nearly all of which were made of cast iron. The primary focus of this feature was two cast iron kettles placed upright, one inside the other. A third, smaller kettle had been broken and the pieces of the walls had been placed on top of the other two kettles. The bottom of this kettle was found approximately five feet to the northeast. Before the two kettles were placed one inside the other, the bottom kettle had ash placed into it. This ash lens was the sealed by the upper kettle. The upper kettle contained a few objects of metal, ocean shells, glass, small bone fragments, and soil. Indeed, the kettle may have been filled simply by the accumulation of items falling through cracks in the floorboards. These kettles were wrapped around their circumference by a heavy chain.

Two "lines" of artifacts radiated out from these kettles. Toward the northeast were Confederate military buttons, large bone fragments, unperforated cockleshells, more chain, and a complete bayonet. Toward the southeast a number of large metal objects were placed along with two additional Confederate military buttons, a quartz crystal, perforated cockleshells. The large metal objects included a hinge, several spikes, a bolt, and a fragment of a plow. This feature likely formed a Nkisi that aided in ritually securing the protection of the cabin, its occupants, and the activities conducted inside from harm that might be caused by powerful elements from the outside world. However, this set of artifacts may not solely symbolize this transition. These artifacts may also represent an *amula* to Ogun, a Yoruba deity, similar to those noted from Cuba.

Another deposit was discovered after the previous three, and as a direct result of an archaeological test to discover a possible meaning for the others. That is, taken together, the previous three deposits could be interpreted as having represented the eastern, northern, and western points of a cosmogram, the BiKongo symbol for the cycle of life as well as an important curing symbol. The eastern point of the cosmogram is represented by the Conjurer's kit, which would be employed in helping to give and maintain life. The northern point on

a cosmogram represents the height of one's power in this world, and maleness. To the north the set of coins was located. The western point on the cosmogram represents the point of passage from this world to the next—the process of moving from life to death. The presence of the ash and the distribution of perforated and unperforated shells may support a symbolic view of this transition. Thus, it was felt that one possible test of the cosmogram hypothesis would be the discovery of an artifact feature forming the southern point which, on the cosmogram, represents the height of one's power in the spirit world, and one's femaleness.

During the excavation of the living area of the cabin around the hearth, no such feature was encountered. However, excavation within the hearth area did produce a deposit of artifacts that forms the southern point as predicted by the cosmogram model. Based upon the presence of a lens of soil and brick over this feature, this deposit was placed into the hearth sometime after completion of the fireplace. The feature itself consisted of a hole dug into the soil supporting the base of the hearth and chimney. Ash, burned ocean shell, and burned square nails and spikes were placed on the floor of this hole. The hole was then filled with soil and brick rubble and the hearth floor reconstructed. This represents the only feature placed into a hearth yet discovered within the Quarters area of the plantation. At the risk of being considered "politically incorrect," in light of the traditional female association for the southern point on the cosmogram, it is interesting that it was placed within the hearth of the cabin. Certainly, however, placement within the hearth may have been the result of the shape of the cabin and the need to maintain cardinal directions while placing the points of the cosmogram. The importance of hearth and household will be noted later in yet another context.

Each of these four features within the Conjurer/Midwife's Cabin support the interpretation of an African American behavioral and belief system—one that serves to control the outside world through the manipulation of the supernatural world. The full set of artifacts and contexts suggest that many of the basic ideas and rituals were of African origins. Very importantly, however, they show an interesting mix of materials from at least two West African cultural groups—BiKongo and Yoruba. However, the patent medicine bottles and the thermometer demonstrate some adaptation of non-African ideas as well. That is, all of these elements support the hypothesis that the conjurer/midwife had sanctified the floor space of the cabin for its use within the ritual performance of curing, conjuring, and, possibly giving birth. In the truest sense of the word, these features, along with the artifacts present, represent an example of the creolization process in operation.

Praise House/Prays House (Cabin I-A-1)

Cabin I-A-1, the northwest "cabin" within Block I has been identified as a "Community Building."(14) Given the artifacts excavated from this cabin, and Barnes' analysis of this material, it is likely that the model of a "Praise House/Prays House" more clearly defines its uses.(15) Excavations were begun here as the final test for the arrangement of the Quarters area at the time of its abandonment. At the time, it was decided that the testing of this cabin would provide information on the apparent "two-room" nature the tenant/sharecropper cabins. Further, the excavation of this cabin had the potential to provide information on the earliest slave quarters on the plantation along with the brick manufacturing area that had been located below this Block of cabins. The first two units excavated into the cabin yielded a surprisingly low frequency of artifacts. However, not only was the amount of material lower than expected, even in so-called "non-abandoned cabins," but there was less variability in the artifact types present. Therefore, additional units were excavated in an attempt to more completely determine the nature of the deposits within this cabin.

These units revealed additional differences between the sub-floor deposits in this cabin and all of the other 16 cabins tested. These differences include: the reduction in artifact frequency and variability, the movement of the hearth, an increase in the size of the cabin, and several sub-floor features not previously observed in other cabins. As a result of the continued excavation of this cabin, artifact counts and distributions have not been completed. However, a few tentative and general comments can be made. First, total artifact counts per unit within this cabin appear to be from one-quarter to one-third of the counts for other cabins. Second, this represents the only cabin in which the building material artifact class is, by far, the largest. Indeed, one artifact type—square nails—makes up close to 25% of the artifacts recovered. Third, artifact types that generally appear in high frequencies in other cabins, such as ceramics, cooking, and eating utensils, bottle glass, bone, buttons, various personal items, and shell, are in very low frequency within this cabin. Thus, the artifact classes indicative of residential activities are the ones that exhibit the low frequency of occurrence. Other than a badly broken pocketknife, no tools were found within this cabin. Again, this is atypical of the artifact inventories of

the other 16 cabins tested, in that it is the only cabin that lacked tools. On this evidence, it is possible to conclude that this cabin, unlike all of the others tested, may not have served as a residence. Although, it may have had a residential function for only a short period of time.

On the other hand, certain artifact types appear at a somewhat higher frequency in this cabin than in others. This "higher frequency" is likely the result of the low overall artifact density, thus making rare artifact types appear in higher frequency. However, the types of artifacts involved are interesting. The artifact types noted in higher than normal frequencies include: buttons, coins/metal tokens, fragments of slate boards, and slate pencils. The frequency of jewelry is approximately the same, or very slightly higher, in I-A-1 than for the other cabins tested.

One item of jewelry appears to be extremely significant in the determination of the function and meaning of this "cabin." This item is a small brass cross set with five cut red glass pieces and suspended on a small brass chain. The cross and chain were found to have been placed approximately in the geographic center of the cabin. When discovered, the cross was oriented north to south, with the actual cross located to the south of the closed-clasp chain. The chain and cross appear to have been deliberately placed below the floor, rather than having been "dropped." Indeed, the appearance was almost as if it was "on display" in a very shallow hole scooped out of the soil below the floor. Equally important, in terms of its deposition, the clasp on the chain was closed. This last point may represent a further indication that the cross and its chain may not have simply become lost below the floorboards. Certainly it could have been lost after being removed by the person wearing it, and then dropped through the floor boards of the cabin before it was known to have been lost, the closed clasp and the slight depression in the ground surface, at least supports the possibility of its having been intentionally placed. This positioning within the cabin, the location of the cross, vis-à-vis the chain, and the closed clasp all aid in making this item potentially very important in the determination of the function and meaning of the cabin. That is, the cross might support the hypothesis that the meaning and function of the cabin was within the Christian religious views held by members of the community: the "cabin" was the location of the "Prays House."

This hypothesis is further supported by the presence of two coins located near the cross. One of these coins, an 1858 half-dollar piece, was found two feet north of the cross. The second coin is an 1858 half dime found 3.5 feet west of the cross. The coins appeared to be located roughly on the lines that would be created if one were to continue outward from the cross along two of its axis's (e.g., north and west from the cross). Also, it should be noted that both of these silver coins date to the same year as at least six of the seven coins in the cosmogram placed beneath the floor of the Conjurer/Midwife's Cabin. Again, both the location of the coins, and their date, supports the hypothesis that they are related to the cross, and functioned within the same sub-system as the cross and chain. While more excavation is required to determine if coins, or other items, radiate out from the cross on the east and south, the cross/chain and coins may represent a cosmogram with the cross in the center. This might suggest either another example of the creolization process, or a statement of completing views of the organization of the way the world operates.

Another point of support for the Prays House function of the "cabin" is that at some point early in the history of its use, the hearth was moved outside of the main room, and its size was slightly increased. Early Prays Houses in the Gullah area of the Lowcountry were built without hearths. Excavation along the west wall demonstrated that the original hearth was located near the northwest corner of the cabin, as defined by the presence of the wall trench for a hearth in this area. At some point this hearth was moved approximately 12 to 13 feet southward along the west wall. It is here that the remains of the brick walls of the hearth were found. Excavation of the west side of the rebuilt hearth walls demonstrated that they met, but were not integrated into, the western brick wall of the cabin block. This is the only set of hearth walls not integrated into a cabin block wall in the ten cabins excavated where this could be investigated.

Further, no other hearth was found within the main room of the cabin. Thus, the movement of the hearth also had the impact of increasing the size of the "cabin" nearly seven feet toward the south. That is, the newly reconfigured "cabin" would have measured 16 feet by 28-29 feet. Robert Harris's analysis of cabin I-B-3, the "Carver's Cabin," the standard cabin size in Block I was 16 feet by 22 feet, and cabins appeared to have had two rooms within this space. Thus, the extension of cabin I-A-1 would have increased its size; while at the same time reduced the size of cabin I-A-2 by almost exactly the amount of the narrow interior room defined by Harris.

The heaviest distribution of artifacts that appear to be indicative of residential-type activities was located within this extended area of the cabin. In general, the dating of the bulk of the materials deposited here, supports the view that

this extension to the cabin was utilized very late in the use-history of the cabin (post 1880). Thus, it is likely that this material was deposited sometime after the extension of the cabin and the movement of the hearth, but exactly when cannot be determined. However, cabin I-A-1 was reconfigured into a larger two-room cabin (with one of the rooms measuring 16 feet by 22 feet and the second measuring 16 feet by 6 feet) much earlier during its use. This would have made it the largest cabin in the quarters. In this light, the lack of artifacts indicative of a domestic function is all the more interesting and important.

In this context, two unique sub-floor deposits were discovered within this cabin. The first extended around the eastern and northern sides of the reconstructed hearth. This was a thick intentionally placed deposit of ash and charcoal. Mixed into the ashy matrix of this feature were bones (some very large), small ceramic shards, small glass shards, broken buttons, burned shell, and square nails. This material was placed into a shallow hole, approximately four to six inches in depth, dug out to a distance of approximately one foot out from the eastern and northern walls of the hearth. Clearly, ash and charcoal tend to increase in frequency on the surface of the ground as one approaches the hearth walls in each of the cabins thus far investigated. However, the situation in the so-called Prays House represents the only time that a special hole was dug around the hearth to hold this material. Further, this is the only time that charcoal, ash, and small household artifacts appear to have been deposited, as opposed to their having accumulated, around the hearth.

The second deposit was found along the eastern wall of the cabin. The feature consists of a shallow pit dug into the soil likely near the area of the entrance to the cabin. Lime-based plaster was employed to produce a raised design on the floor of the hole. The matrix filling the hole and surrounding the “sculpture” consisted soil containing many tiny pieces of the same white, lime-based plaster and very few brick fragments. The soil matrix into which the hole was dug contained a very high density of brick fragments, thus suggesting the hole was not refilled with the soil originally dug out of it. The hole had been capped by two layers of firmly packed, finely crushed brick separated by a thin lens of tightly packed soil. Unfortunately, we have not been able to fully determine what the intended design might originally have been. Tree roots and ground water have destroyed a large portion of the design that was originally present. As with the feature connected with the hearth, this is the only sealed deposit of plaster yet discovered on the site.

Initially, this cabin appears typical of the others in Block I in terms of size and function—it was a residence. However, early in its use, the cabin was physically altered and its function changed. In attempting to interpret the reconstructed cabin’s function, the archaeological deposit was tested against Margaret Creels’ ethnographic description of a Gullah Praise House (or Prays House).(16) Unfortunately, she does not include any discussion of the material items and artifact contexts associated with such a structure. However, a number of test implications that might be developed from her model are met by this structure. For example, she states that the Praise House was the first cabin in the quarters, often originally the residence of an important person within the enslaved community. This is confirmed by the data from cabin I-A-1.

The presence of the cross, the coins, and the ash feature around the hearth all suggest a community ritual nature for the reconstructed cabin. Both Creel(17) and Patricia Guthrie(18) have demonstrated that, among the Gullah, the Praise House functioned as the center of community religious and political activities. In their data, households and residences on a plantation define communities, and households are defined by the presence of hearths. Thus, it is not a great leap to attempt to interpret the ash, charcoal, and burned household artifact deposit around the reconstructed hearth as having been intentionally placed to demonstrate community membership, and helping to secure Praise House membership. Limited historical information further suggests the presence of a religious structure for the black community on the Jordan Plantation prior to 1870.

The African American Cemetery

David Bruner conducted research within the plantation’s African American cemetery during 1994-96.(19) This investigation was primarily oriented toward the mapping of the cultural features within the cemetery. Initially, the cemetery was located and its boundaries defined by oral testimony. That is, the currant landowner, a descendant of Levi and Sarah Jordan, as well as an individual with several ancestors buried within the cemetery, provided information on its location and extent. In order to insure that the complete cemetery was included within out research, the initial mapping project extended outside the “traditionally” defined boundaries. A grid was superimposed over the area, and all mapping was done from the grid points. A total of 140 probable graves were recorded in this mapping operation. Of these potential grave shafts, 37 were marked in some fashion at the surface.

However, only twelve were marked in the traditional European American fashion with head- and/or foot-stones. The others were marked with a variety of forms of markers—e.g., pipes, railroad rails driven into the ground, and other forms of metal "objects." No signs of wooden markers remained on the surface at the time of the investigation. The vast majority of potential graves, therefore, lacked surface monuments. In order to determine the actual number of graves present, it was decided that two additional operations would be undertaken to aid in the definition of graves: the use of a metal detector, and highly controlled and limited excavation.

A metal detector was employed in an effort to determine whether or not a pattern of metal artifacts was present within the area of an unmarked potential grave depression that might indicate the presence of a coffin within the depression. This operation was successful in determining the apparent location of coffins below the surface of the ground within the several of the depressions defined. Also significant was the observation that no "coffin [p]atterns" were defined unless there was a depression present. However, not all depressions revealed the presence of a coffin through this operation. The metal detector also discovered a number of objects that appear to mark graves, in an African American fashion—e.g., metal "pipes." A number of these pipes were no longer observable from the surface. However, based upon the information from marked graves, pipes had been placed standing upright near the western end of graves within this cemetery. Therefore, the information from the metal detector portion of the survey suggested that such pipes could be employed as grave markers, even if the original intent was not for this purpose. Metal pipes were employed to "connect" many of the dead buried within the cemetery with the surface.

Further, shallow excavation units were placed within the cemetery focusing solely on the confirmation of grave shafts and, in a very limited fashion, to aid in the illustration of the surface treatment of the graves. That is, units one foot wide and up to five feet long were excavated across a randomly selected ten percent sample of the unmarked, potential grave depressions. Excavation in these units was continued until it was determined whether or not an actual grave shaft was present. No bodies were disturbed, and no artifacts were collected during this operation. When artifacts were discovered in these units, they were left in place, and excavation continued down around them. Bottles, ceramics, knives, plow parts, car parts, and tractor parts were identified as having been placed on top of or within the graves. All of the depressions tested were determined to have straight-walled shafts that were interpreted as graves.

Based upon this archaeological investigation, the cemetery appears to be the resting place for the physical remains of approximately 140 individuals. Research into a variety of records (both written and oral) was employed in an effort to determine the names of the actual individuals present. Study of the information derived from the head stones, combined with genealogical data, death certificates, oral historical knowledge, and other information, has revealed the identities of approximately one-third of the individuals believed to have been interred within the cemetery. In turn, this evidence has led to an interesting hypothesis concerning the decision-making pattern for burial within this cemetery. With one exception, only people known to have spent their childhood on the plantation were buried in this cemetery during the 125 years of its active use. Spouses of those buried in the cemetery and who did not grow up on the plantation are buried elsewhere.

The single known exception is that of a week old child who died in 1973. This child was, however, born into a family that had continued to live on land that was part of the original Jordan Plantation. Indeed, the child was buried in the portion of the cemetery employed by the family through the 1970s. The scope of this project did not include the investigation of other plantation cemeteries in an attempt to determine if it was possible to identify whether or not they also demonstrate this pattern. However, this pattern appears to be similar to that defined for the Gullah by Guthrie.(20)

Another of the important discoveries made during this survey was the presence of a metal object placed in the ground between the edge of the slough and a set of ten graves. For a variety of reasons, it appears likely that these graves were the earliest ones placed within the cemetery, and may represent the graves of enslaved individuals. This object consisted of a metal half-circle welded onto a railroad rail. Bruner noted that this marker resembles the lower half of a cosmogram—the half which signifies that portion of the life cycle related to death and one's life in the spirit world.(21) This marker does not appear to have been placed on or near a grave. It is, on the other hand, likely that this marker (along with the yucca plants that flank it on either side) identifies the entrance to the cemetery from the slough. If this was, indeed, the case, then a link can be made between the symbolism employed within the community's cemetery and beliefs expressed in a number of contexts within the community itself.

Excavations at Frogmore Manor Plantation

Historical archaeological investigation at the Frogmore Manor Plantation Quarters was begun during March, 1998, under the direction of the author. At the request of the landowner, excavations had to be concluded in August, 2000. In this case, excavation was undertaken solely within the area of the Quarters, although the main house and at least one of the eighteenth century plantation buildings are still in use. Historical records indicate that the Quarters were first built and occupied by enslaved Africans and African Americans owned by William Bull sometime after 1770. By the time of his death in 1791, William Bull operated a sea island cotton plantation covering over 3,300 acres with at least two Quarters areas: the one excavated during our project, and a second one inhabited by enslaved people owned by Bull's overseer, a Mr. Robertson, and located on the northern end of the original plantation, near the modern town of Frogmore.

The earliest written documentation related to the Frogmore Manor Quarters consists of a 1791 map showing the location of the Quarters and several of the plantations other structures. At that time, the Quarters consisted of 18 houses with an enslaved population of less than 100 people. Under the ownership of Colonel John Stapleton and, later, William Grayson, the enslaved population had increased to over 170. Not including the Federal Census lists, a series of four "slave lists" exist for the plantation spanning the period from 1791 (Bull's probate record) through 1852 (Grayson's sale of enslaved people). Each of these lists is in family groups and includes such information as gender, age, occupation, and, in three cases, continent of origin. Thus, the actual written documentation for the enslaved population that occupied the Frogmore Manor Quarters is much more complete than that for Jordan. However, for the purposes of this paper, two aspects of the record are critical: one, that the populations of enslaved people were relatively "the same," and two, that one of the occupations listed at Frogmore Manor was that of "midwife."

The excavation methodology followed at Frogmore Manor was essentially identical to that employed at Levi Jordan. The major exception being that the size of the unit was changed from five by five to three by three. This alteration of the initial unit size was deemed necessary as a result of the sand soil matrix encountered on St. Helena Island. However, these units were also divided into subunits after the first level removed the forest leaf litter. The continuation of the use of subunits throughout this excavation was maintained for two reasons: one, the aid in recording detailed archaeological context, and two, to aid in identifying the two primary house types (based upon their foundation) for enslaved people known from the Carolina Lowcountry, if the types existed within this community.

Prior to discussing the results of our excavation into one of the Frogmore Manor Quarters residences, it is necessary to point out that our investigations at Frogmore Manor, while terminated, are not complete. Therefore, some of the results are tentative at this time. After originally agreeing to four field seasons of excavation, during the third field season it was requested that we not return. The current landowners were receiving a great deal of pressure from other members of their large extended family to have the excavations halted. According to the owners, the rest of the family is certain that we could somehow steal their land as a result of the presence of an important archaeological site. While the owners were assured that such an event could not happen, and were given copies of existing South Carolina and Federal Laws to that effect, nothing would alter their opinion. Thus, excavations were terminated before the planned completion date, leaving important information unavailable.

That having been said, we were able to recover information on at least eleven cabins (five from the early Quarters and six from the later Quarters) and a possible lime and/or ceramic kiln. Of these cabins, two were extensively excavated, both from the later Quarters. The results of one of the excavations of one of these cabins will be presented here as they relate to the Conjurer/Midwife's cabin at Jordan.

The Possible Conjurer/Midwife's House

The house was located in the eastern portion of the Quarters as defined by our testing. Approximately 50% of the original cabins floor area was investigated during our excavations. Of importance here was the discovery of four sub-floor features centered on each of the four walls of the cabin. Two of these deposits consisted of the intentional burial of articulated animals, one a storage pit, and the other a deposit of ash and burned shell and metal. These four deposits appear to form a cosmogram below the floor of the cabin. Unlike the Jordan cosmogram, however, this cosmogram was oriented to the walls of the cabin, and not to cardinal directions.

The first deposit was discovered during the Summer 1999 field season. The deposit consists of a fully articulated chicken placed in a small hole facing east with its wings slightly extended to

either side. The chicken had been placed below a broken base of a green glass wine bottle. As yet, we have been unable to determine how the bird was killed. It was the discovery of this deposit that led to the decision to excavate a number of additional units in the area in an attempt to determine the reason for the burial of this animal. This later excavation has demonstrated that the chicken had been placed along the western wall of the cabin.

The second deposit was discovered during the Summer 2000 field season. The deposit consisted of an almost fully articulated young cow. Upon complete excavation, it was determined that the cow was missing its tail. Like the chicken, the cow had been placed into a hole with its legs and head facing to the east. One major difference between the positioning of the cow and the chicken was that the cow was placed lying on its side and the chicken had been placed standing up. The cow was placed below both a green glass wine bottle base and a complete wine bottle. As with the chicken these glass objects had been placed upside down. A large portion of a colonoware vessel was also recovered from above the cow in the fill of the pit. The cow was placed to the northeast of the chicken, and along the northern wall of the cabin.

The third deposit was also discovered during the Summer 2000 field season. Indeed, both the third and forth deposits were found as a direct result of a test that the cow and chicken formed two of the four deposits of a cosmogram. The third deposit consisted of a shallow, rectangular pit placed below the ground surface immediately in front of the cabin's fireplace. At the time of its excavation, the pit contained a great deal of shell (possibly from the disintegration of the fireplace base), a complete green glass wine bottle, the fragments of another wine bottle missing its base, a long cast iron "needle," a large blue glass bead, several mirror fragments, a number of smoothed bone fragments, and several colonoware sherds. Samples of the soil were collected for possible botanical analysis. This deposit may have been a "hidey-hole," and unrelated to the other deposits, except for three factors: the wine bottles, the association of artifacts the help to comprise the conjurer's kit at Jordan and in the ethnographic examples recorded by Bascom, and the fact that no other houses for which hearths have been identified (four) had these pits.(22) This deposit was located northeast of the cow, but it would have been placed alone the eastern wall of the cabin.

The forth deposit was also discovered during the Summer 2000 field season. This deposit was the most ephemeral of the four. It consisted of a fine, lime ash, with very small fragments of burned shell and metal (including a number of small nails). This deposit was placed in a very shallow hole scooped into the sand. The texture of the sand lined the bottom of the pit suggested that the materials might have been burned *in situ.* However, later depositional factors have had the effect of softening this burned lens, and making it difficult to determine if the materials were actually burned there. The artifacts recovered from within this deposit are identical to those of the southern deposit in the cosmogram interpreted from the Jordan Quarters, and like that one, the one at Frogmore was located on the southern wall of the cabin.

Taken together, these four deposits directly mirror the cosmogram deposits recovered from the Jordan Quarters, and the ethnographically defined meanings of the four points of a cosmogram found in West African contexts. The only major difference between the two cosmograms is the use of animals at Frogmore Manor, rather than the European American technology employed in the Jordan cosmogram. However, the meanings of the deposits appear to have been identical. Indeed, the Frogmore Manor deposits have a much more "African" appearance. Cattle often symbolize wealth in many West African cultures, while protection from spirits can be obtained from chickens. In both Frogmore Manor and Jordan, chickens were sacrificed and then buried fully articulated, though in the case of Jordan this may have been done at the death of the Conjurer/Midwife's two children and husband during the 1870s.

Summary and Conclusions

There can be no question that African cultural traditions became actively incorporated into African American culture through the interactions and adaptations made by Africans, Europeans, and Native Americans who operated within the system of enslavement practiced in the American South. For Africans and African Americans, however, a number of these traditions had to be maintained through their being hidden from the wider, dominant society. Thus, the traditions had to continued but in an "underground" and/or altered expression from those originally practiced in Africa. Some could be hidden within the traditions and beliefs of the dominant culture, as in the Christianity of the Prays House.(23) Sometimes they were hidden, as Bruner stated, in "plain view" within the landscape they created.(24) In other cases, the symbolic representatives of the beliefs and behaviors had to literally be hidden from the view of individuals both within and outside the community. Thus, for African Americans the placement of objects below ground was far more

important than had been the case in Africa. Given the power of the inhabitants of the spirit world, placement out of view, below cabin floors or other locations below ground, even on their bodies, had no impact on the efficacy of the deposits thus "hidden"/placed out of view.

The detailed contextual historical archaeological research of the African American communities of the Jordan and Frogmore Manor Plantations have revealed a number of patterns of behavior along with symbolic representations that appear to have antecedents in Africa: the conjurer, the cosomograms, and other symbolically charged objects, along with a number of beliefs and rituals connected with the burial of the dead. Further, the information discovered during both the Jordan and Frogmore Manor Quarters excavations have also revealed another pattern found within the African American expression of this symbolic culture. That is, for the most part, these displays are hidden from the view of individuals within this world, especially those of the dominant culture, unlike in West Africa where they could be placed into the above ground landscape defined by the inhabitants.

However, what is important in this transition from plain view to hidden is that the elements were still "visible" to inhabitants of the supernatural world. These elements still functioned to aid in the manipulation and maintenance of the supernatural world—a world still heavily defined by the beliefs of peoples of African descent. Such patterns appear similar to historically and ethnographically defined practices from the Caribbean, South America, North America, and, most importantly, the Gullah of the Sea Islands where Frogmore Manor is located.(25)

Clearly, over time the material objects that have symbolic importance within African American systems of belief and behavior were changed from their African counterparts. As people of African descent became increasingly confronted with European American technology they gave it meaning and value within their own cultural contexts. In this they had little choice. Stores and merchants in the New World spent little effort importing the goods from Africa necessary for African belief and behavioral practices to continue with the same materials that might have been employed in Africa. Further, the pattern of cultural repression practiced by European Americans noted above, literally drove people of African descent to a redefinition of meaning and beliefs connected with European American technology and definition of the landscape around them. Thus some of the behavioral and belief patterns noted by historians and historical archaeologists appear to represent adaptations to life under the conditions of enslavement.(26) These patterns would include: determination of community membership, treatment after death, Prays House, and internal community craft production.

The two cosmograms defined from Frogmore Manor and Jordan represent this change from more "African" material culture to European American items being assigned identical meanings. Unfortunately, it is this change toward European American material culture that has caused historical archaeologists "trouble" in defining African and African American impacts on the landscape of American culture. We have spent too much time looking for African material culture, rather than African meaning and value assigned to European American material items. Historians and historical archaeologists have conceived of African practices/material expressions as "retentions" rather than as what they are—elements of a new culture constructed to permit survival within the oppressive systems of enslavement and tenancy/sharecropping. We have taken the view that the dominant culture "provided" the beliefs and behaviors that African and people of African descent had to follow. Phillip Morgan even assigns the role of the labor system as the determining character for "African American cultural retentions."(27) In this view, people of African descent are merely vessels that slowly are filled with European American culture. Clearly, the material presented above suggests this view is totally inadequate. Peoples of African descent played the major role in their cultural development. They simply placed it in contexts "hidden from view."

Notes

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17. Ibid; "Gullah Attitudes Toward Life and Death," in *Africanisms in American Culture,* ed. Joseph E. Holloway (Bloomington, Indiana University Press, 1991), 69-97.

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19. Bruner, "Hidden Power."

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Session Four:

LEGACIES OF URBAN REALMS AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

As people of African descent arrived in or moved to the burgeoning cities, they established uniquely urban cultures. In rural areas, many black towns were established during Reconstruction, where blacks expressed their environmental and commercial values and traditions. Historic and continuing influences of African origins are evident on both the urban and rural landscape.

Traditional African Architecture and Its Impact on Place Making: Case Studies From African and African American Communities

Abimbola O. Asojo

Gardening, Yard Decoration, and Agriculture Among People of African Descent in the Rural South and the Cayman Islands

Richard Westmacott

***Por La Encendida Calle Antillana:* African Influences on Puerto Rican Architecture**

Arleen Pabón

Traditional African Architecture and Its Impact on Place Making: Case Studies from African and African-American Communities

Abimbola O. Asojo

Since the era of independence from colonial rule in African nations and the civil rights movements in the United States, Africans and African-Americans have engaged in developing new identities through the integration of culture in the design of contemporary societies. This paper examines the impact of cultural, historical, and traditional African architecture on historical and contemporary design practices. Traditional architectural forms from Africa are presented to illustrate significant elements of the style, its applications, and implications on contemporary design practices in African and African-American communities.

Traditional African Architecture

Traditional African architecture varies from simple rectangular dwellings in clay, to round houses, tents, sophisticated tombs, obelisks, palaces, pyramids, and monumental structures built by peoples of varying cultures all over Africa. A diversity of building forms existed in traditional African societies, and most of them built highly ornamented structures. The Tassili cave paintings illustrate early forms of human communities in the Sahara desert in Africa. These cave paintings convey information about life in the Sahara region before the rivers and lakes of the desert began to dry, forcing people to move closer to the Nile. Some contemporary historians have stressed the influences of Saharan art and engravings on ancient Egyptian art. Some of these scholars believe ancient Egyptian art borrowed heavily from Saharan art, which preceded, then ran parallel to the Egyptian form. Cave paintings were not restricted only to this area. Some have been found in South Africa, predating those in the Sahara.(1)

Early Innovations of African Craftsmanship

An early innovative example of African craftsmanship is the Ethiopian Monarchy's Obelisk at Aksum (B. C. 300–A. D. 300), which highlights techniques of building freestanding masonry structures. The Obelisk at Aksum was 108 feet tall, with false doors, windows, columns, and wall treatments that had horizontal timber reinforcements and outward projecting wooden stumps. Today, an obelisk still stands in Rome, approximately 25 meters high, the second largest built by the ancient Akumites. It was looted on the orders of Mussolini, and taken to Italy in 1937.(2) In addition, the Meroetic pyramids (North Cemetery at Meroe, B. C. 250–A. D. 350) in Sudan show early craftsmanship in building royal tombs and structures.

Other early illustrations of innovative building techniques are the grand castles and great stone monuments of Zimbabwe. Timbuktu, Mali, and Benin were some medieval empires of West Africa that built exorbitant structures. Denyer noted "the ancient city of Benin, the capital of the Benin Empire was an urban center when the Portuguese arrived in Benin around 1500."(3) Historians have stated they found a city that was a nautical mile long from gate to gate; the inhabitants were prosperous and experienced in metalworking.(4) The empire was later burned down and looted by the British invaders. Today, the looted artifacts from these nations can be found in museums throughout the western world.(5) Despite these precedents, many historical surveys in architecture stop primarily at Egyptian civilization, ignoring the civilizations south of the Sahara.

Traditional African Architectural Styles

Some authors have classified traditional African architecture as tents; Sudanese style; Impluvium style; Hill style; Beehive; Ghorfas; Kasbahs; and, underground structures.(6) Hunters, gatherers, and pastoralists who needed structures that could be dismantled and transported usually used tent structures. The Tuaregs in West Africa utilized these structures during the trans-Saharan trade. They were based on a framework of hoops covered by mats. The average family could pack its house and their entire belongings on the back of a camel or a donkey. The Masai were pastoralists living in northern Tanzania and southern Kenya, their houses were semi portable, and made out of wooden frames which were often transported on the back of animals. The Fulanis, who are distributed throughout West Africa, took their cattle around over large distances, moving from one settlement to another, and utilizing materials available on the site to construct their tents.

Sudanese style was generally a variety of rectangular adobe buildings with courtyards, found mostly in West Africa in areas where Islam was dominant. The style has often been attributed to Islamic influence. However, excavation at Nteresso in Northern Ghana reveal the remains of rectangular planning, and the fact that Fulanis, Nupes, and Khassonkes—other convertees to Islam—did not build in Sudanese style also suggested the style predated Islam. Several characteristics of the style are courtyard plans, flat or dome-shaped vaulted roofs, parapets pierced with gutter pipes or channels. Walls were constructed of mud bricks set in mortar and mud roofs supported by palm frond joist.

Impluvium style was houses with four buildings facing one another in a courtyard, with gabled roofs. Examples are found among the Benin, Yoruba, Asante, and Ibo peoples of West Africa. Yoruba palaces for kings were larger versions of the Impluvium style. The Yorubas had a monarchy system that considered the King's Palace as sacred. The Palace consisted of hundreds of courtyards, with several buildings facing each other in the courtyards. In the palaces, elaborately carved columns supported gabled roofs along the courtyard perimeters. Dwelling units were also built on a courtyard plan, with four rectangular units facing each other in a courtyard.

The largest palace in the Oyo Empire was twice the size of a sports field. Each of the courtyards was reserved for special functions. The largest used for public assemblies or dancing at festivals, while smaller ones were used for the King's private activities. Some of the courtyards were paved with quartz pebbles and potsherds.(7) Today, the largest palace is in Owo, Southwestern Nigeria and covers 44 hectares (4,400 acres).

Archaeological and ethnographical studies indicate that traditional Yoruba towns comprised several compounds, and each compound consisted of houses built around a series of open courtyards of different sizes, which usually contained pots to collect water from rooftop. Yoruba cities were roughly circular in shape, and surrounded by some kind of defensive wall. The afin (King's palace) was an intricate labyrinth of rooms and courtyards, often decorated with sculpted doors, walls, and columns. Andah noted "family and compound continue as it were from all sides of the palace and merge into one another."(8)

This feature of continuity is reflected in the opening lines of the poems in the Yoruba divinatory system of Ifa. One such poem reads: "build a house around you Ifa, so you can build a house around me, so you can let children surround me, so you let money surround me." The architectural forms of the city are interlocked within a well-defined concentric town plan. Yoruba architecture is an organization of disparate units into an interlocking whole. The compound design expresses an architecture of intimacy and encourages the success of the extended family.

The Asantes, found in present-day Ghana, constructed their buildings based on a courtyard system, with a central courtyard usually joining four buildings; the fourth one was usually closed off. The courtyard was used as a meeting space, children's play area, and a place for food preparation. Windows ornamented in gold, silver inlay, and applied finish demonstrated the wealth of the Asantes. The Asantes were governed by a monarchy system, and historical surveys found the King's Palace located in the center of the town overlooking a central playground for children.

The palace consisted of several buildings surrounding a number of courtyards, typical in many West African palaces. The walls were well decorated with symbolic ornamentation, and the main entrance of the palace led to a court 200 yards long. The roof structures of the palace buildings itself were primarily of gabled form. The Asantes also built royal mausoleums for their kings that contained several rooms that housed their remains. The link between the living and the dead made these mausoleums uniquely celebrated buildings.

Hill style houses were usually found in hilly settlements around Africa, and their main features were stone terracing and round buildings, with diameters less than their heights.

Beehive styles were built of stepped thatch, houses were usually round plan and often dome shaped. Pliable material like reeds, grass, leaves, woven mats, and animal skins were often used.

Ghorfas were multi-story, barrel-vaulted stone storage chambers, constructed with stone, sun baked brick, or furnaced baked bricks.

Kasbahs were ten or more stories high structures built out of packed clay and air-dried bricks. They were usually built to house families of one ancestral origin. They evolved out of defensive necessities, and have often been referred to as forts built in indigenous Moroccan styles.

Underground structures were commonly rectangular or circular in plan with roof structures supported by branches and rafters covered by earth.

Traditional African architecture cannot be examined without examining African decorative arts since both are closely related in African societies. Some of the decorative arts of Africa include symbols, patterns, motifs, dress, fabrics, hairstyles, body decoration, metal work, carving, pottery, basketry, beadwork, wall decoration, etc. Ola Balogun noted "African artistic genius was strongly asserted in the decorative embellishment of the built environment. Varying decorative patterns could be found sculpted or painted on walls and wooden doors, which ranged from figurative designs to complex abstract patterns which revealed an exquisite balance of form, color, and shading. Painting was carried out as an extension of architecture than an independent medium."(9)

Calvin Douglas of the Brooklyn Museum of Arts noted "Artistic expression is not the luxury to African peoples that is has become to the west. It is considered a natural and necessary way of giving meaning to phases of a person's life and enhancing his work. This tradition continues in independent African countries today, where cultural dances and attires are used in political festivals. In addition, if the vitality of a culture can be measured in terms of its ability to produce art and enlarge its conception of human life, it is not difficult to understand why so many black people in the U[nited] S[tates] today look to Africa as their cultural source".(10)

Traditional African Forms and Decorative Arts in Seventeenth & Eighteenth Century America

The contribution of African-Americans in historic America has often gone unacknowledged. Vlach noted "[T]he material achievements of blacks are generally assumed to have been negligible, if not non-existent. Yet, now and again, diligent scholarship brings to light an Afro-American tradition in basketry, ironwork, pottery and other crafts. The mortar and pestle, dug out canoes of Chesapeake region and banjo are African influences in American landscape."(11) The African-American shotgun house has been noted to have its roots in African architecture. New Orleans is considered the center of shotgun housing development in the United States. Shotgun houses are usually one room wide and several rooms long with a gable roof facing the main street. Towns of southern Haiti have houses similar to the shotgun houses in Louisiana. The houses were also one room wide and one story high with their gables facing the main road. Historians have linked the occurrence of shotgun houses in Haiti and Louisiana to trade links and immigration.

Vlach noted the "architectural links between Port-au-Prince and New Orleans cannot be denied. All the nonessential details that are associated with the shotgun in Haiti are also associated with the shotgun in Louisiana, although not always to same degree. It is evident that the concept of Shotgun houses was imported from Haiti."(12) The Haitian shotgun had its roots in Yoruba, West Africa. Vlach noted that "Yoruba and Yoruba related peoples were brought to Haiti in the first days of slavery in sufficient numbers to preserve many traits of their African culture".(13) The basic Yoruba house form consists of a two-room linear building, the first room is the parlor/kitchen and the second a bedroom. Impluvium style houses, mentioned earlier, are a multiplication of this basic unit, and the roofs were also gable in form.

Post-Colonial African Spaces

Since the era of independence from colonial rule in the 1960s, there has been a cultural revival in many African nations. Current design practices incorporate elements from traditional Africa in contemporary spaces. Contemporary African architecture is deeply rooted in Mazuri's "triple heritage," which presents African history as comprised of three principal influences: indigenous, western, and Islamic. Western influences began with the Greeks in B. C. 333, continuing through Roman settlement in B. C. 146, and Europeans in mid fourteenth century. Portuguese constructed medieval fortress architecture, the English built gothic forts, Victorian style houses, and English cottages. The Dutch erected Victorian style houses, and Brazilian style houses were built by free men and women, returned to Africa after the abolition of slave trade. International styles buildings were designed by African who went abroad to


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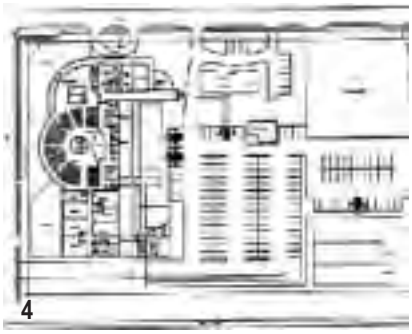
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Figure 1. Dominican Catholic Church, Ibadan, Nigeria.

Figure 2. Cultural Center, Ibadan, Nigeria.

Figure 3. Oduduwa Hall, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

Figure 4. Saint Mary's, Houston, Texas.

Figure 5. Saint Benedict the African, Chicago, IL

Figure 6. Entertainment Space: Larry Levy.

study, and expatriate architects who practiced in many African nations, after independence from colonial rule.(14)

Islamic influences were more predominant in North Africa, because of its strategic location (Egypt fell to Arabs in A. D. 641). Trade contact with people east of the Indian Ocean, from China and Arabia, facilitated Islamic influences in this area. The West African Trans-Saharan trade gave Islam a route to West Africa. Structures were made out of coral limestone, flat roofs, domes, gables, and vaults. Many West African mosques had West African features. The Djenne Mosque in Mali is an example of a mosque built out of adobe in Sudanese style architecture.

Today, several architects are striving to recapture elements from traditional African architecture lost since colonial rule. Nigerian architect Demas Nwoko's Catholic Church in Ibadan, Nigeria, designed in the late seventies, is one example. The church was designed for the Dominican Order in the Catholic Church, which takes a vow of simplicity. (Figure 1) African forms are integrated in the design, through the use of natural materials; the concrete masonry unit wall is left plain and unfinished, the steeple on the roof is roughly fashioned, and the walkway around the perimeter of the church is finished in cobbled stone. A pond around the perimeter of the church relates to the Yoruba's appreciation of natural forms. The building is modeled on the traditional West African hut style, and the sanctuary radiates around the altar, serving as a central focus, similar to palaces and shrines in traditional African societies.

Another of Nwoko's designs the cultural center in Ibadan, Nigeria sits on a hilly site in Ibadan, serving as a cultural landmark.(Figure 2) Natural materials are utilized to recall traditional architectural forms, the relationship with nature, and the Yoruba's appreciation for natural forms. The articulated exterior walls appear to be telling a story similar to forms utilized in traditional societies.

Another example is the Oduduwa hall, at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.(Figure 3) This amphitheater was designed by Sharon and Sharon, from 1969-1972. Ile-Ife is regarded in Yoruba mythology as the cradle of civilization. The building form mimics the bronze heads carved in traditional African societies. Landscaping the base plane is used to express the impor-

tance of nature, and the murals on the building walls are elements from traditional Yoruba geometry, which appear to be telling a story similar to traditional environments.

Twentieth Century African American Spaces

African-American communities are engaged in cultural revival through spaces, which integrate culture-based issues. Saint Mary's Catholic Church, Houston, Texas, designed by the African-American firm of Archi-technics/3 approaches culture-based issues through form, materials, and artifacts. (Figure 4) The final design incorporates a "parti," based on interlocking circles. A gathering space with a baptismal font in form of the Goree Island provides a transition from the outside to inside, which the priest interprets as being synonymous with the passage from slavery to freedom.

Another example, Saint Benedict the African, was built in a Chicago neighborhood of African Americans in 1990. (Figure 5) The building committee and architects, Belli & Belli, while concerned about representing the community's heritage were also concerned with creating a place that would uplift the spirit. A concept of interlocking circles, based upon traditional West African compound dwellings, was represented by multiples of circular forms interlocking each other. African form is again reinforced through the materials of the sanctuary ceiling of wood decking, semi-circular seating plan, and trees planted below grade along the interior walls.

Other renowned examples are Robert Mills' winning entry for the Washington Monument Competition, which is modeled after the African Obelisk from Ethiopia (15); William Stanley's Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, which uses African forms (16); and Jack Travis in his cultural interpretation for Wesley Snipes.(17)

Summary

The impacts of traditional African architecture on African and African-American spaces are numerous. The most recurring elements today include building forms based on the traditional African hut, gathering spaces, natural forms, courtyards, carved doors and columns, ironmongery, interlocking forms, and rectilinear planning. Developing an Afrocentric architecture that recalls African traditional architecture is not an easy task; the process requires not only a consideration of building form but cultural meaning, and a design process that empowers the community through building communities. Other prominent concepts begin with the building forms inspired by styles deeply rooted in African culture and materials. Surface articulation and space delineation are some other design elements. The major challenges today lie in integrating pre-colonial and post-colonial Africa spaces to create a unique Afrocentric architectural style.

Notes

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3. Susan Denyer, *African Traditional Architecture* (New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1978).

4. Denyer, *African Traditional Architecture.*

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6. Denyer, *African Traditional Architecture,* Richard Hull, *African Cities and Towns Before the European Conquest* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1976); Herbert Porthon, *Architectural Styles* (New York: Facts on File Publication, 1982); Labelle Prussin, *Islamic Design in West Africa* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986); Elleh, *African Architecture Evolution and Transformation.*

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8. Bassey Andah, *Nigeria's Indigenous Technology,* (Nigeria: Ibadan University Press, 1992).

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14. Elleh, *African Architecture Evolution and Transformation.*

15. Brad Grant, "Cultural Politics and Pedagogy," in *Voices in Aritectural Education* (New York: Bergin and Garvey, 1991); Elleh, *African Architecture Evolution and Transformation.*

16. J. Moline, "MLK's Congregation in Atlanta Gets a Striking New Sanctuary," in *Architectural Record* 5(1999): 104.

17. N. A. Diop, "Jack Travis Cultural Vanguard. Persistence Continuing in a Course in the Face of Difficulties," in *Blacklines* 1(1999): 10-13.

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Figure 5. Saint Benedict the African. Source: St. Benedict's Building Committee.

Figure 6. Entertainment Space. Source: Studio project by Larry Levy.

Session Four:

LEGACIES OF URBAN REALMS AND RURAL COMMUNITIES

As people of African descent arrived in or moved to the burgeoning cities, they established uniquely urban cultures. In rural areas, many black towns were established during Reconstruction, where blacks expressed their environmental and commercial values and traditions. Historic and continuing influences of African origins are evident on both the urban and rural landscape.

Traditional African Architecture and Its Impact on Place Making: Case Studies From African and African American Communities

Abimbola O. Asojo

Gardening, Yard Decoration, and Agriculture Among People of African Descent in the Rural South and the Cayman Islands

Richard Westmacott

***Por La Encendida Calle Antillana:* African Influences on Puerto Rican Architecture**

Arleen Pabón

Traditional African Architecture and Its Impact on Place Making: Case Studies from African and African-American Communities

Abimbola O. Asojo

Since the era of independence from colonial rule in African nations and the civil rights movements in the United States, Africans and African-Americans have engaged in developing new identities through the integration of culture in the design of contemporary societies. This paper examines the impact of cultural, historical, and traditional African architecture on historical and contemporary design practices. Traditional architectural forms from Africa are presented to illustrate significant elements of the style, its applications, and implications on contemporary design practices in African and African-American communities.

Traditional African Architecture

Traditional African architecture varies from simple rectangular dwellings in clay, to round houses, tents, sophisticated tombs, obelisks, palaces, pyramids, and monumental structures built by peoples of varying cultures all over Africa. A diversity of building forms existed in traditional African societies, and most of them built highly ornamented structures. The Tassili cave paintings illustrate early forms of human communities in the Sahara desert in Africa. These cave paintings convey information about life in the Sahara region before the rivers and lakes of the desert began to dry, forcing people to move closer to the Nile. Some contemporary historians have stressed the influences of Saharan art and engravings on ancient Egyptian art. Some of these scholars believe ancient Egyptian art borrowed heavily from Saharan art, which preceded, then ran parallel to the Egyptian form. Cave paintings were not restricted only to this area. Some have been found in South Africa, predating those in the Sahara.(1)

Early Innovations of African Craftsmanship

An early innovative example of African craftsmanship is the Ethiopian Monarchy's Obelisk at Aksum (B. C. 300–A. D. 300), which highlights techniques of building freestanding masonry structures. The Obelisk at Aksum was 108 feet tall, with false doors, windows, columns, and wall treatments that had horizontal timber reinforcements and outward projecting wooden stumps. Today, an obelisk still stands in Rome, approximately 25 meters high, the second largest built by the ancient Akumites. It was looted on the orders of Mussolini, and taken to Italy in 1937.(2) In addition, the Meroetic pyramids (North Cemetery at Meroe, B. C. 250–A. D. 350) in Sudan show early craftsmanship in building royal tombs and structures.

Other early illustrations of innovative building techniques are the grand castles and great stone monuments of Zimbabwe. Timbuktu, Mali, and Benin were some medieval empires of West Africa that built exorbitant structures. Denyer noted "the ancient city of Benin, the capital of the Benin Empire was an urban center when the Portuguese arrived in Benin around 1500."(3) Historians have stated they found a city that was a nautical mile long from gate to gate; the inhabitants were prosperous and experienced in metalworking.(4) The empire was later burned down and looted by the British invaders. Today, the looted artifacts from these nations can be found in museums throughout the western world.(5) Despite these precedents, many historical surveys in architecture stop primarily at Egyptian civilization, ignoring the civilizations south of the Sahara.

Traditional African Architectural Styles

Some authors have classified traditional African architecture as tents; Sudanese style; Impluvium style; Hill style; Beehive; Ghorfas; Kasbahs; and, underground structures.(6) Hunters, gatherers, and pastoralists who needed structures that could be dismantled and transported usually used tent structures. The Tuaregs in West Africa utilized these structures during the trans-Saharan trade. They were based on a framework of hoops covered by mats. The average family could pack its house and their entire belongings on the back of a camel or a donkey. The Masai were pastoralists living in northern Tanzania and southern Kenya, their houses were semi portable, and made out of wooden frames which were often transported on the back of animals. The Fulanis, who are distributed throughout West Africa, took their cattle around over large distances, moving from one settlement to another, and utilizing materials available on the site to construct their tents.

Sudanese style was generally a variety of rectangular adobe buildings with courtyards, found mostly in West Africa in areas where Islam was dominant. The style has often been attributed to Islamic influence. However, excavation at Nteresso in Northern Ghana reveal the remains of rectangular planning, and the fact that Fulanis, Nupes, and Khassonkes—other convertees to Islam—did not build in Sudanese style also suggested the style predated Islam. Several characteristics of the style are courtyard plans, flat or dome-shaped vaulted roofs, parapets pierced with gutter pipes or channels. Walls were constructed of mud bricks set in mortar and mud roofs supported by palm frond joist.

Impluvium style was houses with four buildings facing one another in a courtyard, with gabled roofs. Examples are found among the Benin, Yoruba, Asante, and Ibo peoples of West Africa. Yoruba palaces for kings were larger versions of the Impluvium style. The Yorubas had a monarchy system that considered the King's Palace as sacred. The Palace consisted of hundreds of courtyards, with several buildings facing each other in the courtyards. In the palaces, elaborately carved columns supported gabled roofs along the courtyard perimeters. Dwelling units were also built on a courtyard plan, with four rectangular units facing each other in a courtyard.

The largest palace in the Oyo Empire was twice the size of a sports field. Each of the courtyards was reserved for special functions. The largest used for public assemblies or dancing at festivals, while smaller ones were used for the King's private activities. Some of the courtyards were paved with quartz pebbles and potsherds.(7) Today, the largest palace is in Owo, Southwestern Nigeria and covers 44 hectares (4,400 acres).

Archaeological and ethnographical studies indicate that traditional Yoruba towns comprised several compounds, and each compound consisted of houses built around a series of open courtyards of different sizes, which usually contained pots to collect water from rooftop. Yoruba cities were roughly circular in shape, and surrounded by some kind of defensive wall. The afin (King's palace) was an intricate labyrinth of rooms and courtyards, often decorated with sculpted doors, walls, and columns. Andah noted "family and compound continue as it were from all sides of the palace and merge into one another."(8)

This feature of continuity is reflected in the opening lines of the poems in the Yoruba divinatory system of Ifa. One such poem reads: "build a house around you Ifa, so you can build a house around me, so you can let children surround me, so you let money surround me." The architectural forms of the city are interlocked within a well-defined concentric town plan. Yoruba architecture is an organization of disparate units into an interlocking whole. The compound design expresses an architecture of intimacy and encourages the success of the extended family.

The Asantes, found in present-day Ghana, constructed their buildings based on a courtyard system, with a central courtyard usually joining four buildings; the fourth one was usually closed off. The courtyard was used as a meeting space, children's play area, and a place for food preparation. Windows ornamented in gold, silver inlay, and applied finish demonstrated the wealth of the Asantes. The Asantes were governed by a monarchy system, and historical surveys found the King's Palace located in the center of the town overlooking a central playground for children.

The palace consisted of several buildings surrounding a number of courtyards, typical in many West African palaces. The walls were well decorated with symbolic ornamentation, and the main entrance of the palace led to a court 200 yards long. The roof structures of the palace buildings itself were primarily of gabled form. The Asantes also built royal mausoleums for their kings that contained several rooms that housed their remains. The link between the living and the dead made these mausoleums uniquely celebrated buildings.

Hill style houses were usually found in hilly settlements around Africa, and their main features were stone terracing and round buildings, with diameters less than their heights.

Beehive styles were built of stepped thatch, houses were usually round plan and often dome shaped. Pliable material like reeds, grass, leaves, woven mats, and animal skins were often used.

Ghorfas were multi-story, barrel-vaulted stone storage chambers, constructed with stone, sun baked brick, or furnaced baked bricks.

Kasbahs were ten or more stories high structures built out of packed clay and air-dried bricks. They were usually built to house families of one ancestral origin. They evolved out of defensive necessities, and have often been referred to as forts built in indigenous Moroccan styles.

Underground structures were commonly rectangular or circular in plan with roof structures supported by branches and rafters covered by earth.

Traditional African architecture cannot be examined without examining African decorative arts since both are closely related in African societies. Some of the decorative arts of Africa include symbols, patterns, motifs, dress, fabrics, hairstyles, body decoration, metal work, carving, pottery, basketry, beadwork, wall decoration, etc. Ola Balogun noted "African artistic genius was strongly asserted in the decorative embellishment of the built environment. Varying decorative patterns could be found sculpted or painted on walls and wooden doors, which ranged from figurative designs to complex abstract patterns which revealed an exquisite balance of form, color, and shading. Painting was carried out as an extension of architecture than an independent medium."(9)

Calvin Douglas of the Brooklyn Museum of Arts noted "Artistic expression is not the luxury to African peoples that is has become to the west. It is considered a natural and necessary way of giving meaning to phases of a person's life and enhancing his work. This tradition continues in independent African countries today, where cultural dances and attires are used in political festivals. In addition, if the vitality of a culture can be measured in terms of its ability to produce art and enlarge its conception of human life, it is not difficult to understand why so many black people in the U[nited] S[tates] today look to Africa as their cultural source".(10)

Traditional African Forms and Decorative Arts in Seventeenth & Eighteenth Century America

The contribution of African-Americans in historic America has often gone unacknowledged. Vlach noted "[T]he material achievements of blacks are generally assumed to have been negligible, if not non-existent. Yet, now and again, diligent scholarship brings to light an Afro-American tradition in basketry, ironwork, pottery and other crafts. The mortar and pestle, dug out canoes of Chesapeake region and banjo are African influences in American landscape."(11) The African-American shotgun house has been noted to have its roots in African architecture. New Orleans is considered the center of shotgun housing development in the United States. Shotgun houses are usually one room wide and several rooms long with a gable roof facing the main street. Towns of southern Haiti have houses similar to the shotgun houses in Louisiana. The houses were also one room wide and one story high with their gables facing the main road. Historians have linked the occurrence of shotgun houses in Haiti and Louisiana to trade links and immigration.

Vlach noted the "architectural links between Port-au-Prince and New Orleans cannot be denied. All the nonessential details that are associated with the shotgun in Haiti are also associated with the shotgun in Louisiana, although not always to same degree. It is evident that the concept of Shotgun houses was imported from Haiti."(12) The Haitian shotgun had its roots in Yoruba, West Africa. Vlach noted that "Yoruba and Yoruba related peoples were brought to Haiti in the first days of slavery in sufficient numbers to preserve many traits of their African culture".(13) The basic Yoruba house form consists of a two-room linear building, the first room is the parlor/kitchen and the second a bedroom. Impluvium style houses, mentioned earlier, are a multiplication of this basic unit, and the roofs were also gable in form.

Post-Colonial African Spaces

Since the era of independence from colonial rule in the 1960s, there has been a cultural revival in many African nations. Current design practices incorporate elements from traditional Africa in contemporary spaces. Contemporary African architecture is deeply rooted in Mazuri's "triple heritage," which presents African history as comprised of three principal influences: indigenous, western, and Islamic. Western influences began with the Greeks in B. C. 333, continuing through Roman settlement in B. C. 146, and Europeans in mid fourteenth century. Portuguese constructed medieval fortress architecture, the English built gothic forts, Victorian style houses, and English cottages. The Dutch erected Victorian style houses, and Brazilian style houses were built by free men and women, returned to Africa after the abolition of slave trade. International styles buildings were designed by African who went abroad to


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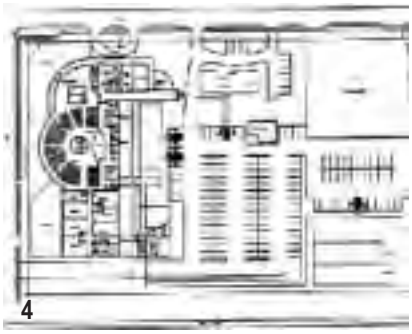
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5


6

Figure 1. Dominican Catholic Church, Ibadan, Nigeria.

Figure 2. Cultural Center, Ibadan, Nigeria.

Figure 3. Oduduwa Hall, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.

Figure 4. Saint Mary's, Houston, Texas.

Figure 5. Saint Benedict the African, Chicago, IL

Figure 6. Entertainment Space: Larry Levy.

study, and expatriate architects who practiced in many African nations, after independence from colonial rule.(14)

Islamic influences were more predominant in North Africa, because of its strategic location (Egypt fell to Arabs in A. D. 641). Trade contact with people east of the Indian Ocean, from China and Arabia, facilitated Islamic influences in this area. The West African Trans-Saharan trade gave Islam a route to West Africa. Structures were made out of coral limestone, flat roofs, domes, gables, and vaults. Many West African mosques had West African features. The Djenne Mosque in Mali is an example of a mosque built out of adobe in Sudanese style architecture.

Today, several architects are striving to recapture elements from traditional African architecture lost since colonial rule. Nigerian architect Demas Nwoko's Catholic Church in Ibadan, Nigeria, designed in the late seventies, is one example. The church was designed for the Dominican Order in the Catholic Church, which takes a vow of simplicity. (Figure 1) African forms are integrated in the design, through the use of natural materials; the concrete masonry unit wall is left plain and unfinished, the steeple on the roof is roughly fashioned, and the walkway around the perimeter of the church is finished in cobbled stone. A pond around the perimeter of the church relates to the Yoruba's appreciation of natural forms. The building is modeled on the traditional West African hut style, and the sanctuary radiates around the altar, serving as a central focus, similar to palaces and shrines in traditional African societies.

Another of Nwoko's designs the cultural center in Ibadan, Nigeria sits on a hilly site in Ibadan, serving as a cultural landmark.(Figure 2) Natural materials are utilized to recall traditional architectural forms, the relationship with nature, and the Yoruba's appreciation for natural forms. The articulated exterior walls appear to be telling a story similar to forms utilized in traditional societies.

Another example is the Oduduwa hall, at Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria.(Figure 3) This amphitheater was designed by Sharon and Sharon, from 1969-1972. Ile-Ife is regarded in Yoruba mythology as the cradle of civilization. The building form mimics the bronze heads carved in traditional African societies. Landscaping the base plane is used to express the impor-

tance of nature, and the murals on the building walls are elements from traditional Yoruba geometry, which appear to be telling a story similar to traditional environments.

Twentieth Century African American Spaces

African-American communities are engaged in cultural revival through spaces, which integrate culture-based issues. Saint Mary's Catholic Church, Houston, Texas, designed by the African-American firm of Archi-technics/3 approaches culture-based issues through form, materials, and artifacts. (Figure 4) The final design incorporates a "parti," based on interlocking circles. A gathering space with a baptismal font in form of the Goree Island provides a transition from the outside to inside, which the priest interprets as being synonymous with the passage from slavery to freedom.

Another example, Saint Benedict the African, was built in a Chicago neighborhood of African Americans in 1990. (Figure 5) The building committee and architects, Belli & Belli, while concerned about representing the community's heritage were also concerned with creating a place that would uplift the spirit. A concept of interlocking circles, based upon traditional West African compound dwellings, was represented by multiples of circular forms interlocking each other. African form is again reinforced through the materials of the sanctuary ceiling of wood decking, semi-circular seating plan, and trees planted below grade along the interior walls.

Other renowned examples are Robert Mills' winning entry for the Washington Monument Competition, which is modeled after the African Obelisk from Ethiopia (15); William Stanley's Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, which uses African forms (16); and Jack Travis in his cultural interpretation for Wesley Snipes.(17)

Summary

The impacts of traditional African architecture on African and African-American spaces are numerous. The most recurring elements today include building forms based on the traditional African hut, gathering spaces, natural forms, courtyards, carved doors and columns, ironmongery, interlocking forms, and rectilinear planning. Developing an Afrocentric architecture that recalls African traditional architecture is not an easy task; the process requires not only a consideration of building form but cultural meaning, and a design process that empowers the community through building communities. Other prominent concepts begin with the building forms inspired by styles deeply rooted in African culture and materials. Surface articulation and space delineation are some other design elements. The major challenges today lie in integrating pre-colonial and post-colonial Africa spaces to create a unique Afrocentric architectural style.

Notes

1. Macleod, "The Nile's Other Kingdom, Nubia: Nubia, not Egypt, May Have Been the First True African Civilization," in *Time Magazine: Commemorative Issue* (1997): 102-106.

2. Nnamdi Elleh, *African Architecture Evolution and Transformation* (New York: McGraw Hill, 1997).

3. Susan Denyer, *African Traditional Architecture* (New York: Africana Publishing Company, 1978).

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6. Denyer, *African Traditional Architecture,* Richard Hull, *African Cities and Towns Before the European Conquest* (New York: W. W. Norton and Co., 1976); Herbert Porthon, *Architectural Styles* (New York: Facts on File Publication, 1982); Labelle Prussin, *Islamic Design in West Africa* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1986); Elleh, *African Architecture Evolution and Transformation.*

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8. Bassey Andah, *Nigeria's Indigenous Technology,* (Nigeria: Ibadan University Press, 1992).

9. Ola Balogun, "Form and expression in African arts," in *Introduction to African Culture: General Aspects,* 69: 1979, Paris: UNESCO.

10. Douglas quote found in Louise E. Jefferson, *The Decorative Arts of Africa* (New York: Viking Press, 1970).

11. John M. Vlach, "By the Works of Their Hands. Studies in Afro-American Folk Life," in *American Material Culture and Folklife* (London: UMI Research Press, 1976).

12. Vlach, "By the Works of Their Hands".

13. Ibid.

14. Elleh, *African Architecture Evolution and Transformation.*

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Figure 6. Entertainment Space. Source: Studio project by Larry Levy.

Gardening, Yard Decoration, and Agriculture Among Peoples of African Descent in the Rural South and in the Cayman Islands

Richard Westmacott

In this paper, I pose two questions concerning African American cultural landscapes. The first is one of origin. Does the use of ornamental plants around dwellings have African antecedents? I have found none, although the use of flowers and other ornamental plants by African Americans in the United States and in the Caribbean has evolved very distinctive characteristics. The second question concerns the survival of African farming practices. Why are African methods of farming practiced in some areas of the Americas but not others? In the Cayman Islands for instance, I found slash and burn agriculture that appeared to be little changed from traditional farming practices in West Africa.(1)

First, a few caveats. I interpret "American Landscape" as landscapes of the Americas, North, Central, South, and the Caribbean. Therefore I include as African Americans, people of African descent in all the Americas as well as the United States. Second, most of my work has been in rural areas. African American society until quite recently had been predominately rural throughout the Americas. My work in the United States has focused on the rural piedmont in Georgia, Alabama, and the low country of South Carolina. Thirdly, my first hand knowledge of the Caribbean is limited to the Cayman Islands and the Lesser Antilles. My knowledge of agricultural practices and gardening on other Caribbean Islands is mostly derived from Lydia Pulsipher's work.(2) Fourthly, my knowledge of African cultures is rather superficial.

A striking feature of the yards of people of African descent in the Americas is that they are often highly decorated with both plants and other ornaments. When working on my book, *African American Gardens and Yards in the Rural South,* I searched of many of the earliest photographic collections from West Africa in the Commonwealth Office Library in London. But I found no examples of the use of plants for ornament. Nor did I find reference to plants being grown for ornament in the descriptions of early travelers in West Africa.

Shade trees were frequent, but I concluded that the use of plants for decoration was not common in Africa and, in the Americas, had resulted from acculturation during colonialization and slavery. Yet I felt that I might be "denying rather than investigating" Africanisms as Melville Herskovits suggested researchers had been inclined to do in the past. However, the publication in 1993, of Jack Goody's *The Culture of Flowers,* reassured me that I was not alone in my conclusion. The title of the first chapter of Goody's book poses the question, "No flowers in Africa?" He described his observations in West Africa thus:

> I had attended many ceremonies and had seen food, the raw and the cooked, offered at innumerable shrines—but never flowers…Islam certainly has its culture of flowers, at least in Asia, the Mediterranean, and to some extent in East Africa.(3)

However, although there may have been no ornamental plants grown in African yards, the spaces around dwellings were kept bare by hoeing and sweeping them regularly, and this practice was adopted in the Americas. The "swept yard" became a feature that was once ubiquitous at all levels of society in the Southern United States, and in the islands of the Caribbean. The sweeping was done

not only to keep the yard tidy, but the pattern and texture of the sandy surface became very important.

In the Cayman Islands, the "sand yard" has become highly stylized with meticulously raked sand between the plants. The routine involved also became a ritual on the Islands. On a moonlit night shortly before Christmas, the whole family would go down to the beach where they would collect sand in large baskets that were normally used for carrying produce (locally known as "backing") from provision grounds to the home.(4) The sand would be piled in the yard, spread, and then carefully raked smooth. Alan Ebanks described it to me.

> It was a family occasion to get together and back sand. The moonlight made it easy to see…. If you've ever seen clean, fresh sand spread in the moonlight, you realize how beautiful it is. It's very much prettier than in the day and in the sun.

Yards are swept with brooms that are made of an appropriate local plant material. In the Cayman Islands, branches of a shrub, known locally as rosemary *(Croton linearis),* are bound together to make yard brooms. House brooms are made of thatch palm *(Coccothrinax proctorii)*. In the southern Piedmont region of the United States, dogwood *(Cornus florida)* is almost always used for yard brooms, but gallberry *(Ilex coriacea),* or dog fennel *(Eupatorium capillifolium)* is more commonly used in coastal areas. In the southern United States, memories of sweeping the yard are still vivid in the minds of many older people, both black and white.

Although the plants are different, their arrangement in yards in the South was strikingly similar to the arrangement of plants in the yards in the Cayman Islands. Plants are spaced individually and are appreciated as individuals. Very rarely are they grouped or massed and are generally are not used for purposes such as ground cover, as an edging, or to provide a screen. They are not used as "structural" elements in the composition, to enclose a lawn, to provide a background, or to screen the foundations of a building. Probably for this reason, evergreen shrubs, grown mostly for their foliage, are not common in African American yards in the South. Nor is it usual to group several of the same plant together. Rather, they are set apart from adjacent plants so that they can be clearly distinguished.

Color is the most important criterion for choosing plants. In the tropics, there are many highly colored foliage plants, the croton *(Codiaeum variegatum),* in all its variations, being the most popular. Among the flowers, old favorites such as hibiscus *(Hibiscus rosa-sinensis and H. schizopetalus),* oleander *(Nerium oleander),* and bougainvillea *(Bougainvillea spectabilis)* are all spectacularly colorful. In more temperate areas however, there are few hardy colorful foliage plants, and flowers predominate. But I discovered no recurring patterns in the use of colors. I found no cases of deliberately arranging colors to clash, as has been noted by Robert Farris Thompson in African American quilt design. He wrote "Black quilters usually enliven cloth with what might be called 'attack coloration' (i.e. even outpouring of high decibel, often clashing hues)."(5)

In my research in the southern states of the United States, I found little evidence of agricultural practices that could be attributed to Africa. Littlefield has argued convincingly that plantation owners on the South Carolina coast sought out slaves with expertise in growing rice, but the multicropping systems typical of much of equatorial West Africa appears to have had no equivalents in the United States. Recently, I was studying subsistence agricultural practices and gardening traditions on the Cayman Islands.(6) I was astonished to find not only complex multicropping, but also slash and burn land rotation typical of West Africa. The Cayman Islands were not inhabited when the British first colonized the islands and it is doubtful if Amerindian practices had any influence on agriculture on the islands.

The rotation takes place, in the instance described here, over a seven-year period.(7) The land is first cleared and burned. The slash is piled more thickly on tree stumps to increase the effectiveness of the burn. The soil is then cultivated with a hoe or a machete. Several crops were planted in a typically complex arrangement, with pumpkins, sweet potatoes, yams, cassava, plantains, papaya, and even mango trees, although from appearances they were probably survivors of an earlier rotation. After about five years, productivity will have fallen, and an area is fenced in preparation for conversion to a grass pasture, known locally as a grass "piece." Pasturing livestock on the plot can restore the fertility in a much shorter period than a forest rotation. Animals were not used in slash and burn rotations in equatorial Africa and, in the Cayman Islands, probably resulted from European influence.

Multi-cropping has distinct advantages in wet tropical climates for subsistence farming. There are no seasons, and crops can be harvested as-and-when needed. Consequently, land is not exposed to erosion and leaching for much of the year, as it is in seasonal seed agriculture. Harvesting as-needed also eliminates the problem of storage. The complex of plant types, annual and perennial herbaceous plants, root crops, vines, shrubs, and trees gives excellent soil protection and uses sunlight most

efficiently. Multicropping is not suited to producing large surpluses of produce for sale, an important goal of plantation agriculture. But, as subsistence was the goal of most Caymanians (cash crops were palm rope and turtles), there was no great pressure for change. However, in the United States, perennial multicropping is impractical due to the seasonal climate. Many slaves were not permitted to have their own gardens, and for those that were, there was strong pressure to adopt the practices of the plantation.

The soil on the Caymans is so rocky that row cropping and mechanical cultivation are impossible. As a result, a plantation agricultural economy never developed as it did on most other Caribbean islands. Slaves were brought, mostly from Jamaica, to cut the mahogany, which covered much of the interior of the islands. But after all the mahogany had been cut, most slaves were returned to Jamaica. Very few Africans were brought to the Caymans as field hands. They were brought as house slaves, to work on the wharves, and in shipbuilding. These slaves would have acquired a much wider range of skills than field hands.

When slavery on the Caymans was ended in 1835, there were considerable areas in the interior of the islands that were not used or occupied. Although most of the land had actually been granted to individuals in large tracts between 1734 and 1742, the valuable timber has been cut. The land was of little value to its owners, and it was not difficult for ex-slaves to find land to cultivate and occupy without being evicted. Thus, a measure of independence and even land proprietorship came much earlier to the Cayman Islanders than to Africans on other Caribbean islands or in the Southern United States. The catalog of the Jamaican Exhibition of 1891 noted that the Caymans were remarkable for peasant ownership of the land.(8)

Most Cayman Islanders used to live close to the sea, just behind the dunes, and their provision grounds were in the interior of the islands. The house was a thatched, frame structure of ironwood *(Chionanthus caymanensis),* protected by dense thickets of sea grape *(Coccoloba uvifera),* sea almond *(Terminalia catappa),* Australian pine *(Casuarina equisetifolia),* and coconuts *(Cocos nucifera).* In sheltered areas, adjacent to the house, islanders grew a wide range of different fruits including avocados *(Persea americana),* akee *(Blighia sapida)*, breadfruit *(Artocarpus atilis),* various citrus fruits *(Citrus spp.),* soursop *(Annona muricata),* sweetsop *(Annona squamosa),* star fruit or carambola *(Averrhoa carambola),* and naseberry *(Manilkara zapota).* Some fruits such as plantains *(Musa paradisiaca)* and papaya *(Carica papaya)* were too sensitive to the salt spray and tended to be grown on the provision grounds well away from the shore. These provision grounds were sometimes quite distant from the dwelling and often a hut would be built to allow the owner to stay overnight.

Pulsipher noted that on the island of Montserrat, slaves cultivated provision grounds far from the plantations, but this had to be done surreptitiously for fear of the plantation owner finding out. In contrast, Cayman Islanders had ready access to land both for agriculture and fruit growing. They were not subject to pressures to adopt methods of row-crop agriculture, and traditional multicropping slash and burn techniques were more adaptable to local soil conditions.

Notes

1. In this paper, I use the term “garden” to refer only to the place where vegetables are grown. The “yard” includes other places around the dwelling including those used for pleasure and ornament.

2. Lydia M. Pulsipher, “They Have Saturdays and Sundays to Feed Themselves: Slave Gardens in the Caribbean,” Knoxville: University of Tennessee, 1898; reprint, in *Expedition* 2(2)(1990): 24-33.

3. Jack Goody, *The Culture of Flowers* (Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1993), 11.

4. Provision grounds are plots of land, usually in the interior of the islands and often distant from the home where produce is grown.

5. Robert Farris Thompson, *Flash of the Spirit: African and Afro-American Art and Philosophy* (New York: Random House, 1983), 13.

6. Richard Westmacott, *Gardens, Yards, Pieces, and Grounds: The Domestic Places and Spaces of Caymanians* (George Town: National Museum of the Cayman Islands, 1999).

7. The area Hutland, Grand Cayman, was named for the huts that were built on the provision grounds that were often so distant from homes that the owners built places to stay overnight.

8. Neville Williams, *A History of the Cayman Islands* (Grand Cayman: The Government of the Cayman Islands, 1970), 65.

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Por La Encendida Calle Antillana: African Impact on Puerto Rican Domestic Architecture

Arleen Pabón

When premier Puerto Rican poet Palés Matos wrote the well-known lines of his *Black Majesty* poem:

Por la encendida calle antillana
va Tembandumba de la Quimbamba…

he was trying to capture the Tembandumba's impact as she walked down the Antillean street. His artistry with words allows us to picture her elusive progress and the lasting impact her beauty and African heritage had on the population. Palés' poem, like this paper, deals with intangibles. One of Puerto Rico's most powerful cultural components is embodied by our African heritage. However, just as Tembandumba lives only by means of a poem, the subject of this paper—African impact on the island's domestic architecture—exists only in the interpretation of some rapidly disappearing ruins and a few old photographs.(1)

This work is about things that are no more. It deals with absence and tries to dislodge two of Westerners most cherished attitudes. First, the idea that–-to use Pevsner's grand metaphor—only cathedrals and not bicycle sheds deserve academic scrutiny and, second, that cultural significance is exclusively embodied in physically identifiable architectural artifacts. Many, many years ago, when I first tried to understand why historic preservation (or architectural history for that matter) seldom dealt with aspects present in herstory (as opposed to history), I realized that Western thought is, at best, seriously biased. Take as an example Caribbean domestic architecture, its historical and cultural development. Seldom, if ever, is the topic academically explored; seldom, if ever, is it analyzed as a significant part of our cultural heritage.

While a few Caribbean dwellings, almost always examples of the big house type, are presented as transplanted examples of grand European architecture, the topic is rarely analyzed in holistic fashion. As a result, society fails to understand how, for example, the slave hut bred as many, if not more, important and relevant domestic types as the big house. More significantly, we fail to consider the role women, Puerto Ricans of African decent, and other subordinate groups played in the creation of our architectural heritage. African influence in Puerto Rican architecture is non-subject in part because the following questions have not been addressed. How can a subordinate group contribute to a culture's architectural development? Even if possible, are huts and similar humble structures culturally significant? Most importantly and assuming there was an influence, where are the artifacts that prove it? For many decades, only silence answered these questions. Unfortunately, the void in knowledge was construed as non-participation by the African group. This work tries to shed light upon these topics.

The Caribbean Hut

When Columbus first came into contact with native Puerto Rican or Taíno architecture he wrote: "There [he is referring to Puerto Rico] I saw very good houses that would compare favorably with those in Valencia." It soon became obvious that he was fudging the truth: the Caribbean Natives did not construct following European ideas. In a fascinating and ironic historic twist, the native's paradigmatic building—the *bohío*—was similar to the Vitruvian hut: a makeshift affair, open to nature although usually round. As expected, the *bohío* had much in

common with many African types, enshrined in the memories of those that suffered the slave Diaspora.

When the tragic trade first started, slaves in the island were not provided with or allowed to have their own individual homes. Usually, they lived in *barracas* or *barracones* where they experienced a total and degrading lack of privacy. However, as time went on, some were allowed to have their own huts. In spite of their humble ethos, this building—a condensation of native and African ideas—is iconic of a momentous cultural transformation. The hut provided something the *barracones* did not: your very own dwelling artifact, a place where you could plant your very own roots. It is known that Caribbean islanders followed (they still do) specific rites as they built these houses, known as huts, *ranchitos* or *bohíos.* From Guadeloupe's ceremony of marking the cutting down of the master post of the hut (2) and the old Puerto Rican phrase: plantar *holcones,*(3) to the Cuban religious ceremony that took place at the construction site, they all showcase the importance associated to this rite of passage (having your own dwelling). There is dignity associated to being able to construct your very own hut for, even the simplest of them, represented the transcription of many hopes and dreams. It is fascinating that so much immutable feeling could go into such an architecturally mutable form.

The African descendants transformed that native typology and made possible a new organization, both spatial and urban. Instead of the round floor plan common to the natives, the square or rectangle was preferred, as in many African locales. The makeshift, nomadic native ethos was also transformed: the *bohío* acquired more substance both in terms of its materials and structural components. Probably, the most interesting transformation was that it became a closed and enclosed space. In most cases it sported no windows and only a small door to the interior.

This lack of windows needs to be explored, for one would think that opening interiors unto the outdoors is a must in a tropical milieu. However, for the enslaved population (and you were enslaved whether you were a slave or freed slave) the bright outdoor space was not their space, but rather a cruel stage, a vivid reminder of the unfortunate situation they experienced. A dark, closed interior created a sense of intimacy that protected—to paraphrased Bachelard—the user's immense intimacy from prying eyes. It is recorded that all over the Caribbean, in the few cases where windows do appear, blind shutters closed them, as per African tradition and in marked contrast to the fancy European shutters. When inside, you wanted to shut out the exterior, not to bring it in. This characteristic became an intrinsic part of the Puerto Rican house. To this day, most windows, when shut, allow for no light to come in.

In most cases, the interior space served as living-cum-sleeping place (called a *pieza* or *aposento*) that sported a dirt floor. The dirt floor had a unique symbolism and, in keeping with its significance, had its own special name: the *soberao,* a word of unknown origin. Some years ago, when visiting one of these abodes, the lady of the house kept excusing herself regarding her untidy *soberao.*(4) As I knew, she insisted, her husband was a carpenter and there was no way she could keep it clean all the time. At first, I was nonplussed with her extreme preoccupation. I now understand that the *soberao* proves you have a place of your own (even if you an *arrimao* and the land belongs to another person), that you possess your very own dwelling locus. For the old lady, her *soberao* was evidence not only that she had a house but also that she was the lady of that house. I have read that in the United States, slaves at times insisted on this type of floor finish as an act of appropriation.(5) The feel and texture of the dirt against bare feet, the smell of packed earth, and the darkness enveloping these sensations was probably a reminder of their long-gone African past.

In the island, cooking was considered a communal affair and, once again, the African influence transformed the native experience: the Taíno *batey* became a common area shared by the *bohíos* that help organize it. Contrary to European plaza standards for such areas, this iconic space did not follow any particular geometric layout. It was an informal place to work, chat, cook, play, and, on occasions, dance. It is interesting to note that balconies, the paradigmatic European architectural domestic artifact, are not present in the African-Puerto Rican hut. In the island, Europeans used balconies as visual instruments of order. While in the countryside, they acted as tribunes from where the activities of the farm could be inspected in the city, they maintained the feminine purdah system, being the only outside place a woman could venture on her own. In both cases, they represented something foreign, seldom experienced by the group under study: a place to spend time at ease. The communal *batey* was the equivalent of the European balcony: it was both signifier and a signified.

The lack of interest in formal arrangement evidenced in the *batey* is parallel to the way the group related to the city. Even in the tightly restricted San Juan urban area, the free African-Puerto Rican population chose to express themselves in a different manner. It is interesting to note that the *barrio* where

most lived was distinguished by its own, if unfortunate, name. If we analyze an 1880 copy of a 1771 plan of the area, we detect that the individual houses in the *barrio* do not follow the rigid urban grid layout that defines the rest of the urban enclave. As the orthogonal scheme reaches the area and as can be seen even today, the houses deconstruct the grid. In fact, some houses in the area still sport a small garden in the front, something unheard of in the rest of the city.

A *bohío* was more than just a shelter; it was a womb-like milieu that provided comfort by means of privacy. The type experimented with minimalist architectural ideas and its unique personality was the result of importing the African architectural experience into the domain of the native house. At a later stage, other African elements were introduced, such as the emphasis on the long axis and special decorations on the main façade. When these traditions fused with other ideas (such as the Anglo-American grille), the unique Puerto Rican house came to be. Most examples of the hut type are long gone but their architectural influence is still with us in every solidly closed window and in every housing subdivision street used as a *batey* by children and grownups alike.

On Things Unseen

Not all things are visible; there are things unseen regarding African impact to architectural culture. Because they are absent, we lack traditional physical evidence. Contemporary Deconstructivist ideas point out that society is guided by phonocentrism. This attitude is extremely partial to physical things. As a result, we believe that physicality represents truth and reality. As we grapple with this idea we construct binaries, such as: male/female, Black/White, being/not being, presence/absence, among others. As Derrida has masterfully explained, these binary oppositions favor the "groundly" term, the one that supposedly articulates the fundamentals. Hence, woman is everything a man is not.

Unfortunately, phonocentrism also affects historic preservation stances. For example, we usually ascribe cultural significance to things we can see or, at the most intangible, to places directly related to events we define as significant; in other words, sites that physically represent the historic happenings. If we do some soul searching, we realize that we are really in the business of preserving tangibles. Yet tangibles are a trap that causes us to believe that only "real things" matter. This is particularly the case regarding architecture. We all fall into this trap. I for one, on many occasions, define architecture to my students using Heidegger's dwelling concept that, naturally, requires presence. However, is cultural significance exclusively tied to the presence of an object or a sign?

Unfortunately, most of the time, our answer to this question is yes. That is the reason why the Underground Railroad does not qualify as a cultural resource: we do not have a string of "things" we can see that relate to it. Curiously, because of our architectural phonocentrism, even when we can see, we might not understand. Ruins such as these have a paradigmatic presence in most Puerto Rican *haciendas.* While their name: *barracas, barracones* or *beneficiados* should alert us, most specialists miss the point regarding the cultural significance of these structures. These places are more than just ruins of storage areas. They are also domestic artifacts, for slaves lived here. The absence of traditional domestic architectural personality clouds our understanding. More importantly, understood as mere storage areas and not as slaves' dwellings, there seems to be no urgent need to preserve the half dozen that still remain.

We interpret presence as substance and existence. To further complicate the issue, presence sets the following claims: first, that truth lies behind all appearances; second, that architectural artifacts represent the spirit of an age; and third, that individual artistic emotion is palpably present in each constructed building. Interpreted in this fashion, these architectural artifacts are understood as symbols of commercials ventures, as examples of specific construction techniques…as everything excepted as the homes of slaves.

Architecture is a physical artifact, like speech, yet it is also a symbol of a mental experience. Architectural "reality" is constructed of more than just stones and bricks. There exist supplemental components, like the *genus loci,* to mention just one. As preservationists working with the past for the future, we have a cultural exigency: we must question traditional thinking, dislodge its certitudes, and disrupt its quest for an undivided point of view. How can we do this? Let's accept Derrida's recommendation and privilege feelings over physicality, not being over being, absence over presence. If not we might be in danger of forgetting the importance some artifacts have in themselves and, most importantly, one of our culture's most fascinating and elusive histories: the relationship between the object we call a house and Puerto Ricans of African descent.

Conclusion

Buildings are a necessity of the metaphysics of presence. Hence their historical significance for they carry full presence. However, our human cultural heritage is formed not only of thoughts

expressed physically but also of emotions. Regarding African influence and Puerto Rican architecture I believe in privileging absence over presence. Some structures are more than just *barracones* sitting in planted fields.

Whenever I see places like this, I think of battlefields. We preserve battlefields because for several hours something considered important happened there. These ruins are landmarks just like battlefields. In these places, in every cotton, coffee or sugar row, a battle was fought every hour of every day, every week, every year, for several centuries. The battle was for something sacred: individual dignity and freedom. They are truly battlefields of honor where both blood and sweat were spent. Because of this, they are a paradigmatic place of society's cultural memory.

Por la encendida calle antillana
va Tembandumba de la Quimbamba
Flor de Tortóla, rosa de Uganda,
por ti crepitan bombas y bámbulas;
por ti en calendas desenfrenadas
quema la Antilla su sangre ñáñiga.
Haití te ofrece sus calabazas;
fogoses rones te da Jamaica;
Cuba te dice: dale mulata!
y Puerto Rico: melao, melamba!

Majestad Negra
-Luis Palés Matos

Notes

1. I would like to thank Professors LaVerne Wells-Bowie and Andrew Chin, as well as Ms. Toni Lee and Mr. Brian Joyner for their help and interest in this paper.

2. The post is called *Pied-bois d'ail.* Jack Berthelot and Martine Gaumé, Kaz Antiyé *Jan Moun Rété* (Paris: Editions Caribéennes, 1982), 85.

3. The phrase literally translates into "planting" the wooden structural posts.

4. My friend Arch Gloria M. Ortiz, State Architect for the Puerto Rico State Historic Preservation Office, once told me of a similar experience when visiting the house of an artisan or *santero.*

5. John Michael Vlach, *Back of the Big House: The Architecture of Plantation Slavery* (Chapel Hill: The University of North Carolina Press, 1993), 165.

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Session Five:

AFRICAN BURIAL GROUND PANEL:

DISCOVERY, PRESERVATION, AND MEMORIALIZATION

New York's African Burial Ground Complex in Diasporic Perspective

Warren R. Perry, et al

New York's African Burial Ground Mortuary Complex in Diasporic Perspective

Warren R. Perry, Jean Howson, and Ruth Mathis

Session Five:

African Burial Ground Panel

The purpose of this paper is to describe this mortuary complex and to place it in a Diasporic perspective. This means integrating findings from the skeletal research, demography, ethnographic, historical, and archaeological research to pose questions about the eighteenth century African community in New York.

The African Burial Ground needs to be placed in both global and local contexts. Globally, the trade in African captives involves a variety of African and European people of different social, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds and areas, no doubt with diverse notions of socio-cultural roles and proper burial practices. Locally, New York City was always a polyglot town, with the Dutch, English, Huguenot, Native, and African peoples most prominent, but including numerous other minorities as well. Thus, the mortuary complex at the African Burial Ground is the product of mortuary rituals and burial ceremonies that had symbolic and social significance to their African funeral traditions as well as traditions of other cultural groups in contact with these African communities.

We assume that the material culture found in colonial contexts acquire meaning only in a particular socio-cultural contexts. Indeed, most categories of material culture involving a similar range of objects, were used by Europeans, Africans, and Native Americans, though often in quite different ways. We refer to this condition as multivalency. Multivalency exists when an object or set of objects takes on very different meanings for different social groups, with dominating groups often totally ignorant of the meaning system of subordinated groups. The multivalent function of these objects is suggested by their archaeological context. The daunting task of analyzing and interpreting the archaeological materials from the African Burial Ground is to capture these meanings and their social relations, and to discover alternative understandings and practices associated with them.

Historic Background of the African Burial Ground

We suspect that the cemetery was in use during at least part of the seventeenth century, although the first document mentioning the African Burial Ground dates to 1712. This early reference is a letter written by Chaplain John Sharpe in which he complains about “the Heathenish rites performed at the grave.” Later, Europeans living on the northern boundaries of the city complained about the loud nighttime ceremonial drumming and chanting that was taking place at the cemetery. Thus, it seems that New York’s African Burial Ground community did to some degree control their own rituals and symbolism around their mortuary activities.

The Location of the Cemetery

Few Africans in colonial New York lived in houses of their own. Almost all enslaved Africans lived within the domicile of Europeans. Thus, Caribbean type courtyard burials or African-type house floor burials were impossible. The spatial and social placement of the cemetery on the landscape of colonial New York afforded a relatively private setting for the performance of mortuary rites, and sacred space outside the town. This is consistent with mortuary practices in some societies in western and central Africa.

In early New York, community-formation among Africans from diverse backgrounds required getting together away from their households, in a separate place from Europeans. The occasion of the funeral and the location of the cemetery, therefore, would have been particularly important in providing space

for creating, expressing, and reproducing a creolized African identity, which emerged within a context of colonial captivity.

The Collect Pond area, located north of the city's main residential area throughout the seventeenth and much of the eighteenth centuries, was no doubt familiar to Africans who labored in the noxious industries there and on farms in the northern part of the island. Furthermore, the cemetery was located near the farms granted to Africans by the Dutch West India Company during the 1640s.

Mortuary Patterns at the African Burial Ground

The program of spatial analysis of the African Burial Ground is concerned with establishing "archaeological context." Key to understanding the spatial relationships at the Burial Ground is our stratigraphic analysis. We are trying to establish temporal sequences of burials by looking at their relationships in vertical and horizontal space, to see what kinds of differences correspond to earlier and later burials. These differences may be reflected in changes in health patterns, quality of life, places of origin, demography, or mortuary practices.

One of the most important analyses that we have begun is of coffin style. 94% of the peopled buried in the excavated portion of the African Burial Ground were in coffins, a total of 401, while 26 individuals were interred without coffins. With this large a number of coffin burials, it will be possible to develop a typology. Variability in coffins should be related to several factors: changes in coffin style and construction techniques over time, differences among colonial New York's artisans (whether African or European) who built the coffins, differences in cost, and differences in beliefs about what was proper for burial.

We will be inventorying the coffin hardware, and at the same time we will continue using the field records and drawings to determine shapes and sizes, and sometimes construction details. The development of a useful typology is still ahead, but promises to be an important means for both describing the Burial Ground and interpreting its variability.

So far we have distinguished three basic coffin shapes: hexagonal, tapered, and rectangular. There are 34% of the total burial population whose coffin shapes remain indeterminate. Of the 254 coffins with discernable shapes, 10% are tapered, 13% are rectangular, and 77% are hexagonal.

Although individuals of all ages and both sexes are distributed throughout the Burial Ground, those individuals not interred in coffins appear to be gender and age specific and not randomly distributed. For instance, children and infants appear to, rarely if ever, be buried under adults. Because stratigraphic analysis is very problematic, we must emphasize that our discussions are very preliminary as to numbers and these numbers may change as research continues.

The scanty documentation indicates that various kinds of coffin decoration were available. Though we know the range of prices that Africans would have had to pay to have coffins built at one shop, African artisans may have priced their wares differently for specific kingroups, fraternal organization members or secret burial societies. It is likely that some Africans would have donated their labor in preparing coffins for family, community members, or the family would have collected from mourners.

Coffin hardware is the most common artifact category found at the Burial Ground. Decorative coffin hardware was rare for any ethnic group before 1830 in North America and represented "high status" mortuary adornment. At the African Burial Ground there are a total of seven burials with decorative coffin hardware.

One such burial with tacks on the inside of the coffin is Burial 176 a 22-25 year-old man buried in a tapered coffin with six secure distinct inverted bail coffin handles (1720-50) that could have been used to carry the coffin. Each handle had a wrought iron escutcheon plate screwed to the coffin and had unique chevrons or backed arrow motifs. Similar motifs have been found on coffin hardware from eighteenth century English coffins. There were two on each sideboard, and one each at the headboard and footboard. Research into the hardware used in the manufacture and decoration of coffins is in the early stages of analysis.

Burial in coffins, then, may represent an Akan practice which became widespread in colonial New York's broader African community; or a belief that those buried here were ultimately going to be taken home and therefore were not placed directly in the ground; or active resistance on the part of New York's enslaved Africans, who insisted their enslavers pay for (but not attend or participate in) decent funerals.

Most interments without coffins (23) are males and are found north of a series of postholes aligned along an east-west axis in the central part of the excavated portion of the burial ground. These coffin-less burials appear to be oriented to one another in a series of three to four north-south columns.

Of the African Burial Ground burials without coffins, it appears that variations in the grave cut exist. Five male burials

are cut with an oblong boundary. The remaining burials with no coffins have grave cuts that are rectangular or square in shape. This may be the result of excavation methods, but we cannot rule out the possibility of these being intentional grave cuts made during interment.

Multiple Burials

The analysis of sequential relationships within and among groups of graves is underway. Although most of the grave shafts contained a single coffin or individual, we do have a number of cases of multiple burials. By multiple burials we mean more than one individual buried in the same grave cut, or as in the case of some women and children, in the same coffin.

Unlike the coffin-less burials none of these burials, however, is separated from the general burial population. Most are women interred with men or either children. However, we have one case of a child wearing a necklace of beads, is interred within the same grave shaft as a 30 year-old man but in separate coffins.

This may be indicative of a father-child, or uncle, nephew, bond, a social relationship often ignored by European investigators, but culturally significant among Africans. Too often, we as western scholars ignore the relationships of African and African-American men to children, and often impose matrifocal models of kinship onto data pertaining to African Americans. Here, it is important to bear in mind that gender is as much about men as it is about women.

In African Diasporic cemeteries the variation in burial orientation seems to be minimal. At the African Burial Ground there appears to have been a standard form of internment. All burials are extended in the supine (face up) position and most, 98%, are oriented east-west with heads lying west and feet east. There are also a number of individuals whose heads are facing east as well as a small number of individuals whose bodies are oriented north south. The great majority have the orientation, with possible seasonal shifting with the sunset.

Although supine, head lying west and feet facing east, orientation is typical of Christian burials and traditional African American burials these positions and orientations are also common in African mortuary practices. These patterns may also reflect Muslim burials.

A few grave markers were recorded at the site, but only in the far western area, where excavation revealed the former ground surface. Since that surface was not encountered over most of the excavated burial ground, we do not know what sorts of markers or grave goods were placed on most graves. A total of seven grave markers were recovered at the African Burial Ground. Four are stone grave markers (like that shown in the slide) that seem to be made of local Manhattan schist.

There are others like these arches of river cobbles in which individual graves were outlined. This was very rare at the site, where in most cases the graves overlapped each other.

There is associated with one 35 year-old man, a cedar grave board/marker with five nails attaching it to the coffin. Wooden grave or head boards are found on eighteenth through twentieth century African descendent and Euro American cemeteries throughout the United States.

Placement of items at grave sites or on coffins at the time of interment is at least suggested by the presence of pottery on at least one coffin and shells on some others.

Funerary Practices

Preparation of the dead for interment would not have involved outsiders (the "layers out of the dead" as in the nineteenth century). Perhaps family or households members? Perhaps the work of women in particular. Children were wrapped in winding sheets or dressed in shrouds, fastened with pins.

Many adults were also wrapped or shrouded, but some, men in particular, were dressed in clothing.

Buttons, including matched and unmatched sets, were found on a few individuals and are apparently associated exclusively with adult males. Buttons, like beads, can be strung as pendants, or used in charms, and we need to consider all possibilities. A total of six metal buttons were recovered from Burial Six, an adult male, two of which have naval motifs. Without precise information on the location of the buttons we cannot say for certain that the buttons represented a jacket. Thus, these buttons were most likely salvaged from reused clothing and do not appear to represent an individual buried in uniform. In addition to rigorously examining every object associated with each burial we also have to examine the exact placement of buttons within the coffin. For instance, some of the buttons recovered appear to have been used as amulets in necklaces or in strings of beads.

Shroud pins do not need to be identified; they need to be recorded as to their exact location if at all possible, since this can tell us about which individuals were wrapped, and how. Different ways of treating the dead, including details about how they wrapped or shrouded, may reflect ethnic or religious differences (for instance, culture-specific views about the destination of spirits of children who

die), or such differences may reflect change over time, or other factors such as relative poverty and the like.

So far, there are a total of 271 individuals, representing of the total population, that have been examined for evidence of shroud pins and/or textiles. Of these individuals believed to be wearing shrouds 70 representing are children or infants, 22 representing are women and 19 are men. There are another ten persons representing .04% whose sex are indeterminate. Six individuals, of the sampled burial population have shroud pins and/or shroud cloth and buttons. Of these individuals, only one is a woman, while five are men. This suggests that at least some people (mostly men) were buried with both shrouds and clothing.

Conclusions

The African Burial Ground mortuary complex argues for a distinct suite of practices that can be separated from European norms. We are looking for patterns of behavior that, on the one hand, can be differentiated from European behavior and suggest a distinct conception of the cosmos. On the other hand, to point to aspects of these patterns that suggest African influence—or alternatively the genesis of new and distinct African American worldviews. At a rudimentary level, there are simple comparisons between specific artifacts, traits, or characteristics found in New York and in west and central Africa. While such continuities are important to demonstrate, the real significance lies in the occurrence of suites of characteristics, beginning with the distinctive features of the Burial Ground as a whole and with the combination of features found in individual burials, such as Burial 340.

The exciting thing is that at the African Burial Ground we are starting to put together such a mosaic of features. At least in some instances, there are suites of artifacts and attributes—a view that appears different from that represented in European burials. This is far more exciting than whether or not a particular pipe, bead, or practice originated in Africa. It also avoids these tangential debates as to whether or not this or that feature is “African”. Research will continue to explore the various west and central African mortuary practices and funeral customs as well as Native American, and European mortuary practices in order to explain the mortuary complex witnessed at the African Burial Ground.

Biographies

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