Humans in Shackles

An Atlantic History of Slavery

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CHAPTER 10

Sex and Violence

On August 3, 1882, Honorata, a twelve-year-old enslaved girl, was purchased by Henriques Ferreira Pontes in Olinda, in the northeast state of Pernambuco in Brazil. Before bringing her to his house, Pontes took her to the place where Tiburcio, an enslaved man also owned by him, resided. Asking the bondsman to leave his residence, Pontes locked himself in his room and raped Honorata, who was a virgin.[1] Honorata's ordeal was not an exception, and her tragic story survived in the written record only because in 1882, slavery existed only in Cuba and Brazil. Therefore, publicity of the case was greatly influenced by the intensive abolitionist movement that was finally shaking Brazil.

In all societies where slavery existed in the Americas, slaveholders maintained coerced sexual relations with their human property. Not just slave owners but overseers as well subjected enslaved women and men to sexual abuse. In the domestic environment, enslaved maids and wet nurses lived under the continuous control of their owners. Sexual abuse often began in childhood, sometimes under the slave owner's promise of release from enslavement. Slave owners and overseers conceived the bodies of enslaved people as property and therefore available to them. In the beginning of the eighteenth century, Jesuit priests such as Antonil wrote about the abuses perpetrated by the overseers against enslaved women in Brazil. According to him, they inflicted physical punishments on bondswomen who refused to

engage in sexual relations. These accounts of violence contrast sharply with the widespread image that until recently prevailed in Brazil and Latin American societies disseminated sometimes in European travel accounts but especially through the work of early scholars such as Gilberto Freyre, which advanced the misleading idea that enslaved women maintained harmonious and consensual sexual relations with slaveholders.[2]

People engage in sexual activities for many reasons, often in search of pleasure but also in response to social and religious demands from their communities. Bondspeople engaged in sexual exchanges with other bondspeople, freed persons, free people, and white individuals of various social positions. They also sometimes had sex with their owners. Needless to say, these relations were tainted by inherent imbalance of power, coercion, exploitation, and violence. For enslaved men, women, and children, the possibility of experiencing sexual abuse began when they were captured and gathered by force into coffles, then confined in coastal structures along Atlantic African shores. This potential for abuse continued in the holds of slave ships, and, once in the Americas, sexual violence haunted all activities involving enslaved people and their owners, overseers, and other free white individuals.

As this chapter will show, sex under slavery was shaped by relations of power and physical violence. Several slave narratives published in Britain and the United States reported that slave owners could claim the bodies of enslaved women to provide sexual services whenever they wanted. Indeed, in urban settings as well as on plantations located in remote rural areas, enslaved women were constantly exposed to sexual violence. Bondsmen were also victims of sexual abuse by their male and female owners. Regardless of racial ideologies that emerged during the era of slavery, bondswomen lived in constant threat of being raped by slave owners, other male members of the household, and overseers. By examining the problem of sex and slavery, this chapter argues that despite the existence of relations based on bondspeople's own choices documented in written documents such as wills, postmortem inventories, and marriage records, sexual violence

against enslaved women and men was widespread throughout slave societies and societies with slavery in the Americas.

Sex in Atlantic West Central Africa and West Africa

Most of what we know about how people engaged in sexual activity in Africa was made available after the period of the early contact with European traders and colonizers. Biased by their Christian religious and moral values, these men produced accounts and travelogues that often described African sexual behaviors in derogatory ways. Their European views on what it means to be a man, a woman, or a child have predominated ever since, most often ignoring how African peoples assigned or associated particular roles and behaviors to people who were biologically identified as males and females.

Both today and in the era of the Atlantic slave trade, African sexualities are not homogeneous. Instead, they were as diverse as the numerous societies and groups whose members were sold into slavery. Cultural practices and traditions were not fixed and, in fact, continued to evolve during the more than three centuries during which the Atlantic slave trade devastated the African continent. Sexual preferences and activities varied across cultures and age. Religion and kinship framed the development of sexuality of African individuals, shaping gender roles at an early age.

As on other continents, sexuality was a crucial dimension of the lives of West African and West Central African men, women, and children who were enslaved and forcibly transported to the Americas. Yet, scholars have challenged the existence of cultural and social characteristics that distinguish what it was to be a man and to be a woman in Africa. In other words, gender appears to be a Western invention, an idea that may have been foreign to many African societies prior to the European arrival on the continent.[3] In Yoruba, a language spoken in several regions of present-day Nigeria and the Republic of Benin, the words *k* and *aya* (respectively translated in English as "husband" and "wife") are gender-free, and therefore can designate either a male

or a female.[4] Likewise, in Yorubaland, the division of labor did not correspond to gender norms but was very often based on age. Young male bachelors had limited access to premarital sexual activity. Most marriages were monogamous, though polygamous practices existed as well. In Yorubaland and in other regions of West Africa, women abstained from sexual activity during pregnancy and until nearly three years after giving birth, as the tradition established that having sex during this period could put the child's life in danger.[5] Couples did not share the same room. Usually, the mother, her children, and sometimes several dependents occupied the same small room, making unlikely the idea of a husband sexually abusing a wife.[6]

In the decades that followed their first contact with African societies, Europeans described the sexual behaviors of African women as promiscuous, often referring to them as prostitutes and whores. But it was their own behavior that was predatory; Africanist scholars have highlighted how European men violated the bodies of African women during the period they remained stationed on the coasts of Africa. In 1588, the governor of the Portuguese fort São Jorge da Mina, in Elmina, on the Gold Coast, was denounced and sentenced by the Portuguese Inquisition for having had sexual intercourse not only with Christian women but also with young African women who were considered pagans by the Roman Catholic Church. As shown by historian Kwasi Konadu, the Inquisition trial revealed that Pessanha had his African agents bring young local African women to the fortress, where he raped them.[7]

Early European writers described African women as sexually available because their sexual practices and gender roles contrasted with Western and Christian views of European women, who were expected to marry as virgins and remain tied to the same man for their entire lives. Based on observations of European travelers, Olfert Dapper, a Dutch physician and amateur geographer who never visited the African continent, published an account in the seventeenth century that described the sexual practices of men and women in West Africa. According to him, in the Kingdom of Quodja (north of present-day

Sierra Leone), young people "make love like they do among us." Dapper supposed his readers would be surprised to learn that these young women slept with men before being married and that the men did not mind whether the women they were to marry were virgins as long as they pleased them.[8] When describing the populations living in the eastern part of modern-day Côte d'Ivoire up to the Gold Coast in today's Ghana, he observed that not only could men have several wives, but each village had two or three enslaved women who, after an initiation ceremony, were appointed as prostitutes (*abrakrees*) and would be paid to provide sexual services.[9] These "public women," as they were called, were enslaved women owned by Akan elite members who were recruited and "coerced into what was definitely a social institution designed to alleviate sexual pressures among unmarried men."[10] Despite these reports, however, it is possible that in this early period the European men from whom Dapper received his information were referring to polyandry, the practice in which a woman has more than one husband.[11]

Understanding these interpretations helps us measure the impact of enslavement on women who had previously held influential roles, who prior to their capture were not expected to submit to men's control but rather occupied complementary positions in their homelands. In the Kingdom of Dahomey, for example, the king's wives had important religious roles. They constantly influenced political decisions.[12] Dahomey also had a select group of royal women (*ahosi*) warriors (*agodjie*) referred to by Europeans as "amazons," a term evoking the mythological Greek female warriors. This group of women soldiers, whose story has been recently portrayed in the motion picture *The Woman King* (2022), may have emerged in Dahomey in the early eighteenth century as an armed royal guard that served Tassi Hangbé, the daughter of King Wegbadja (who reigned between 1645 and 1685), who ruled as a regent for a brief period following the death of Akaba, her brother and successor to the throne (who reigned between 1685 and 1708).[13] These Dahomean women warriors were legally considered as king's wives and regarded as his dependents. Drawing from European chroniclers, American

anthropologist Melville Herskovits wrote that these women were unattractive and were expected to remain virgins.[14] Yet, as pointed out by Robin Law, they did not live in celibacy as they "were all legally married to the King."[15] For example, British officer Richard Francis Burton reported an incident when dozens of *agodjie* were imprisoned after becoming pregnant, in the second half of the nineteenth century.[16] More likely, their alleged virginity and unattractiveness were the products of male Europeans' prejudice and gaze. Although most "amazons" may have remained virgins while they were in active service, several of them were married before becoming warriors, whereas others had children, and their descendants still live in Abomey.

Depending on the period, women warriors could make up nearly one-third of the Dahomey army. They became central players in the military campaigns against neighboring polities that captured prisoners to be sold into slavery to the Americas.[17] In Dahomey and other West African societies, women married other women, even though these same-sex marriages did not always include sexual relations.[18] These features did not make West Africa a paradise where sexual freedom reigned absolute, however. Historian Nwando Achebe has noted that in Igboland, in today's north-central Nigeria, women were not "free to do as they wished with their bodies before marriage" but rather had several restrictions imposed on them to ensure their "sexual morality and chastity."[19] Olaudah Equiano reminds the readers of his narrative that in his native Igboland, women who committed adultery were sometimes sentenced to death or sold into slavery.[20] Overall, many Africans forced onto slave ships were captured at such a young age that they were prevented from experiencing the rites of passage into adulthood that would prepare them for sexual activity.[21]

In West Africa and West Central Africa, soldiers, traders, and middlemen raided villages, capturing men, women, and children. They also ventured into kidnapping vulnerable persons near the coast or in the regions far in the hinterland. These agents gathered the captives in coffles, tying them together in chains or restraining their bodies with bamboo or wooden collars and yokes to prevent them from escaping.

On foot or on board canoes, they transported these coffles of naked, sweaty, smelly, and soiled human bodies, moving them through narrow trails and, depending on the distance, crossing forests, rivers, and lagoons until they ultimately arrived at coastal trading posts.

European and African encounters generated more than derogatory representations of African peoples. As early as in the fifteenth century, European explorers and traders made implicit and explicit references to the sexual availability of African women and girls in their written accounts. In his first contact with the populations of Cape Verde islands in 1455, Venetian navigator and slave trader Alvise Cadamosto, by that time around twenty-five years old, reported that a local chief gave him as a gift "a girl twelve or thirteen years of age, Black and very beautiful [*una garzona de annj 12 in 13 negra e molto bella*]" to serve him in his room.[22]

We will never know how this West African girl faced the idea of having sex with a stranger who did not even speak her language. Was she a virgin? Was she an outsider who was locally enslaved? Or perhaps in her community being offered as a sexual partner to a foreigner placed her in an important position of intermediaries between European explorers and local African rulers? Admittedly, as briefly discussed on chapter 3, after Cadamosto's voyage, starting in the sixteenth century, European slave merchants, captains, and other lesser crew members who were established on African coastal regions engaged in sexual relations and even long-term relationships with free African women living in coastal areas such as Gorée Island and Saint-Louis, in today's Senegal, and Luanda and Benguela, in modern Angola, where their daughters, known as *signares* and *donas*, became prominent slave traders.[23] But in the context of the Atlantic slave trade, the bodies of African women also became sites that facilitated commercial transactions.[24]

Rape on African Shores and Slave Ships

European men and African male agents also introduced new forms of sexual exchanges, often shaped by violence.[25] In regions such as

the Gold Coast, as early as the fifteenth century, either in their own homes or confined in forts, African women and girls provided sexual services to fulfill the demands of European traders established in the coastal areas. Flemish trader Eustache de la Fosse sailed to the Gold Coast in 1479. He walked the streets of Elmina, a slave port in present-day Ghana, trying to sell two bowls. When he stopped at one of the houses, a young woman reportedly invited him to have sex with her while already taking off her loincloth, though apparently, he declined the offer.[26] During the eighteenth century, as the slave trade intensified on West African coastal areas, travelers and slave traders increasingly described the activities of African women who provided paid sex in other ports of the Gold Coast and the Bight of Benin.

West African rulers sent African women and girls onto slave ships anchored at their ports to provide sex to ship captains. Sometimes, although free, these women were sent into slavery to the Americas.[27] Men, women, and children remained vulnerable to sexual abuse during the entire time they remained confined in coastal trading structures waiting to board the slave ships. Amid hunger and exhaustion, sexual activity, once voluntary and private, was relocated in the shared spaces of dungeons, pens, and barracoons. As one historian has noted, the trading posts where slave merchants and ship captains resided during their long stays in the coastal area of Sierra Leone during the nineteenth century were "replete with food, wine, and sex slaves handpicked from the barracoons."[28] This forced and painful proximity exposed captives to continuous sexual abuse, even though the surviving records produced by European and American slavers obviously rarely provided explicit accounts of how they violated the bodies of enslaved women.

After the long waiting period in coastal enclosures ended, a new nightmare started. Enslaved men crossed the Atlantic Ocean attached in chains and shackles to prevent uprisings. Women of all ages and children traveled unchained, occupying a separate and more spacious compartment in the lower deck. In French slave ships, a rule prevented ordinary sailors, always in greater numbers, from having access to the women's quarters. Similar provisions were also applied in Dutch slave

ships, confirming the dangers of enslaved women being raped by multiple men. Yet, in French slave ships, officers had "easy access to the women's compartment."[29] This context favored by the organization of various compartments surely allowed crewmen to sexually exploit enslaved women during the Middle Passage.[30] In Dutch slave ships, the women's quarters were referred to as the "whore hole" (*hoeregat*). Sailors and ship officers carefully selected not only women but also children and men as the most suitable sexual partners.[31] La Rochelle's mariner Jacques Proa, who sailed to Ouidah aboard the ship *Duc de Laval* in 1777, explains that as soon as the slave ship left the coasts of Africa transporting its human cargo, the ship captain and crew members selected their preferred African women to serve them "at the table and in bed."[32]

African men who published narratives of their harrowing lives under slavery in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries reported episodes of sexual violence during the Middle Passage. For example, Quobna Ottobah Cugoano retained a vivid memory of the weeks he spent in the hold of the slave ship, which included a countrywoman "who slept with some of the headmen of the ship" as "it was common for the dirty filthy sailors to take the African women and lie upon their bodies."[33] In 1785, La Rochelle's slave ship *Caraïbe* returned from the Bight of Benin carrying 351 enslaved Africans. Upon anchoring in Port-au-Prince, a main port of the French colony of Saint-Domingue, the ship captain Etienne Dufaud brought to the hospital a sailor and the vessel's cook, who had both contracted a sexually transmitted infection, presumably either during their stay in West Africa or during the Middle Passage.[34]

Crew members did not spare pregnant women or young girls from their appetite for sex and violence. Although rape was rarely reported by captains until the rise of the movement to abolish the inhuman trade, a few written accounts denounce these violations. On May 11, 1776, the slave ship *L'Aimable Françoise* left from Nantes to Gorée Island and then to the Gambia. According to the report by ship captain Lazare-Antoine Peroty, the second captain Philippe Liot was

arrested after mistreating the crew and the enslaved people on board the ship. Despite his detention, he managed to violently attack an African woman, described as "very beautiful." He broke two of her teeth and left her in such a bad condition that upon arrival in Saint-Domingue she was sold for a very low price and died fifteen days later. Liot also raped an African girl between the age of eight and ten for three consecutive nights, covering her mouth to prevent her from screaming, nearly killing her.[35]

A decade after Liot's crimes, abolitionist James Field Stanfield published a poem and a series of letters addressed to his friends, including the abolitionist Thomas Clarkson, in which he only alludes, without any details, to what might have been the rape of a young enslaved girl by a ship captain.[36] British surgeon Alexander Falconbridge, who participated in four slave voyages to Africa before becoming an abolitionist, noted in his account that "common sailors are allowed to have intercourse with such of the black women whose consent they can procure. And some of them have been known to take the inconstancy of their paramours so much to heart, as to leap overboard and drown themselves. The officers are permitted to indulge their passions among them at pleasure, and sometimes are guilty of such brutal excesses, as disgrace human nature."[37]

Although initially framing these encounters as consensual, and even suggesting that enslaved women died by suicide after falling in love with their rapists, the surgeon ended up admitting that British sailors raped captive African women. Likewise, British slave ship captain John Newton, who later became an evangelical priest and abolitionist, noted that women and girls were taken on board a ship "naked, trembling, terrified, perhaps almost exhausted with cold, fatigue, and hunger." Regarded by the crewmen as prey, the women were "divided, upon the spot, and only reserved till opportunity offers."[38] During the voyage of the British slave ship *African*, Newton also reported in his journal that William Cooney, a member of his crew, publicly raped a pregnant African captive, identified only as number 83, whom he forced "into the room and lay with her brutelike in view of the whole quarter deck."[39]

Bondswomen and children were victims of sexual violence in slave ships flying flags of all nations involved in the Atlantic slave trade. After the prohibition of the British slave trade in 1807 and the end of slavery in its colonies in the West Indies, Britain continued to pressure all countries that persisted in transporting enslaved Africans to the Americas, not only through the signature of treaties but also by patrolling Atlantic waters to search and apprehend vessels that violated these agreements. Consider the case of the Portuguese brigantine *Arrogante*. The vessel departed from Gallinas River in Sierra Leone to the port of Havana in Cuba in 1837 carrying 407 enslaved persons. The British Royal Navy intercepted the ship approaching the Cuban coast and brought the case to the Anglo-Spanish Court of Mixed Commission (a slave trade court based on British law) at Sierra Leone, where in 1838 the vessel was adjudicated and condemned for illegally practicing the trade in enslaved Africans.[40] During the voyage of the *Arrogante*, 75 slaves were killed. The 332 men, women, boys, and girls who survived the ordeal to the point of the British interception were disembarked in Jamaica and emancipated from slavery. Nearly 60 were reported to be very sick, having endured repeated beatings and rapes.[41] Abolitionist newspapers also reported the sexual violations against enslaved women on board slave ships during the nineteenth century. In January 1841, the British Royal Navy captured the overcrowded Spanish schooner *Jesus Maria*, which was carrying 252 enslaved Africans in deplorable conditions to Cuba. Upon rescuing the survivors, British officers found out that "instances both of rape and murder had taken place in the vessel and that the captain of the slave vessel had been guilty of those crimes."[42] With the rise of the abolitionist movement, sexual violence perpetrated by crew members on enslaved women, men, and children gained recognition for the first time.

Forced Reproduction

Sex continued to be linked to violence in the daily experiences of enslaved people in the Americas. Slave dealers sold women and men

to perform a variety of tasks in cities, mines, and plantations. As discussed in chapter 6, buyers and sellers scrutinized, smelled, and touched the seminaked bodies of human commodities displayed in slave markets. This forced intimacy was a concrete form of violation. Slavers selected enslaved persons to perform a variety of activities, but physical strength and attractiveness were essential features that led them to purchase specific men and women and favor them over others. Slave traders knew the preferences of slave buyers who sought to purchase attractive enslaved women to become their sexual partners.[43] Regardless of age and sex, bondspeople were expected to provide sexual services to their owners and to whomever their owner chose for them.

For slave owners and slave dealers, the sexuality of their enslaved property was linked to their capacity for reproduction. Some slave owners also coerced enslaved people to engage in sexual activity as well. The practice of forced reproduction of bondspeople is documented in the Iberian Peninsula as early as in the sixteenth century and in colonial North America as early as the seventeenth century.[44] With the ban of the Atlantic slave trade to the United States in 1808 and the rise of cotton production in the United States in the early nineteenth century, some slave owners started forcing enslaved men and women to engage in sexual intercourse with the hope of increasing the size of the enslaved population.[45] Historian Daina Ramey Berry defined compulsory breeding among enslaved people as "third party rape." She reminds us not only that "rape and breeding are unified by the use of force—both physical and mental" but also that "slave breeding represented one form of sexual abuse that adopted the machinations and mannerisms of rape because it forced people to engage in unsolicited sexual activity."[46] Freedpeople and their descendants remembered forced reproduction with words associated with animal husbandry that compared bondspeople to mules and cows. As one historian reminds us, these analogies, largely employed in narratives by freedmen and freedwomen collected as part of the Works Progress

Administration's Federal Writers Project in the United States in the 1930s, underscored the "inhumanity of this practice."[47]

As the trade in enslaved Africans to Brazil continued until the 1850s, the country never witnessed the same birthrate levels as the United States. Surviving written records rarely document forced breeding in Brazil, but similarly to the United States during the twentieth century, journalists and historians collected testimonies by freedpeople and their descendants who reported the use of enslaved men as breeders in Brazilian plantations. For example, Roque José Florêncio (1827–1958), known as "Pata Seca," was an enslaved breeder in the coffee plantation Santa Eudóxia near São Carlos in the state of São Paulo in Brazil.[48] Oral tradition among Florêncio's descendants emphasizes his role as an enslaved breeder who fathered 249 children, though only nine of them were conceived by his wife.

Florêncio's story is not the only surviving account about enslaved breeders in southeast Brazil during the second half of the nineteenth century, when the trade in enslaved Africans was prohibited and the coffee industry blooming. Another former Brazilian enslaved man provided testimony that included telling details about his role as a breeder in a southeast coffee plantation in Brazil. In 1973, João Antônio de Guaraciaba, by that time reportedly 122 years old, told the journalist Jorge Andrade his mistress would bring him to the slave quarters and separate a "herd" of ten enslaved women. Some of them were as young as fifteen years old and were all in their fertile period. Guaraciaba told the journalist that to perform his work of breeder, he was well fed, with the same diet as his owner, which included beef, milk, and rice. Some bondswomen cried and resisted, but as he had one month to impregnate the women, he was able to convince them to have sex by offering them affection and sharing his food. According to him, "if a woman is at the 'moment' she becomes fiery, stepping on fire. Women are like sow, cow, mare. At her 'moment,' she delivers herself. Ugly or old, any male will do."[49] Guaraciaba's account, bragging about his manhood and evacuating the violence involved in forced breeding,

is probably exaggerated, leading some historians to approach similar accounts with caution, very often labeling them as the product of collective memory passed down from generation to generation and not as reliable oral historical accounts.[50] But in the context of the second slavery and the final thirty years of slavery in Brazil, it is plausible that such a figure could have existed as recounted in Guaraciaba's telling.

Like the accounts of the Middle Passage, written records are often silent about sexual violence against enslaved men, women, and children. These gaps are not surprising, as these documents were written by white male officers who officially corroborated the views of elites who endorsed the Atlantic slave trade and slavery as legitimate, even after they became illegal. Indeed, almost everywhere in the Americas the silence of archival documents regarding sexual abuse and rape only confirms that usually slave owners and overseers who committed sexual violations against their human property were not breaking the law. In their roles as slaveholders, they could freely take possession of the bodies of their human property. Despite persisting gaps, a number of written accounts tell stories of sexual violence inflicted on enslaved persons in the West Indies, the United States, Latin America, and Brazil.

House bondswomen who performed domestic service in cities and plantations were especially exposed to sexual violence. More often than not, they could not escape the brutality of slave owners and overseers. In Jamaica, slaveholders systematically sexually abused enslaved women. Thomas Thistlewood, the notorious British overseer, planter, and slave owner who settled in Jamaica in 1750, maintained a detailed journal during more than three decades of residence on the island. His diaries report how white settlers, often heavily drunk, gang-raped bondswomen. This was the tragic fate of Eve, a young enslaved woman, who on the night of March 12, 1755, was raped by six drunk males.[51] In its multiple entries, Thistlewood's journals provide firsthand accounts of how he sexually assaulted enslaved women on a regular basis. On the first property where he worked as an overseer, he had sex with at least ten of the seventeen women he oversaw.[52] A self-confessed rapist and sadist, his diaries document with vivid details how he violated

and tortured Sally, one of his bondswomen. But Sally was not his only victim. Thistlewood raped other slaves multiple times as well.[53]

Bondswomen endured sexual violence in other regions of the British West Indies. As explained in chapter 6, Mary Prince, who lived and worked as an enslaved woman in Bermuda, was sold multiple times to different owners who physically and mentally abused her. In her own words, one of her owners "has often stripped me naked, hung me up by the wrists, and beat me with the cow-skin, with his own hand, till my body was raw with gashes." According to her, this same man sexually molested her. He "often got drunk" and "had an ugly fashion of stripping himself quite naked, and ordering me then to wash him a tub of water. This was worse to me than all the licks. Sometimes when he called me to wash him I could not come, my eyes were so full of shame. . . . He was a very indecent man."[54]

Harriet Jacobs, the enslaved woman whose dramatic story was also briefly presented in chapter 6, went through similar experiences. Enslaved in North Carolina, she lost her mother at the age of six, and at twelve years old, her mistress died. Her early life was marked by family separation. As her owners either died or married, she and her relatives were separated. But when she became a teenager, she was constantly physically abused and sexually harassed by her owner James Norcom (whose pseudonym in the narrative is Flint). In her words, "He peopled my young mind with unclean images, such as only a vile monster could think of. I turned from him with disgust and hatred."[55] As Norcom continued his audacious advances, his wife became extremely jealous and confronted Jacobs. Meanwhile, Jacobs lived in fear, as she did not know for how long she would be able to repel a man who was notorious for raping other enslaved women and had already fathered eleven children on the plantation. In her situation, a free white girl could have denounced her harasser to a relative or to another member of her community. But Jacobs was an enslaved girl. Her body legally belonged to her owner, as he told her. Even though many of her enslaved fellows knew about Norcom's abuse, denouncing it was useless. Desperate to escape her owner's threats,

Jacobs entered a liaison with a lawyer and future US congressman Samuel Treadwell Sawyer. He impregnated her with two children, who remained Norcom's property, because of Jacobs's slave legal status, until they were later purchased by Sawyer.

Jacobs was not alone. In Brazil, many other enslaved girls were sexually harassed and forced into coerced sexual intercourse with their male owners. Consider the example of Rosa (alias Rosa Egipcíaca), an African enslaved girl of approximately six years of age transported from the Bight of Benin to Brazil in 1724.[56] We know her story because when she was forty-four years old, the Holy Office of the Catholic Church's Inquisition accused her of heresy because of her unusual religious activities. After being denounced and investigated by the church's officials, she was sent to the Inquisition prison in Lisbon. The several pages of her interrogation reveal information about her life and religious activities. Among other things, she told the inquisitor that when she disembarked in Rio de Janeiro, she was purchased by a man named José de Souza Azevedo, who had her baptized in the Candelária Catholic Church.[57] Unlike Jacobs, who managed to resist her owner's harassment, Rosa was raped by Azevedo, who "had deflowered her and treated her awkwardly" until the age of fourteen, when he sold her to the province of Minas Gerais. But her story of sexual abuse did not end in Rio de Janeiro. Once in Minas Gerais, her new female owner, Anna Gracês de Moraez, and her partner forced Rosa into prostitution, a practice that was not uncommon for enslaved women who worked in urban areas.[58] Abused by her owners and prosecuted by the church, Rosa eventually died of "natural causes" in the Inquisition prison in Lisbon in October 1774.[59]

At the end of the eighteenth century, enslaved women who since their childhood had been sexually exploited by their owners were able to use the courts to demand their freedom, while at the same time denouncing these abuses. Well-known in Brazil is the case of the young Brazilian-born enslaved woman Liberata, who also experienced sexual violence and psychological abuse. In 1790, at ten years old, she was sold to José Vieira Rebello, a man who resided near the city of

Desterro, in present-day Florianópolis in the Brazilian southern state of Santa Catarina. Rebello sexually abused Liberata and manipulated her with the promise of manumission. Within a few years he impregnated her with two children who remained his property. Rebello recognized the paternity of the first female child, baptizing her as Anna Vieira. Yet, as his wife and children condemned the extramarital relations, he refused to baptize the second baby. As late as 1812, Liberata remained enslaved. She began a relationship with Francisco José, a mixed-race free man, who attempted to purchase her freedom to marry her. But her owner rejected the offer, leading her lover to petition the municipal judge in order to obtain his bride-to-be's emancipation. Although Liberata's case made it to the court and she was eventually freed, many other enslaved women in the Americas whose owners promised their freedom in exchange for sex were not able to enjoy the same outcome.[60]

In other parts of the Americas, enslaved women and girls went to court to denounce sexual abuse perpetrated by their male owners, who would often even be supported by their own wives. Although not all testimonies were sustained by detailed evidence, some enslaved women explicitly denounced sexual violations. Cecilie was enslaved in Saint Croix, an island of the Danish West Indies, in the present-day Virgin Islands. In 1829, she testified to the police judge of the Christiansted Police Court that her owner, the overseer of the Boetzberg plantation where she was enslaved, coerced her to have sexual relations with him. Although she resisted, the man eventually raped her, but the manager's wife interrupted the violation. However, instead of blaming her husband, she violently flogged the enslaved girl instead.[61] The case never made it to the lower court, but Christiansted's authorities fined the couple and ordered that Cecilie would no longer work for them.

Similar cases occurred in Brazil. As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, Henriques Ferreira Ponte raped the enslaved girl Honorata in Olinda, Brazil, immediately after purchasing her on August 3, 1882. Following the violation, Pontes raped Honorata two more times.

After denouncing her owner, medical doctors submitted the enslaved girl to an examination that corroborated her words and those of the witnesses who testified in her favor. As in Cecilie's case, the judge convicted the owner of rape. But Pontes appealed the court decision. The judge considered the rape of an enslaved girl by her owner immoral, revolting, and punishable. Still, he argued that such a violation was not a crime in the Brazilian criminal code, and Pontes was acquitted one year later.[62] A few years before the end of slavery in Brazil, slave owners continued to have the right to rape their enslaved property.

Rape of Enslaved Men

Same-sex sexual relations were legally prohibited in the Americas during the period of slavery, but these interdictions were not enforced. Until the end of the eighteenth century in Latin America, the Inquisition persecuted enslaved men who were denounced for sodomy practices, even when they were raped by their owners. In 1689, Luiz Delgado, a Portuguese guitarist and tobacco merchant, was arrested by the Inquisition and sent into penal exile to Bahia in Brazil for having committed the sin of sodomy. One day before being arrested again by the Inquisition, he raped a fugitive African-born enslaved man who had recently disembarked from Africa. In his testimony, translated into Portuguese for the inquisitors, the bondsman said Delgado was a "bad white man, because on that night he wanted to make [me] a woman."[63] Historian Mariana Candido found the case of José Benguela, an enslaved man who lived and worked Salvador, Brazil, and was accused of sodomy by the Portuguese Inquisition in 1703.[64] During his interrogation, the twenty-year-old bondsman, whose owner was João Carvalho de Barros, declared he was born in Benguela in West Central Africa. He told the Inquisition officers that his owner touched his member and made him touch his own, ejaculating in his hands, an event that happened again two or three more times. He also told the officers that his owner forced him to have sex with an enslaved woman called Domingas and then submitted him

to anal penetration. According to José, his owner raped him three or four times.[65]

In 1741, the slave owner João Durão de Oliveira of Sabará, Minas Gerais, in Brazil was also denounced for the "abominable sin of sodomy."[66] During the first phase of Durão's investigation, the parish priest heard eight male witnesses. In the second phase, sixteen witnesses were heard, including one enslaved woman, one freedwoman, and several of his victims. All witnesses reported stories about Durão harassing enslaved men, women, and boys, sodomizing them in exchange for gifts. Whereas some of the enslaved individuals resisted his threats, Durão raped dozens of enslaved men and boys. But the inquisitors were not seeking to avenge the enslaved victims of rape; they were seeking to punish sodomy, which, for the Catholic Church was an abominable, nefarious act.[67] Yet, Catholic priests who were slave owners were also accused of sodomizing bondspeople, including enslaved children. Take the case of the priest José Ribeiro Dias, who owned twenty-seven enslaved men, women, and children. In 1743, Felipe de Santiago, a bondsman owned by him, denounced the priest for "having forced him to perform acts of malice and sodomy." According to Santiago, Dias "raped him with the power and commandeering respect of a master," whereas he "obeyed him out of fear because of his condition as of a slave."[68] Unlike in other cases of rape perpetrated by slave owners, Dias was arrested by the Inquisition and spent ten years in the galleys.

During the same period, many other cases of enslaved men raped by their owners are documented in the Inquisition records. Take the example of Luiz da Costa, an African-born enslaved domestic servant, who worked in Vila da Boa Vista, in the captaincy of Pernambuco, Brazil. In 1743, he accompanied his owner, Manoel Alves Cabral, in a hunting excursion. Threatening him with a musket, Cabral raped Luiz, who described the act as "penetration and ejaculation in his posterior orifice."[69] In 1761, Francisco Serrão de Castro also raped the African-born enslaved man Joaquim Antonio, with anal penetration. According to Joaquim, like him, several other enslaved men were also

sexually abused by Castro.[70] These cases bring to light how slave owners coerced enslaved men to have sex with them and how they violated their bodies through rape.

In colonial North America and the antebellum South, sexual encounters between white women of various statuses and enslaved men posed serious challenges. During most of the seventeenth century, the children of a white woman with an enslaved man would carry the legal slave status of the father. Starting in the eighteenth century, sexual relations between a Black man and a white woman were prohibited. And at any time, these liaisons could be denounced as alleged rapes.[71] Similar liaisons obviously existed in Latin America and the West Indies, but there was never any legislation preventing interracial sex and marriage. The Catholic Church punished women who had sexual relations out of wedlock, regardless of whether the sexual partner was enslaved or free, or white. But although unmarried white women who engaged in premarital sex were morally reproached, they were not legally prevented from having sex with whomever they chose.

In a famous passage of an early twentieth-century book, historian and sociologist Manoel Bomfim describes the tragic outcomes of such forbidden sexual liaisons in Brazil: "It is not uncommon for the 'little missy' who was raised touching young black boys, to deliver herself to them, when the degenerate nerves wake up in irrepressible desires; then paternal morality comes: the black or mulatto is castrated with a badly sharped knife, the wound is salted, and he is buried alive afterwards. The girl, with a reinforced dowry, marries a poor cousin."[72] Although castration is perhaps an exaggeration, this description suggests that despite the absence of legislation preventing interracial sex, Brazilian society violently punished enslaved men who engaged in sexual relations with young white elite women.

Other factors also impacted sexual relations among the enslaved population. On plantations and in urban areas, the absence of private spaces where bondspeople could engage in intimate exchanges was an obstacle to sexual activity.[73] Depending on the period and region, fewer enslaved women were available to become sexual partners of

enslaved men. In Brazil, the overall gender imbalance of the enslaved population was clear, with two-thirds of the bondspeople in plantation areas being male. In Cuba, there were similar problems. In 1839, for example, bondsmen on the Cuban coffee plantation La Suerte complained to the local authorities about the lack of enslaved women. The complaint generated results, as the authorities "sent them back to the plantation with the promise that the slaveholder would buy women slaves before Christmas."[74]

Regardless of gender imbalance, some bondsmen also chose to engage in sexual relations with other enslaved men. In his account to journalist Domingo Del Monte, former enslaved man Esteban Montejo emphasized that some male slaves preferred to have sex between themselves and did not want to have anything to do with women: "This was their life: sodomy. They washed clothes and if they had a husband they also cooked. They were good workers and were busy cultivating their plots. They gave the harvest to their husbands so that they would sell it to the peasants."[75] However, we can presume that Cuban Catholic society likely rejected and disapproved of same-sex enslaved couples.

Intimacy with and without Manumission

Violence was intrinsic to sexual relations during the era of slavery. But despite abundant evidence, until recent years, many historians tended to romanticize sexual liaisons between slave owners and enslaved women. In countries such as Brazil, these views emerged in part because a number of enslaved women performed work in urban areas, especially in mining towns, and thus could more easily purchase their own freedom. This context led scholars to pay attention to the cases of bondswomen who experienced social mobility in Brazilian slave society and also contributed to the emergence of the myth of the lustful enslaved woman who managed to use her beauty and sex appeal to seduce her owner and take advantage of this kind of intimate relationship.

In some contexts, enslaved women could definitely receive material advantages from having sexual relations with their owners and therefore could have strategically engaged these relations with the hope of being emancipated. Consider the example of the eighteenth-century captaincy of Minas Gerais, a gold and diamond mining region in southeast Brazil. Most of the population in this area was composed of males, including enslaved men, but most freed individuals were women. In this very specific context where a large white and mixed male population predominated, enslaved women had more access to manumission by engaging in sexual relationships with their male owners. As a result, these male slave owners made provisions in their wills to emancipate the women upon their deaths. Despite these opportunities, most freedwomen purchased their own freedom, and very few of them were granted manumission without providing their owners any compensation. Even fewer bondswomen were emancipated by their owners when the owners were still alive.[76]

Consider the case of Francisca da Silva de Oliveira, known as Chica da Silva. Born in the village of Milho Verde in the Brazilian gold and diamond mining region of Minas Gerais between 1731 and 1735, Chica was the daughter of an African-born enslaved woman and a Brazilian-born white man. Sources from the period describe Chica as a light-skinned woman. When she was still a young girl, her owner sold her to Manuel Pires Sardinha, a prosperous Portuguese physician and bachelor who lived in the town of Tejuco, today's Diamantina. In 1750, when Inquisition officers visited Tejuco, an individual accused Sardinha of living in concubinage with two enslaved women, one of whom was Chica. The accusation was apparently genuine, as one year later Chica was pregnant with her first son. Although Sardinha did not recognize the boy's paternity, he freed him immediately after his Catholic baptism. In Sardinha's will, he also made the child one of his heirs.[77]

But Sardinha's sexual exchanges with Chica were again disturbed in 1753, when the representatives of the Portuguese Inquisition returned to Tejuco one more time. As now Chica was a mother of a newborn,

the crime of concubinage was established. For the Inquisition officer, there was no doubt that Sardinha purchased Chica with the goal of having sex with her.[78] Thus, after signing an agreement committing to break ties with the enslaved women who lived under his roof, Sardinha sold Chica to João Fernandes de Oliveira, a Portuguese businessman and owner of a gold mine. Oliveira had arrived in Tejuco a few months earlier to represent his father, a diamond contractor who succeeded in obtaining the fourth monopoly contract of diamond extraction in the region. But weeks after purchasing Chica, on Christmas Day, December 25, 1753, Oliveira officially freed her. This unusual, quick, and unconditional manumission suggests that like Chica's previous owner, Oliveira had selected his new enslaved property based on her sexual attractiveness. But here, the situation was different. Oliveira could have engaged in sexual relations with Chica without freeing her.[79] Therefore, this early manumission indicates that bonds of affection connected Chica and Oliveira. After her emancipation, Chica continued to share her life with her former owner for seventeen years, until he returned to Portugal to fight for his father's inheritance. Although never legally married, the couple had thirteen children. Chica lived a very comfortable life. After Oliveira's return to Portugal, she remained living in the couple's large residence, administrating his properties, including dozens of enslaved individuals. Their children inherited property, and the males received university education in Portugal. Chica's story was later adapted into a movie and soap operas and became the theme of Carnaval parades and songs in Brazil.

Stories comparable to that of Chica and Oliveira happened in other parts of Latin America and the West Indies during the era of slavery as well.[80] Similar cases also occurred in Louisiana but were rare elsewhere in the United States. Admittedly, there were periods in which manumission laws restricted the ability of slave owners to free enslaved women. But even when manumission was possible, unlike Brazil, the United States did not witness a trend of slave owners emancipating the enslaved women with whom they had had sexual liaisons. Take the example of Elizabeth Hemings, born in Virginia in

1735, nearly the same year as Chica da Silva. Like Chica, she was the daughter of an African woman and a white man, in this case a certain Captain Hemings, after whom she received her last name. Elizabeth's owner John Wayles was the father of Martha Wayles Skelton, the future first lady Martha Jefferson. After the death of his wife, Wayles had six children with Hemings. But unlike Chica, Elizabeth was never emancipated by her owner. After Wayles's death in 1773, Martha Jefferson inherited Elizabeth and her ten children, six of whom were her half-siblings. None of these children was freed. None of these children received college education. None of these children inherited property. The most famous of them, Sally Hemings, was impregnated by her owner, the US President Thomas Jefferson. Like her mother, Sally also had six children fathered by her owner, all of whom became his property.[81] Jefferson was not the only politician to have ever maintained a long-lasting relationship with a bondswoman. Richard Mentor Johnson, who served as the US vice president from 1837 to 1841, owned an enslaved woman, Julia Ann Chinn, who is referred to as his enslaved common-law wife and with whom he had two children.[82] But in contrast with Brazil's Chica da Silva, the US enslaved women Elizabeth Hemings, Sally Hemings, and Julia Chinn were never freed by their eminent owners.

Sex, Violence, and Human Ownership

Human bodies fueled the Atlantic slave trade and slavery. For nearly three centuries slavers captured African men, women, and children who were sold and transported to the Americas by slave traders. Slave owners purchased these captives and held their descendants in bondage. This process entirely relied on the physicality of bodies, transformed into the exemplary locus where human ownership triumphed. Africans and their descendants performed coerced work in rural and urban areas. But being the master of their bodies also meant their owners could use them to gain physical pleasure. Thus, sexuality was a significant part of the institution of slavery, marked

by a persisting tension between slavers and enslaved. Slave traders, ship captains, and crewmen sexually assaulted enslaved men, women, boys, and girls while they were confined in trading structures along the African coasts and in the holds of slave ships. In all parts of the Americas, enslaved men and women, no matter their sexual orientation, engaged in sexual encounters with other bondspeople.

Bondspeople had sex with their owners, and these exchanges were coercive by nature because enslaved people were movable property and rarely had the ability to refuse these their owners' advances.[83] As we have seen in this chapter, a great amount of evidence produced by enslavers and enslaved people confirms that sexual violence against enslaved women, men, and children predominated in the Americas. Although not all sexual exchanges between slave owners and enslaved women were based on explicit violence and some liaisons may have been based on mutual agreement, the power imbalance between enslavers and bondspeople was too huge to assume that sexual relations that may have looked consensual were based on mutual agreement—unless, as in rare instances, slave owners decided to free their sexual partners.

59. On Mina women street vendors, see M. Soares, *People of Faith*, 99–100. On Mina women in this specific market, see Farias, *Mercados Minas*, 106.

60. Louis Agassiz and Elizabeth Agassiz, *Journey in Brazil* (Boston: Ticknor and Fields, 1868), 82–85.

61. This case is explored in Juliana Barreto Farias, "De escrava a Dona: A trajetória da africana mina Emília Soares do Patrocínio no Rio de Janeiro do século XIX," *Locus: Revista de História* 18, no. 2 (2012): 13–40.

62. On this case, see Farias, *Mercados Minas*, 103.

63. See Sheila Siqueira de Castro Faria, "Sinhás pretas, damas mercadoras: As pretas minas nas cidades do Rio de Janeiro e de São João del Rey (1700–1850)" (diss. for full professor promotion, Universidade Federal Fluminense, 2004), 200–202.

64. *Diário do Rio de Janeiro*, March 30, 1825, 94.

65. Patricia Acerbi, *Street Occupations: Urban Vending in Rio de Janeiro* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2017), 60–61.

Chapter 10

1. "Defloramento da escrava pelo senhor: Questões connexas," *O Direito: Revista mensal de legislação, doutrina e jurisprudencia* 35 (1884): 103–18.

2. Gilberto Freyre, *Casa-grande e senzala* (São Paulo: Global, 2003). Published in 1933 in Brazil, this book was translated into English as Gilberto Freyre, *The Masters and the Slaves: A Study in the Development of Brazilian Civilization* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1946).

3. Marc Epprecht, "Sexuality, Africa, History," *American Historical Review* 114, no. 5 (2009): 1259.

4. Oyèrónké Oyěwùmí, *The Invention of Women: Making an African Sense of Western Gender Discourses* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1997), 29, 44.

5. Dapper also reports this tradition in the Jolof Kingdom, in present-day Senegal, and the Gold Coast. Olfert Dapper, *Description de l'Afrique* [. . .] (Amsterdam: Chez Wolfgang, Waesberge, Bom & van Someren, 1686), 234–35, 299.

6. Oyěwùmí, *Invention of Women*, 53–54.

7. See Kwasi Konadu, " 'To Satisfy My Savage Appetite': Slavery, Belief, and Sexual Violence on the Mina (Gold) Coast, 1471–1571," *Journal of African History* (2022): 1–16. For a longer and more detailed study of these cases, see also Kwasi Konadu, *Many Black Women of This Fortress: Graça, Mónica and Adwoa, Three Enslaved Women of Portugal's African Empire* (London: Hurst, 2022).

8. Dapper, *Description de l'Afrique*, 260.

9. Olfert Dapper, *Naukeurige beschrijvinge der Afrikaensche gewesten* [. . .], vol. 2 (Amsterdam: J. van Meurs, 1676), 219, 106. The passage describing these

women is absent from the French edition of 1686; see Dapper, *Description de l'Afrique*, 277. For an English translation of this passage, see Adam Jones, "Prostitution, Polyandry or Rape? On the Ambiguity of European Sources for the West African Coast 1660–1860," in Candido and Jones, *African Women in the Atlantic World*, 90.

10. Emmanuel Akyeampong, "Sexuality and Prostitution among the Akan of the Gold Coast c. 1650–1950," *Past & Present*, no. 156 (1997): 146.

11. A. Jones, "Prostitution, Polyandry or Rape?" 93, 97–105.

12. See Bay, *Wives of the Leopard*.

13. See Lynne Ellsworth Larsen, "Wives and Warriors: The Royal Women of Dahomey as Representatives of the Kingdom," in *The Routledge Companion to Black Women's Cultural Histories*, ed. Janell Hobson (London: Routledge, 2021), 227. See Gina Prince-Bythewood, dir., *The Woman King* (TriStar Pictures, 2022).

14. Melville J. Herskovits, *Dahomey: An Ancient West African Kingdom* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University Press, 1967), 2:46.

15. Robin Law, "The 'Amazons' of Dahomey," *Paideuma: Mitteilungen zur Kulturkunde* 39 (1993): 256.

16. See Law, " 'Amazons' of Dahomey," 256.

17. Suzanne Preston Blier, "Mort et créativité dans la tradition des amazones du Dahomey," in *Ethnocentrisme et création*, ed. Annie Dupuis (Paris: Éditions de la Maison des sciences de l'homme, 2013), 73.

18. Melville J. Herskovits, "A Note on 'Woman Marriage' in Dahomey," *Africa: Journal of the International African Institute* 10, no. 3 (1937): 335–41.

19. Nwando Achebe, *The Female King of Colonial Nigeria: Ahebi Ugbabe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2011), 81.

20. Equiano and Carretta, *Interesting Narrative*, 33.

21. On European and African notions of childhood, see Benjamin N. Lawrance, *Amistad's Orphans: An Atlantic Story of Children, Slavery, and Smuggling* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014), 20, 29. See also D. da Silva, *Atlantic Slave Trade*, 111–12.

22. "Viagens de Cadamosto e Pedro de Sintra: Primeira viagem de Cadamosto (22-3-1455)" in Brásio, *Monumenta Missionaria Africana: Segunda série*, 1:322.

23. On Senegal, see H. Jones, *Métis of Senegal*, and J. Johnson, *Wicked Flesh*. On the Gold Coast, see Feinberg, *Africans and Europeans in West Africa*, and Ipsen, *Daughters of the Trade*. On Benguela and Luanda, see Candido, "Aguida Gonçalves da Silva," and V. Oliveira, *Slave Trade and Abolition*.

24. Mustakeem, *Slavery at Sea*, 38–41.

25. On sexual violence in these early exchanges on the Gold Coast, see Konadu, " 'To Satisfy My Savage Appetite,'" and Kwasi Konadu, *Many Black Women of This Fortress*.

26. Eustache de la Fosse, *Voyage à la côte occidentale d'Afrique en Portugal et en Espagne (1479–1480)* (Paris: Foulché-Delbosc, 1897), 14–15.

27. Audra A. Diptee, *From Africa to Jamaica: The Making of an Atlantic Slave Society, 1775–1807* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2010), 22–23.

28. Lawrance, *Amistad's Orphans*, 120.

29. Harms, *Diligent*, 312.

30. Harms, *Diligent*, 312, and Deveau, *La traite rochelaise*, 241.

31. Johannes Menne Postma, *The Dutch in the Atlantic Slave Trade 1600–1815* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 243; Mustakeem, *Slavery at Sea*, 85.

32. ADCM 17, 4J 45 2318, *Mémoires de Jacques Proa dit Proa des îles*, 113–14. On Proa's memoir, see Antoine Regis, "Aventures d'un jeune négrier français d'après un manuscrit inédit du XVIIIe siècle," *Notes africaines*, April 1974 , 51–56. See also J. Johnson, *Wicked Flesh*, 83.

33. Cugoano, *Thoughts and Sentiments*, 15.

34. See Deveau, *La traite rochelaise*, 241. On this specific slave voyage, see Slave-Voyages, Voyage ID 32363, www.slavevoyages.org/voyage/database.

35. ADLA B4596, Rapports des capitaines à l'Amirauté de Nantes, Rapports des capitaines au long cours, August 23, 1777, fl113–14. Part of the document is summarized in Jean Mettas and Serge Daget, *Répertoire des expéditions négrières françaises au XVIIIe siècle*, vol. 1 (Nantes: Société française d'histoire d'outre-mer et Librairie orientaliste Paul Geuthner, 1979), voyage 1048, pp. 600–601. The case is also quoted in Robert Stein, *The French Slave Trade in the Eighteenth Century: An Old Regime Business* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1979), 101.

36. James Field Stanfield, *The Guinea Voyage, a Poem* [. . .] (Edinburgh: J. Robertson, 1807), 74. See Rediker, *Slave Ship*, 152.

37. Falconbridge, *Account of the Slave Trade*, 23.

38. John Newton, *Upon the African Slave Trade* (London, 1788), 20. See also Harms, *Diligent*, 313.

39. Entry of February 3, 1753, in Newton, Martin, and Spurrell, *Journal of a Slave Trader*, 75. See also Rediker, *Slave Ship*, 179, and Mustakeem, *Slavery at Sea*, 86.

40. House of Commons Parliamentary Papers, United Kingdom (hereafter cited as HCPP), *Correspondence with the British Commissioners Relating to the Slave Trade, 1838–9*, [180.] Class A, Correspondence with the British Commissioners at Sierra Leone, The Havana, Rio de Janeiro, and Surinam, Relating to the Slave Trade from May 1st 1838 to February 2nd 1839, vol. XLVIII, Sess. 1839 (London: Clowes and Sons, 1839), 27.

41. Rapes are mentioned in Manuel Barcia, *The Yellow Demon of Fever: Fighting Disease in the Nineteenth-Century Transatlantic* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2020), 49. Details about these rapes are in Barcia, "White Cannibalism in the Illegal Slave Trade," 1–28.

42. The National Archives, Kew, UK (hereafter cited as TNA), Foreign Office 84/347, vol. 45, Draft to the H. Ms. Commission, Havana, August 9, 1841, no. 20, 54v. Contemporaneous observers described the case in John Flude

Johnson, *Proceedings of the General Anti-Slavery Convention, and held in London from Tuesday, June 13th, to Tuesday, June 20th, 1843* (London: British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, 1843), 228–29. The incident was widely reported in the abolitionist press that employed the term *rape*; see "Tidings from Cuba," *British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Reporter*, May 5, 1841, 85. See also Dale T. Graden, *Disease, Resistance, and Lies: The Demise of the Transatlantic Slave Trade to Brazil and Cuba* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2014), 50.

43. Edward E. Baptist, "'Cuffy,' 'Fancy Maids,' and 'One-Eyed Men': Rape, Commodification, and the Domestic Slave Trade in the United States," *American Historical Review* 106, no. 5 (2001): 1641–42.

44. For the Iberian Peninsula, see the case of sixteenth-century enslaved breeders in Vila Viçosa, Évora, in Portugal, documented in the travel account by Alessandrino Legato, an Italian emissary sent to Portugal by Pope Pius V. See Biblioteca da Ajuda, Lisbon, Portugal (hereafter cited as BA), "Rerum Lusitanicarum—Symmicta Lusitanica," Viaggio del Cardinale Alessandrino Legato Apostolico Alli Ser Re di Francia, Spanha e Portogallo, 1571, 46-IX-3; and Jorge Fonseca, *Escravos e senhores na Lisboa quinhentista* (Lisbon: Edições Colibri, 2010). For seventeenth-century New England, see John Jesselyn, *An Account of Two Voyages to New England: Made During the Years 1638, 1663* (Boston: W. Veazie, 1865), 26.

45. See Gregory D. Smithers, *Slave Breeding: Sex, Violence, and Memory in African American History* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2012), and Thomas A. Foster, *Rethinking Rufus: Sexual Violations of Enslaved Men* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2019), 50.

46. Daina Ramey Berry, *"Swing the Sickle for the Harvest Is Ripe": Gender and Slavery in Antebellum Georgia* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 79. On forced breeding, see also Berry, *Price for Their Pound of Flesh*, 78–80.

47. See Smithers, *Slave Breeding*, 1–2, and Foster, *Rethinking Rufus*, 55.

48. See Marinaldo Fernando de Souza, "Além da escola: Reflexões teórico-metodológicas com base na análise de práticas educativas alternativas descobertas em áreas rurais da região de São Carlos, S.P." (PhD diss., Universidade Estadual Paulista, 2016).

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50. Hebe Mattos, "Os Combates da Memória: Escravidão e liberdade nos arquivos orais de descendentes de escravos brasileiros," *Tempo* 3, no. 6 (1998): 10–11.

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52. Vincent Brown, *Tacky's Revolt: The Story of an Atlantic War* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2020), 58.

53. Burnard, *Mastery, Tyranny, and Desire*, 261.

54. Prince, *History of Mary Prince*, 24.

55. Jacobs, *Incidents in the Life of a Slave Girl*, 34.

56. Arquivo Nacional da Torre do Tombo, Lisbon, Portugal (hereafter cited as ANTT), Tribunal do Santo Ofício, Inquisição de Lisboa, Processo 9065. Anthropologist Luiz Mott was the first scholar to bring this case to light. See Luiz Mott, *Rosa Egipcíaca: Uma santa africana no Brasil* (Rio de Janeiro: Bertrand do Brasil, 1993), and Luiz Mott, "Rosa Egipcíaca: De escrava da Costa da Mina à Flor do Rio de Janeiro," in *Rotas atlânticas da diáspora africana: Da Baía do Benim ao Rio de Janeiro*, ed. Mariza de Carvalho Soares (Rio de Janeiro: Editora da Universidade Federal Fluminense, 2007), 135–55.

57. ANTT, Tribunal do Santo Ofício, Inquisição de Lisboa, Processo 9065, fl. 77v.

58. ANTT, Tribunal do Santo Ofício, Inquisição de Lisboa, Processo 9065, fl. 77v–78.

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61. Gunvor Simonsen, *Slave Stories: Law, Representation, and Gender in the Danish West Indies* (Aarhus, Denmark: Aarhus University Press, 2017), 77, 97.

62. "Defloramento da escrava pelo senhor." See the transcription of this case translated in English in Robert Conrad, *Children of God's Fire: A Documentary History of Black Slavery in Brazil* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1997), 273–80.

63. On this case, see Luiz Mott, *Bahia: Inquisição e sociedade* (Salvador, Brazil: Editora da Universidade da Bahia, 2010), 142–43.

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65. ANTT, Tribunal do Santo Ofício, Inquisição de Lisboa, Process 6478, December 6, 1703, fl. 2–2v.

66. ANTT, Tribunal do Santo Ofício, Inquisição de Lisboa, Process 5708, May 20, 1741, fl. 4.

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Slavery, ed. Gwyn Campbell and Elizabeth Elbourne (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2014), 534.

68. Vainfas, "Sodomy, Love, and Slavery in Colonial Brazil," 535.

69. This trial is transcribed and translated in English in Richard A. Gordon, "Confessing Sodomy, Accusing a Master: The Lisbon Trial of Pernambuco's Luiz da Costa, 1743," in *Afro-Latino Voices: Narratives from the Early Modern Ibero-Atlantic World, 1550–1812*, ed. Kathryn Joy McKnight and Leo J. Garofalo (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2009), 277.

70. Moura, *Dicionário da escravidão negra no Brasil*, 225.

71. See Martha Hodes, *White Women, Black Men: Illicit Sex in the 19th Century* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1997), and Foster, *Rethinking Rufus*, 33.

72. Manoel Bomfim, *A América Latina: Males de origem* (Rio de Janeiro: H. Garnier, 1905), 153.

73. Ulrike Schmieder, "Sexual Relations between Enslaved and between Slaves and Nonslaves in Nineteenth-Century Cuba," in Campbell and Elbourne, *Sex, Power, and Slavery*, 234–35.

74. On this case, see Schmieder, "Sexual Relations between Enslaved and between Slaves and Nonslaves," 236, 249n35.

75. Miguel Barnet, *Biografía de un cimarrón* (Buenos Aires: Centro Editor de América Latina, 1977), 31. The original edition of this biography is Miguel Barnet, *Biografía de un cimarrón* (Havana: Instituto de Etnología y Folklore, 1966).

76. Júnia Ferreira Furtado, *Chica da Silva: A Brazilian Slave of the Eighteenth Century* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 15–16.

77. Furtado, *Chica da Silva*, 46–47.

78. Furtado, *Chica da Silva*, 50.

79. Furtado, *Chica da Silva*, 105.

80. See, for example, the cases of Bernabela and Petrona Funes in eighteenth-century Córdoba in present-day Argentina, in Erika Denise Edwards, *Hiding in Plain Sight: Black Women, the Law, and the Making of a White Argentine Republic* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2020), chap. 3.

81. See Gordon-Reed, *Hemingses of Monticello*. On the history and memory of Sally Hemings, see also Araujo, *Slavery in the Age of Memory*, 24–31.

82. On Chinn, see Amrita Chakrabarti Myers, *The Vice President's Black Wife: The Untold Life of Julia Chinn* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2023).

83. According to Joshua D. Rothman, in the context of antebellum Virginia, some bondswomen were successful in resisting the sexual advances of slave owners and overseers. See Joshua D. Rothman, *Sex and Families across the Color Line in Virginia, 1787–1861* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2003), 154–55.