

# Memories of Refugees in the Early Modern Atlantic World

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## Introduction

Let's linger for a bit on the title of this module - "Refugees in the Early Modern Atlantic World." In Reading 1, we addressed the reality that 'refugee' is not a neutral word. It's inherently sympathetic and implicitly treats the migrant as a victim. Sometimes refugees do not want to be described as such, while others play up their refugee status. Sometimes outsiders refuse to admit that migrants are refugees. Other times, they hail the refugees as heroes or martyrs. The word always implies a set of values. By comparing different kind of refugees and other migrants systematically, you have been able to identify factors shaping movements of people, and the power relations intrinsic to different scenarios.

## MEMORIES OF REFUGEES

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INTRODUCTION

HUGUENOT REFUGEES FROM  
FRANCE

MAROON REFUGEES FROM  
SLAVERY

AFRICAN REFUGEES FLEEING WAR  
AND ENSLAVEMENT

INDIGENOUS AMERICAN REFUGEES

CONCLUSION

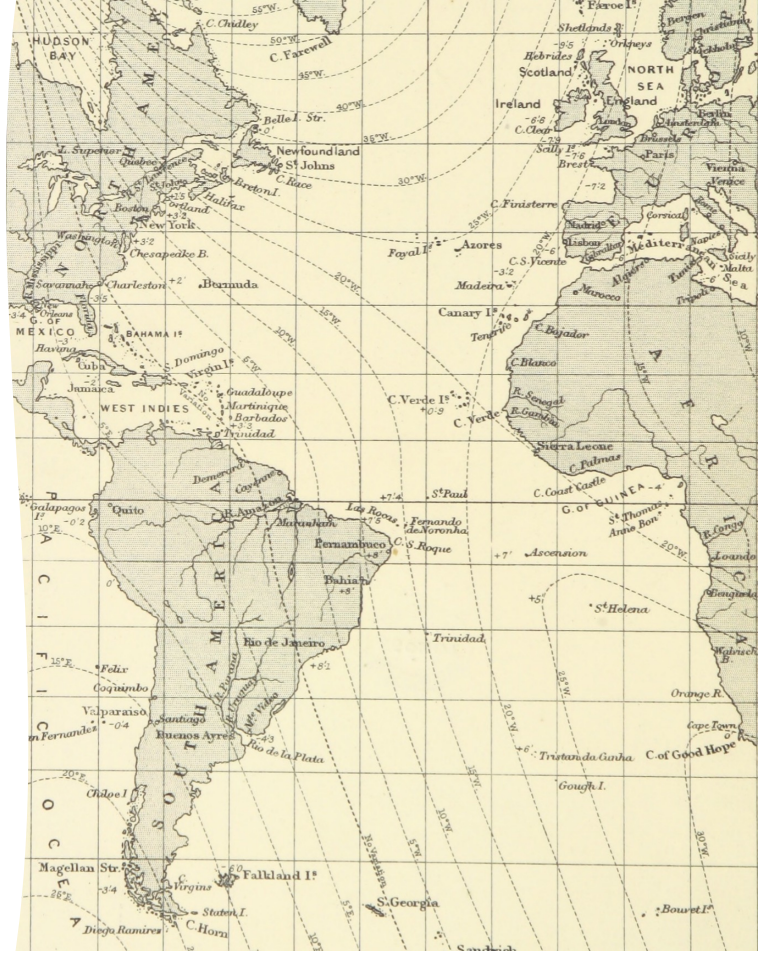
## Map of the 'Atlantic World'

The module also centers on "the Atlantic World." We never defined what that meant, but it probably was clear to you. The point was to use the trans-oceanic connections to understand that people in Europe, Africa, and the Americas have had relationships to one another for centuries. Had we only examined one of these regions - or just one state or group of people within one of these regions - we would not have been able to see the connections of these people, connections that in some cases they were unable to see themselves.

But what of the term, "early modern"? What does *that* mean? It turns out that historians have spent a lot of time and ink debating about what 'modern' means. Specialists in many fields debate definitions, of course, so that's not surprising. For our purposes, let's not bother with the details, except to say that it means more like you and I today than at some earlier point in time.

That is, let's use modern in a general sense, simply in contrast people or things that are old fashioned, traditional, or out-of-date - that is, not like today. For now, let's move on to the word "early." If 'modern' means more like us and less like the way we used to be, what does 'early' mean? It means that we are describing a period in which some of the key features that characterize the world today were starting to emerge, that is, they were in their "early" forms.

Historians using the term "early modern" do so to identify key features that came to characterize the world in the 19<sup>th</sup>, 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> centuries were starting to emerge during this earlier era. While we have been focusing on the years from about 1670 to about 1730, most historians count the "early modern era" as starting sometime between 1450 and 1500 and ending between 1750 and 1800. Not all historians use the term "early modern" - it does not work as well to describe major changes East Asia or Oceania, for instance. But many who study the Atlantic World find it useful to explain some key developments taking place in Europe, Africa, and the Americas.



Like the word 'refugee,' then, the phrase 'early modern Atlantic' carries implicit meanings, in this case that events unfolding during that time and in those places have a particular importance in world history that can help us understand the world we live in today.

**Etching of Amsterdam,  
c. 1750**



If we are going to use the past to help us navigate the present, though, we have to first admit that there are always gaps between what happened (the historical past) and what we remember about the past (historical memory). Sometimes, those gaps exist because incomplete surviving evidence. Other times gaps exist when people emphasize certain evidence in favor of others or stress different meanings of the same evidence, based on their assumptions, preconceptions, or values. Sometimes, it's what's not said that is critical – silences about the topic some people would rather not remember or that have over time become forgotten altogether because they were inconvenient or embarrassing.



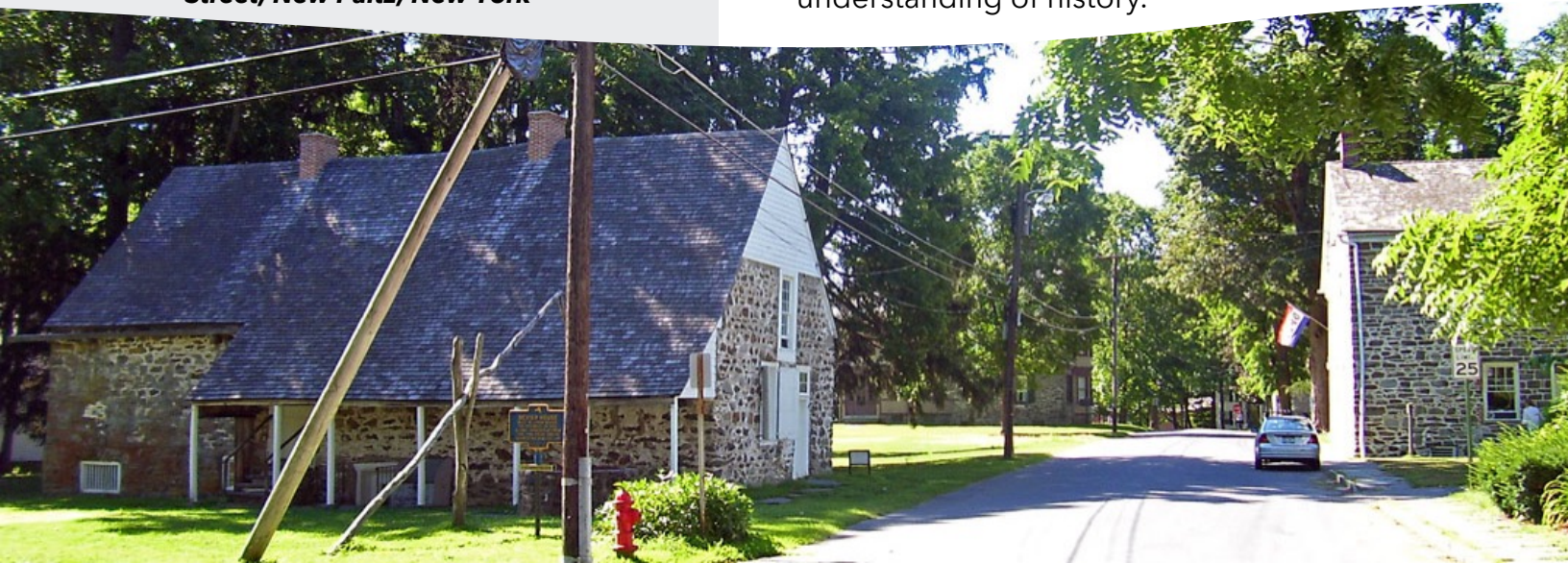
**Parque Memorial Quilombo dos Palmares, the site of a maroon community of Brazil led by Zumbi dos Palmares**

For this last lesson, we are going to move about a century and a half into the future, to consider how historians later remembered the kinds of early modern refugees that we have been studying. Historians' jobs is to do their best to fill in the gap between the historical past and historical memory, by producing historical accounts that that offer an accurate, meaningful, and thorough explanations of the historical past. Professional historians don't always agree with one another, but they all share the goals of being critical, systematic, well-informed, accurate, and thorough in their thinking and communicating about the past.

For this last lesson, we will assess how older generations of historians depicted these refugees, and identify places where their values and assumptions shape the alignment between the historical past and their historical memory.

**Contemporary view of Huguenot Street, New Paltz, New York**

As you read, compare their account of push and pull factors to those we have studied, the values in the language they used, and what (if any) evidence the author omitted. This practice will help us read critically, but also help us avoid lettering letting our own biases distort our understanding of history.

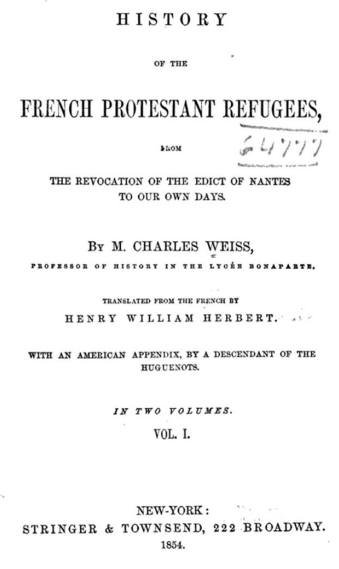




## Source 1: *Huguenot Refugees from France*

The first example we'll look at is Charles Weiss, a French Protestant and teacher of secondary school history in the city of Strasbourg, who wrote his *History of the French Protestant Refugees from the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes* in 1853. The following year, a proud descendent of the Huguenots living in New York City, Henry William Herbert, published an English translation.

Here's an excerpt:



**Engraving of the  
Huguenots Fleeing  
France, 1696**

"The Protestants were steeped in a lethargy of grief. In spite of the persecutions they had suffered, they looked upon Louis XIV with the same eyes as all France; they admired in him the greatest king of the age, and persisted obstinately in believing in his good faith, his wisdom, and his humanity. .... Every illusion ceased, however, when they saw fall, even unto the last, the eight hundred temples they had possessed ... A swarm of the 'reformed' thought of nothing but quitting the kingdom. The ministers went first. ... Most of them went in haste, unprovided with the most necessary articles, at an already inclement season, and ignorant where they might find an asylum.... The precautions which were taken to prevent emigration [of non-clergy] were useless. In vain the frontiers and the coast were guarded by men, who were rewarded in proportion to their captures; in vain arms were placed in the hands of peasants, who were forced to quit their work in order to watch the highways and ferries, and to observe night and day those who crossed; in vain were they promised a part of the spoils of the emigrants they might arrest; in vain was it published that there was no asylum for the refugees abroad; and that they should be, everywhere, without employment and without relief; that more than ten thousand had died of wretchedness in England; that most of them who remained, begged permission to return, and promised to abjure; All these reports found small credence, and did not hinder thousands of Protestants from braving every day, the most terrible dangers, in order to escape from their executioners. Hopes were entertained that they could be terrified by the public display of punishments.... It is impossible to state, at the present time, the exact amount of the Protestant emigration. We believe, however, that we shall not be very far from the truth in assuming that, of about 1,000,000 Protestants ... from 250,000 to 300,000 expatriated themselves in the last fifteen years of the seventeenth century ... These deplorable difficulties laid the commerce of France under a sort of interdict. Foreign nations endeavored to do without it; and the necessity of acting thus produced more fatal effects on France than the ill will of all her enemies."



**Walloon Huguenot monument in Battery Park, dedicated to Jesse de Forest for his contributions to founding of New York City**

About the Huguenot refugees in the American colonies, Weiss wrote this:

“The American colonies were largely remunerated for their wisely generous hospitality, by the services which the exiles rendered them. The uncultivated lands on the banks of the Saint James, were transformed by them into fields covered with rich harvest. The flourishing stake of their model farms around Manniken was extoled throughout the whole of Virginia.

The provincial legislation also endowed them with great privileges, in order to hinder them from emigrating farther south, whither they might be attracted by a milder climate, and the increasing number of their exiled fellow-citizens. In Massachusetts, they cleared in a great measure the forests which still surrounded colonies of Boston and Oxford. In the State of New-York, the founders of New La Rochelle recoiled from no fatigue that might tend to render the virgin lands on the border of the East River. Men, women and children, worked without relaxation, and succeeded in conquering smiling fields from a savage wilderness. In South Carolina, they reared magnificent plantations on the banks of the Cooper....

The political services which the emigrants rendered to North America were not less numerous, nor less brilliant. ... The refugees, notwithstanding their small number, formed then an important part of the population; and their generous blood flowed in the veins of a multitude of families, when the War of Independence broke out. The natural enemies of political despotism and religious intolerance, they certainly contributed to keep up, and even foment, the love of liberty among the other colonists; and when they saw them run to arms, they seconded the insurrectional movement with that puissant energy they had inherited from their ancestors....

A politeness and elegance of manners, far superior to those of the inhabitants of English origins, a severe morality, and unalterable charity - such were the other qualities by which the refugees obtained the esteem of their fellow-citizens. The little colony of French Santee, became particularly noted for the exquisite urbanity of its founders. Thanks to the intolerance of Louis XIV, the French language, and with it all the perfections and all the refinements of French society in the seventeenth century, were propagated by them in these distant countries, where until then, the austere and sombre character of the English Puritans had almost exclusively ruled.... It was above all, their sympathy for the suffering classes which distinguished them throughout the course of the eighteenth century. Gabriel Manigault, the creator of the future of his house, always showed himself charitable toward the poor, and would never consent to increase his wealth by the commerce in slaves, which was at that time so lucrative.”



**Gabriel Manicault would not trade in enslaved people, but did “own” hundreds of enslaved Black people who labored on his rice plantations**

Source: Charles Weiss, *History of the French Protestant Refugees from the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes to Our Own Days*, trans. Henry William Herbert, vol. 1 (New York: Stringer & Townsend, 1854), 347-38, 351-52, 377-79

## Source 2: *Maroon Refugees from Slavery*

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In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, there were few opportunities for Blacks - whether in Africa or in the Americas - to publish scholarly accounts of refuges among their ancestors. That does not mean that they that they did not tell those stories. One way that African Americans who had self-emancipated as maroons did so was by telling their stories to educated white people willing to publish them. One such author was Harriet Beecher Stowe, who crafted fictional stories with strong abolitionist morals. One of those novels from 1856, was *Dred: A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp*. The titular character (Dred) is a maroon with a deep Christian faith who helps people escape enslavement in North Carolina. The work is based in part on events in the news and in part her imagination, but also on stories told to her by people escaping enslavement that she was hiding in her home from slave hunters. Dred's father, Denmark Vasey (c.1767-1822), was named for a real historical character, a Protestant pastor and activist who was executed for organizing an anti-slavery revolt in Charleston, South Carolina.



**Harriet Beecher Stowe, 1852**

Here's some passages:

"Among the children of Denmark Vesey was a boy by a Mandingo slave-woman who was his father's particular favorite. The Mandingos are one of the finest of African tribes, distinguished for intelligence, beauty of form, and an indomitable pride and energy of nature... The boy received from his mother the name of Dred; a name not unusual among the slaves, and generally given to those of great physical force.

The development of this child's mind was so uncommon as to excite astonishment among the negroes. He early acquitted the power of reading, by an apparent instinctive faculty, and would often astonish those around him with things which he had discovered in books. Like other children of a deep and fervent nature, he developed great religious ardor, and often surprised the older negroes by his questions and replies on this subject. A son so endowed could not but be an object of great prize and interest to a father like Denmark Vesey. The impression seemed to prevail universally among the negroes that this child was born for extraordinary things...

At the time of his father's execution, Dred was a lad of fourteen.... Sold to a distant plantation, he became noted for his desperate, unsubduable disposition. He joined in none of the social recreations and amusements of the slaves, labored with proud and silent assiduity, but, on the slightest rebuke or threat, flashed up with a savage fierceness, which supported by his immense bodily strength, made him an object of dread among overseers ... Finally, an overseer, hardier than the rest, determined on the task of subduing him. In the scuffle that ensued Dred struck him to the earth, a dead man, made his escape to the swamps, and was never afterwards heard of in civilized life.





***The Great Dismal Swamp***

The reader who consults the map will discover that the whole eastern shore of the Southern States, with slight interruptions, is belted by an immense chain of swamps, regions of hopeless disorder, where the abundant growth and vegetation of nature, sucking up its force from the humid soil, seems to rejoice in a savage exuberance, and bid defiance to all human effort either to penetrate or subdue...

What the mountains of Switzerland were to the persecuted Vaudois, this swampy belt had been to the American slave.\* The constant effort to recover from thence fugitives had led to the adoption, in these states, of a separate profession, unknown at this time in any other Christian land - hunters, who train and keep dogs for the hunting of men, women, and children ... Dred carried with him to the swamp but one solitary companion - the Bible of his father. To him it was not the messenger of peace and good-will, but the herald of woe and wrath!...

The negroes lying out in the swamps are not so wholly cut off from society as might at first be imagined. The slaves of all the adjoining plantations, whatever they may pretend, to secure the good-will of their owners, are at heart secretly disposed, from motives both of compassion and policy, to favor the fugitives. They very readily perceive that, in the event of any difficulty occurring to themselves, it might be quite necessary to have a friend and protector in the swamp; and therefore they do not hesitate to supply these fugitives, so far as they are able, with anything which they may desire. The poor whites, also, who keep small shops in the neighborhood of plantations, are never particularly scrupulous, provided they can turn a penny to their own advantage; and willingly supply necessary wares in exchange for game, with which the swamp abounds.

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\* The Vaudois here refers to Waldensians, religious dissenters in France who fled as refugees along with the Huguenots in 1685, following the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. While most Huguenot refugees fled to the Dutch Republic and England, most Waldensian refugees fled to areas in the Alps.

***Slave Hunt, Dismal Swamp, Virginia***  
**by Thomas Moran, 1862**

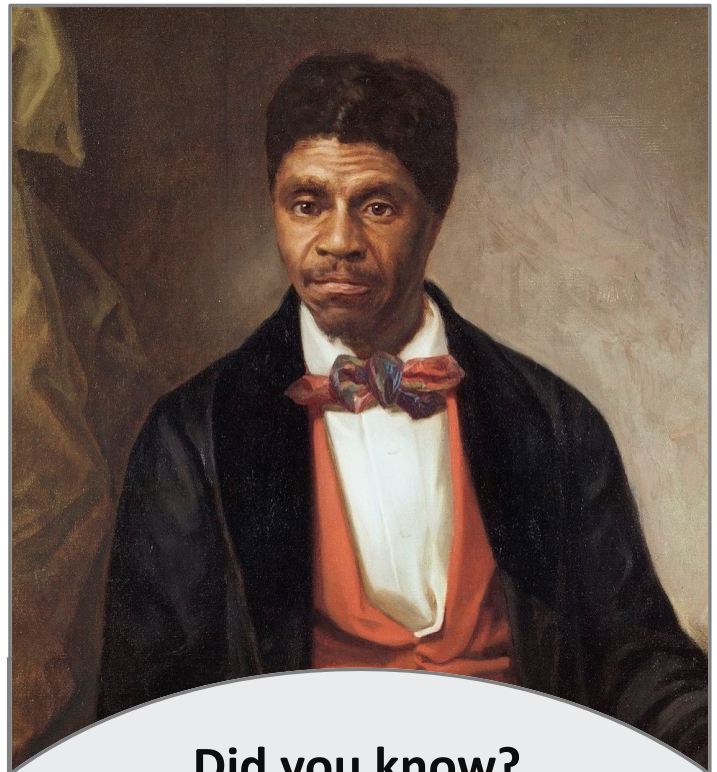




**Portrait of Dred Scott,  
c. 1888**

Dred, therefore, came in possession of an excellent rifle, and never wanted for ammunition, which supplied him with an abundance of food. Besides this, there are here and there elevated spots in the swampy land, which, by judicious culture, are capable of great productiveness. And many such spots Dred had brought under cultivation, either with his own hands, or from those of other fugitives, whom he had received and protected. From the restlessness of his nature, he had not confined himself to any particular region, but had traversed the whole swampy belt of both the Carolinas, as well as that of Southern Virginia; residing a few months in one place, and a few months in another. Wherever he stopped, he formed a sort of retreat, where he received and harbored fugitives. On one occasion, he rescued a trembling and bleeding mulatto woman from the dogs of the hunters, who had pursued her into the swamp. This woman he made his wife, and appeared to entertain a very deep affection for her. He made a retreat for her, with more than common ingenuity, in the swamp adjoining the Gordon plantation; and after that, he was more especially known in that locality."

Source: Harriet Beecher Stowe, *Dred: A Tale of the Great Dismal Swamp*, vol. 1 (Boston: Philips, Sampson and Company, 1856), 253-58.



### Did you know?

Stowe's novel, *Dred*, was published just as the real-life Dred Scott and his wife Harriet were suing for freedom. In 1857, the case was rejected by the Supreme Court, which ruled that enslaved people were not citizens, and therefore could not expect protection from the government. Learn more:

- [Dred and Harriet Scott's Freedom](#)
- [Dred Scott v Sanford, 1857](#)

For the period we are studying, the 1670s to the 1730s, we have few direct glimpses of historical narratives that 19<sup>th</sup>-century Black people - whether still enslaved or free - told themselves about maroons. Collections African American folk stories exist that celebrate the trickster who outwits the slave owner, though those come from much later. For the United States, abolitionist-era accounts exist told by people who escaped to Canada or to free states. But most of the early maroons we studied were from Africa (and spoke African languages). By the 19<sup>th</sup> century, few Blacks in the Americas had direct knowledge of African languages and cultures. Meanwhile, while most early maroons did not have any clear ideas about where they might flee to, many people fleeing enslavement in the 19<sup>th</sup>-century United States knew they could be free if they reached Canada, and they could find support - via the Underground Railroad - to get there. Still, maroons told their own stories to one another and enslaved people surely told one another histories of those who had escaped to freedom long after the fact.



### Source 3: African Refugees Fleeing War and Enslavement

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19<sup>th</sup>-century historical accounts written by Africans about the early modern refugees along the West African coast are absent, in part because of so few people there used a written language at the time, but also because the powerful kingdoms that dominated the region at the time - the kingdoms of Asante and Dahomey - had largely organized around their role in the slave trade. Instead, many of the writings published during the 19<sup>th</sup> century about the history of West Africa were authored by racist white people defending the trans-Atlantic slave trade or to justify the more recent European colonialism in West Africa, which began with formation of Britain's Gold Coast colony in 1821.

By the 1910s, however, a significant movement of Black intellectuals in the United States and the Caribbean had formed that were forming scholarly narratives, based in careful reading of sources, that were providing alternatives to the racist narratives glorifying white supremacy. In 1915, one such author, W. E. B. Du Bois, published *The Negro*, the first general history of Black people in English. It offered an overview of the history of Africa and people of African descent in the Americas included both a recognition of the impacts of the trans-Atlantic slave trade on Africans as well as a brief discussion of marrons.

"[I]n Benin the whole character of west-coast culture seems to change. In place of the Yoruban culture, with its city democracy, its elevated religious ideas, its finely organized industry, and its noble art, came Ashanti and Dahomey. What was it that changed the character of the west coast from this to the orgies of war and blood sacrifice which we read of later in these lands?

There can be but one answer: the slave trade. Not simply the sale of men, but an organized traffic of such proportions and widely organized ramifications as to turn the attention and energies of men from nearly all other industries, encourage war and all the cruelest passions of war, and concentrate this traffic in precisely that part of Africa farthest from the ancient Mediterranean lines of trade...

**Portrait of W.E.B. Du Bois, c. 1911**





**Elmina Castle, 2010**

The Portuguese built the first slave-trading fort at Elmina, on the Gold Coast, in 1482, and extended their trade down the west coast and up the east coast ... It was the Dutch, however, who launched the oversea slave trade as a regular institution ... By 1621 they had captured Portugal's various slave forts on the west coast and they proceeded to open sixteen forts along the coast of the Gulf of Guinea. Ships sailed from Holland to Africa, got slaves in exchange for their goods, carried the slaves to the West Indies or Brazil, and returned home laden with sugar. In 1621 the private companies trading in the west were all merged into the Dutch West India Company, which sent in four years fifteen thousand four hundred and thirty Negroes to Brazil, carried on war with Spain, supplied even the English plantations, and gradually became the great slave carrier of the day...

The first advent of the slave traders increased and encouraged native industry [on the West African coast], as is evidenced by the bronze work of Benin; but soon this was pushed into the background, for it was not bronze metal but bronze flesh that Europe wanted. A new tyranny, blood-thirsty, cruel, and built on war, forced itself forward in the Niger delta. The powerful state of Dahomey arose early in the eighteenth century and became a devastating tyranny, reaching its highest power early in the nineteenth century. Ashanti, a similar kingdom, began its conquests in 1719 and grew with the slave trade. Thus state building in West Africa began to replace the city economy, but it was a state built on war and on war supported and encouraged largely for the sake of trade in human flesh.....

The exact proportions of the slave trade can be estimated only approximately. From 1680 to 1688 we know that the English African Company alone sent 249 ships to Africa, shipped there 60,783 Negro slaves, and after losing 14,387 on the middle passage, delivered 46,396 in America.



**John Canoe dancers in Jamaica, 1975**

## Did you know?

The Junkanoo (or "John Canoe") festival is held throughout the English-speaking Bahamas and beyond. Its origins date back to the era of enslavement, and today it is marked with street parades, music, dances, and costumes. Explore more:

- [Who Was John Canoe?](#)
- [The History of Jonkonnu/John Canoe](#)



It seems probable that 25,000 Negroes a year arrived in America between 1698 and 1707 ... before the Revolutionary War it had reached at least 40,000 and perhaps 100,000 slaves a year ... It was a rape of a continent to an extent never paralleled in ancient or modern times....

The English slave empire in America centered in the Bermudas, Barbadoes, Jamaica and the lesser islands, and in the United States. Barbadoes developed a savage slave code, and the result was attempted slave insurrections in 1674, 1692, and 1702.... The chief island domain of English slavery was Jamaica. It was Oliver Cromwell who, in his zeal for God and the slave trade, sent an expedition to seize Hayti. His fleet, driven off there, took Jamaica in 1655.



**Trelawney Town, Jamaica, c. 1790s**

The English found the mountains already infested with runaway slaves known as "Maroons," and more Negroes joined them when the English arrived. In 1663 the freedom of the Maroons was acknowledged, land was given them, and their leader, Juan de Bolas, was made a colonel in the militia. He was killed, however, in the following year, and from 1664 to 1738 the three thousand or more black Maroons fought the British Empire in guerrilla warfare. Soldiers, Indians, and dogs were sent against them, and finally in 1738 Captain Cudjo and other chiefs made a formal treaty of peace with Governor Trelawney. They were granted twenty-five hundred acres and their freedom was recognized."

Source: W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Negro* (New York: Henry Holt and Company, 1915), 67-68, 150-51, 153-56, 178-79.

**The Black Maroon, monument at Port-au-Prince, Haiti**



***The Door of No Return in Ouidah, Benin is a memorial arch to the enslaved Africans taken from the region to the Americas***

Even after West Africans became independent from colonial rule – mostly between 1957 and 1961 – few scholars or ordinary people living in West Africa were interested in discussing the impact of the early modern slave trade. That’s not because no one remembered or that the evidence had been lost. They did remember. However, controversies and multi-generational traumas surrounding those memories remained intense.



In time, some pioneering scholars, including Akosua Perbi, Kwame Yeboa Daaku, James Anquandah, Wilhelmina Donkah and others, have turned scholarly attention to the effects of the slave trade on West Africa. In addition, since the 1990s the government of Ghana has begun devoting resources to preserving historical sites and educating visitors about this history. There remains much work to do, however, to fully recover that history.

## Explore more...

Akosua Perbi is a Ghanaian author and history professor, as well as Ghana’s permanent representative on UNESCO’s Slave Route Project. In this interview she discusses her research, as well as the history and impacts of enslavement on Ghana.

- [Interview with Akosua Perbi](#)



***Akosua Perbi***





**The Dying Tecumseh, 1856, Shawnee chief from the Ohio Valley, who resisted white westward expansion**

## Source 4: Indigenous American Refugees

In the 19<sup>th</sup> century, too, few indigenous people of the Americas were writing formal histories of the sufferings of their ancestors, though they were sharing those stories orally among the family and community members. But the 19<sup>th</sup> century was not an era for natives of the Americas to patiently write lengthy historical accounts, but a time of widespread forced dislocations, wars and, in some cases genocidal violence. Instead, white authors in Europe and the United States had a near monopoly on writing those histories. And when they did so, some recognized the death and social dislocations in indigenous communities that came with colonialism, but saw those as the inevitable losses necessary for “progress.”

In other cases, they recognized migrations of the era specifically, but regarded such “restlessness” as somehow inherent to the character of the people, without providing any sense of the role that widespread enslavement, the introduction of firearms, the loss of lands, deaths due to diseases, warfare, and massacres may have played in encouraging such migrations.

### **The Tecumseh Stone at Fort Malden, where Tecumseh reportedly delivered a final address to British troops in 1813**



THE TECUMSEH STONE  
\* Tradition has it that the Indian leader Tecumseh stood upon this stone to deliver a final address to the British at Amherstburg after the Battle of Lake Erie. Donated in 1939, it originally stood near the corner of Dalhousie and Gore Streets. In his speech Tecumseh asserted, in part:

**FATHER,** listen... You always told us to remain here and take care of our lands. It made our hearts glad to hear that was your wish, our great father, the King is dead, and you represent him, you always told us you would never step your foot off the British ground, but now, father, we see you drawing back, and we are sorry to see our father doing so without seeing the reasons. We must compare our father's conduct to a fat man, that carries a tall upon his back; but when attacked, it drops it before he is hit and runs off.

**FATHER,** You have got the arms and ammunition which our great father gave his red children. If you have any idea of going away, give them to us and you may go and welcome. For us, our eyes are in the hands of the Great Spirit; we are determined to defend our lands, and if it is his will we wish to leave our bones upon them.

Nonetheless, when the British under Major-General Henry Procter abandoned Fort Malden in late September of 1813, Tecumseh and his followers reluctantly accompanied them. Overtaken by the Americans, the British and Indians from Malden were defeated in the Battle of the Thames on October 5, 1813. Tecumseh was killed in the engagement.

LA PIERRE DE TECUMSEH

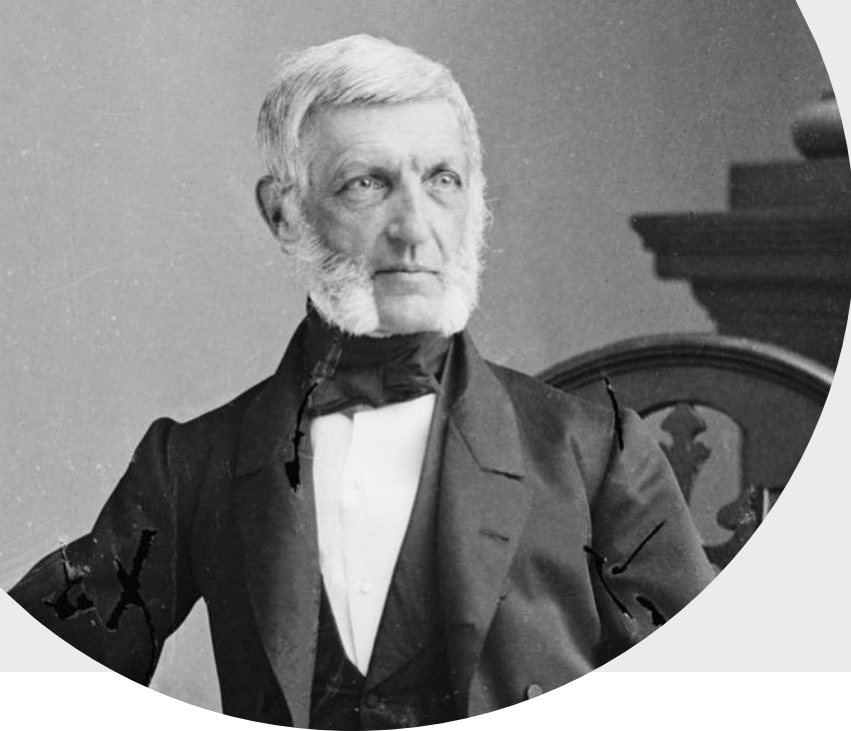
Selon la tradition, le chef indien Tecumseh s'est tenu sur cette pierre pour délivrer son dernier discours aux Britanniques pour la dernière fois à Amherstburg, après la bataille du lac Érié. La pierre, donnée en 1939, avait d'abord été érigée près de l'intersection des rues Dalhousie et Gore. Voici un extrait du discours de Tecumseh.

**PÈRE,** écoutez... J'ai toujours été toujours d'être de demeurer ici pour prendre soin de nos terres. Vous étiez heureux que tel soit votre désir, notre noble père le Roi est le chef et vous le représentez. Vous nous avez toujours dit que vous ne quitteriez jamais le sol britannique. Or maintenant, nous voyons que vous battez en retraite et nous sommes surpris de votre père de la sorte en l'honneur des enfants.

**PÈRE,** vous avez les armes et les munitions que notre noble père a données. Si vous avez l'intention de partir, donnez-les nous, nous les avons en nous. Nous considérons nos vies entre les mains du Grand Esprit; nous sommes déterminés à défendre nos terres, et si c'est sa volonté, nous sommes prêts à y laisser notre peau.

Cependant, lorsque les Britanniques sous les ordres du Major-général Henry Procter abandonnèrent le fort Malden à la fin de septembre 1813, Tecumseh et les Indiens de sa bande les accompagnèrent contrecoeur. Rattrapés par les Américains, les Britanniques et les Indiens de Malden furent vaincus dans la bataille de la Thames le 5 octobre 1813. Tecumseh perdit la vie au cours du combat.





**George Bancroft, c. 1860**

Such was the case with perhaps the most popular history of the United States of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, George Bancroft's *History of the United States* (1854-78). Here's how he described the Shawnees, one of the most important groups of indigenous refugees that we studied in Lesson 3 who had fled to the Upper Midwest:

"The Shawnees connect the south-eastern Algonquins with the west. The basin of the Cumberland River is marked by the earliest French geographers as the home of this restless nation of wanderers....Their principal band removed from their hunting-fields in Kentucky to the head waters of one of the great rivers in South Carolina; and at a later day, an encampment of four hundred and fifty of them, who had been straggling in the woods for four years was found not far north of the head waters of the Mobile River, on their way to the country of the Muskhogees. It was about the year 1698 that three or four score of their families with the consent of the government of Pennsylvania, removed from Carolina, and planted themselves on the Susquehannah. Sad were the fruits of that hospitality! Others followed; and when, in 1732, the number of Indian fighting-men in Pennsylvania was estimated to be seven hundred, one-half of them were Shawnee emigrants. So desolated was their wilderness that a vagabond tribe could wander undisturbed from Cumberland River to the Alabama, from the head waters of the Santee to the Susquehannah."



**Prominent Shawnee, from top left: Shawnee Bill; Lizzie Pecan; F. A. Rogers; Pah-te-cóo-saw; Tecumseh; Ten-squát-a-way; Lay-láw-she-kaw; Wet-Ta-Ka; and Lay-lóo-ah-pee-ái-shee-kaw**

Source: George Bancroft, *History of the United States, from the Discovery of the American Continent*, 15<sup>th</sup> ed., vol. 3. (Boston: Little, Brown, and Company, 1858), 240.





**Thomas Wildcat Alford**

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, some indigenous people did start recording accounts of their ancestors' experiences. Among the Shawnee, some celebrated the heroic resistance against colonial incursions in the War of 1812, led by Tecumseh. Others, like Thomas Wildcat Alford (1860-1938) celebrated ancestors who had fled west to preserve their cultural heritage. But we have no such written accounts for the refugees of the 1670s and 80s we discussed. Even today, historical writing about these migrations remains today largely written by white people. Some indigenous people even remain distrustful of those histories because all the sources that survive from that era were produced by the very people committed to eradicating their cultures. As a result, some feel, no complete or just history can be told. Still, many continue to try to scour the records and broaden their use of sources to tell indigenous histories of the era.

## Conclusion

After reading and considering the questions raised by these readings, try considering what meanings for their lives these 19<sup>th</sup>-century authors found in the histories of early modern refugees of the Atlantic world. In the last assignment for this module, you will consider what meanings you might find in the histories of these refugees as well, comparing your values to those of this earlier era.

***Celebration at the Parque Memorial Quilombo commemorating Zumbi dos Palmares and the maroon communities of Brazil, 2000***



# Further Reading

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