



Community
Engagement & Education

DISCUSSION GUIDE

AKWANTU

THE JOURNEY

a film by ROY T. ANDERSON

The Jamaican Maroons: an epic story of heroism, defiance, and resistance.

...THE NEW WORLD'S FIRST SUCCESSFUL FREEDOM FIGHTERS!

www.akwantumovie.com

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Acknowledgements

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Roy T. Anderson - Biography

Roy T. Anderson is writer, director and producer of his first feature-length documentary *Akwantu: the Journey*. A veteran stuntman/stunt coordinator, Anderson is a world record holder and an award winning stuntman. For more than twenty-five years he has performed stunts for such Hollywood stars as Will Smith, Denzel Washington and Jamie Foxx, accumulating more than 400 production credits in the process. He's appeared in such hits as; *The Dark Knight Rises*, *Spiderman 2*, *Bourne Ultimatum*, *American Gangster*, and top-rated TV shows; *Law & Order*, *Sopranos*, and *Person of Interest*. While continuing his stunt work, Anderson has flipped the script to direct his first film. During his storied career Roy has shown the ability to be very creative in his performance and coordination of difficult stunts, and he brings this same imagination to the table as a first time director who has observed some of the best filmmakers in the world.

Statement from the Filmmaker



Roy T. Anderson - PHOTO/Contributed

This film is a result of the search for my roots. What started out as an innate sense of curiosity grew into a newfound sense of pride as I began to learn more and more about my ancestors; brave men and women that history refers to as Maroons. There were many days during my research when I was simply not able to contain myself as I uncovered new and fascinating information. I was driven to find out more. From these things just really took on a life of its own. Without realizing it, I had given birth to ***Akwantu: the Journey***.

Now many scholars have studied the Jamaican Maroons, and their exploits are well documented.

As a Maroon descendant I seized on the opportunity to present my own perspective on a people generally regarded as the New World's first successful freedom fighters. What the Maroons, rebel slaves of West African ancestry, were able to accomplish in their many battles with the colonial forces is nothing short of amazing.

What follows is the first feature-length documentary that examines in depth the triumphs and struggles of a proud and resilient people whose historical importance has either been ignored or misunderstood. ***Akwantu: the Journey*** tells the story of an enduring people who possess an indomitable spirit, whose towns and populace are physically indistinguishable from that of their fellow Jamaicans. Yet even today, the Maroons remain a "nation within a nation," steadfast in the knowledge that their forebears violently opposed a system that sought to enslave them and that only through the force of their collective will were able to fight for and win their freedom.

Maroon communities celebrate each day by honoring their spirited ancestors. That defiance of spirit first exhibited by our African forebears who endured the worst indignities associated with slavery is very much alive today. This film provides a rare window into the lives of a proud people whose ancestors chose to die fighting rather than remain in bondage. It takes a look at the amazing exploits of Maroon heroines and heroes like Nanny and Cudjoe and others as expressed to us by present day Maroons in Jamaica and elsewhere. ***Akwantu*** also looks at the hardship and challenges faced by Maroons in Jamaica today as told by the people themselves. You will notice that Maroons by their very nature are very insular and not very trusting of outsiders. The film will also seek to find the root of this distrust for outsiders. As a Maroon I was able to gain their trust as I observed them intently and interacted with them in their natural surroundings. On my many visits to the different Maroon communities in Jamaica profound pride was self-evident on the faces of all Maroons. You could hear it in the way they spoke, in the way they danced, and in the way they sang. On my first visit to Accompong I was overwhelmed as I walked the very same pathways my ancestors did more than three hundred years ago. And the people spoke about their affinity for the Motherland. This aroused my curiosity even more. To really get a sense of the genesis of marronage I traveled to where most Maroons believe it all began – the African continent.

With much difficulty I traveled along part of the same roads where my ancestors made their agonizing long march on foot from the African interior to the coast, and to where they had their final bath. From there they would continue their trek to the coastal dungeons. The emotions I felt were absolutely astounding. I decided then that the path they took would also be my journey as well. When they cried, I cried. When they felt pain, I felt pain too. When they triumphed, I claimed their victory.

As I toured the Cape Coast Castle dungeons and took that symbolic walk out the “Door of no Return” to the beach where the boats awaited, I could only imagine the anguish felt by my ancestors. For perspective, I boarded a motorboat that sailed the Gulf of Guinea. The Castle disappeared from view as the boat sailed farther away. For my ancestors, this would have been their last snap shot of their beloved Africa as they started out on the dreaded Middle Passage to an uncertain future. For those that survived the voyage they carried with them old traditions and beliefs that gave them comfort in a foreign land.

Out of this group that the British generally referred to as Coromantees, there emerged a segment whose proponents, thousands of miles away from their point of origin, were sufficient in numbers to resist slavery and violently put down any other cultural complex that threatened their own. They are of the Akan-speaking group – most notably the Asantes and Fantes, who were fiercely independent. They formed the core of the old-time Maroons. And their accomplishments were nothing short of amazing. They eventually became an independent nation. Nowhere else in the New World had Africans enjoyed such a degree of autonomy, coming more than thirty years before the American War of Independence, and almost sixty years before the Haitian Revolution (1791).

So while the signed Treaties inspired others to rebel, it crushed the hearts of many who also yearned to be free. The Maroons were seen as traitors and collaborators for having signed a pact with the British. **Akwantu** examines the many intricate details of these Treaties which have made the Maroons hated and despised by their fellow African brothers and sisters.

This dislike towards the Maroons is still evident today, but most Jamaicans are quite proud of what they accomplished. In the face of insurmountable odds, this band of poorly armed Africans stood their ground against the mighty British Empire. This film should serve as an inspiration for many who are battling their own personal superpower. After all, David did defeat the giant Goliath.

This journey has taken me from the remote regions of Jamaica to the African continent, and back to North America. During this time I thought deeply about my forebears and the indignities they suffered along the way more than three hundred years ago, and how they persevered. They chose to die fighting rather than remain in bondage. That fighting spirit makes me extremely proud, and it lives on in me. And that is why I felt the story of the Jamaica’s most famous but least known people, had to be told. It was my aim to make **Akwantu: the Journey** not only a stunning visual piece, but also a study in man’s innate desire to remain free and to use all the tools at his disposal in pursuit of that necessary human need for freedom. I am honored that you have chosen my film to have a heart-to-heart discussion around the themes of diversity, race, resistance, peace, basic human decency, and respect.

Roy T. Anderson, Director/Producer

Foreword

The Happenstance of a Humanistic Collaboration



Harcourt T. Fuller, PhD - PHOTO/AGWA

In 2010, I read an article in the Jamaica Gleaner about Roy T. Anderson, a Jamaican-born Hollywood stuntman, who was filming a feature-length documentary on the Maroons called *Akwantu: the Journey*. The article mentioned that Anderson, who is the Writer, Producer, and Director of *Akwantu*, is also a descendant of the Leeward Maroons. Being a curious scholar of Windward Jamaican Maroon descent, and like many other academics who are rightfully suspicious of Hollywood and Hollywood insiders' depictions of history in general and the history of Africa and the Diaspora in particular, I decided to email Roy to introduce myself, and to inquire about the nature of the film. Two years later, I became the Educational Outreach Director for Anderson's award-winning documentary.

What convinced me to join Roy on his improbable journey was our mutual interest in Maroon history, as well as the quality of *Akwantu* and his commitment to not taking shortcuts in making the film. I was pleasantly surprised that Roy's film was both a work of accurate and solid scholarship, in addition to being accessible to the lay person. In the film, African nationals, Maroon officials (including the Colonels/Chiefs of the four remaining Jamaican Maroon territories) and present-day Jamaican citizens (both Maroon and non-Maroon), interpret and guide viewers through their own history and culture. *Akwantu* also feature interviews with some of the most important academic voices on slavery and Marronage, such as Kenneth Bilby (*True-Born Maroons*), Emmanuel Akyeampong (Harvard University), Marcus Rediker (University of Pittsburgh), Verene Shepherd (University of the West Indies-Mona), and Roger Buckley (University of Connecticut, Storrs).

Roy Anderson's methodology of combining oral history, archival material, historically-relevant geographic locations, scholarly commentary and cinematography to reconstruct the history and Trans-Atlantic journey of the Jamaican Maroons represents an important contribution to the advancement of the discipline of History and related fields. Roy's extensive use of Maroon oral history is in line with UNESCO's recognition of the international significance of Maroon heritage and oral traditions. In 2003, it named the musical heritage of the Moore Town Maroons one of the "Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity."

International and American Screenings of *Akwantu*

Akwantu is a film that truly belongs to the study of the Atlantic World and related areas of research, in terms of its geo-thematic focus. Anderson filmed *Akwantu* in Jamaica, Ghana, Canada and the United States, narrating the history and construction of the Maroon nations in Jamaica, while simultaneously capturing his personal journey of self-discovery from Maroon society to the North American continent. Since it was launched in early 2012, the film has garnered impressive accolades, including the "JAMAICA 50" designation that the Jamaican Ministry of Youth and Culture bestowed on *Akwantu*, as an official part of the celebrations for the Caribbean island's 50th Anniversary of Independence in 2012. The much heralded JAMAICA 50 World Premiere of the film took place in June 2012 in the Maroon community of Charles Town, Portland on the

island's north coast. In July 2012, the film won the Special Jury Prize for Best Feature Documentary at the 7th Annual Belize International Film Festival.



Roy salutes his team at a May 2012 screening in Harlem, NY. (L to R) Edward Washington, Vineet Verma, Mike Alston-Nero, Rolando Gori, Alison Anderson.
PHOTO/Shomari Green

Working with Roy as the film's Educational Outreach Director, we have screened *Akwantu* at colleges and universities, film festivals, cinemas and other institutions across the Caribbean, Central and North America, Europe and Africa. In October 2012, *Akwantu* was screened at Boston University as part of the African American Studies Program's 50th Anniversary of Independence for Jamaica and Trinidad & Tobago event, which included a panel discussion by scholars from Harvard University and Wellesley College. As John Thornton of Boston University remarked after reviewing the film:

Because of the history of Maroons as runaway slaves, along with betrayals by the authorities who recognized their semi-sovereignty, forced them to be secretive, modern day Maroons remain difficult to visit or film. Thanks to his own heritage and considerable work, Anderson has been able to bring this important group to the attention of the wider world.¹

Beyond the reviews of world-renowned scholars like Thornton, college students who have seen the film have also commented on the ways in which it has impacted their lives and studies. After viewing *Akwantu* at Georgia State University, a freshman who is of Jamaican Maroon descent wrote the following letter to me:

¹ John K. Thornton, "Review of Akwantu: The Journey" (Letter to Roy Anderson, July 6, 2012).

I just wanted you to know that I really enjoyed this film. I grew up half my life in [the parish of] St. Elizabeth, Jamaica [the location of the Accompong Maroon settlement], and that is where most of my family lives. My great grandfather lived in Maroon Town [Accompong] and I really learned a lot more [about the Maroons] when I saw the movie. My parents never really told me much about those things, so this movie really had an effect on me to search for my African roots. I just wanted to thank you for the experience.

This groundbreaking film screened in Amsterdam in October 2012 as an Official Selection of the Africa in the Picture International Film Festival; and also at the prestigious 2013 Pan African Film Festival in Los Angeles, CA. In November 2012, the West African Research Association (WARA) sponsored a special screening of *Akwantu* at the African Studies Conference in Philadelphia. Edmund Abaka, Director of the Africana Studies Program at the University of Miami, joined Roy Anderson and me as a panelist for a lively post-screening Q&A session. For a complete list of screenings, please visit the film's website: www.akwantumovie.com

The Educational Value of *Akwantu*

The educational, historical and cultural value that students, educators and the general public have thus far ascribed to *Akwantu* is encouraging, as we seek to bring it into classrooms, from primary or junior high schools to universities around the world. This will allow us to bring awareness to the history and contemporary challenges faced by Maroon communities in Jamaica and other parts of the Americas. The film has inspired me to design a new undergraduate course, *Maroon Nations in the Atlantic World*. In addition to this Discussion Guide and a Lesson Plan, Roy and I are collaborating on a forthcoming book, *Slavery, Marronage and the Legacy of the Jamaican Maroons*, to compliment the film. These materials will allow educators, NGOs and community leaders to design meaningful lessons around central themes, and set Experiential Learning outcomes around specific modules. For example, audiences who view the film will have a blueprint for carrying out their own genealogical research, regardless of their ethnic or national origin. Budding filmmakers will also have a model for how to make a professional, first rate documentary film with modest resources. Students and community members will be able to have important discussions around issues of historical and contemporary significance, such as the legacy of the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade, and the role of oral history in the preservation of ethno-national identity. In the academic setting, *Akwantu: the Journey*, is suitable for courses in fields including (but not limited to) History, African Studies, African-American Studies, Caribbean History, the Atlantic World, Military History, Women's Studies, Political Science, Ethnomusicology, Applied Linguistics, Sociology and Anthropology.

The Agency of Maroon Intellectuals

Maroons and their descendants have lacked the agency to represent their own history and culture, at all levels of academia, both in scholarly writing as well as on film. The production of knowledge about the Maroons has historically been the domain of European colonial officials, Western journalists, researchers and scholars in a variety of disciplines, who have had the requisite training, preparation, funding and access to carry out this research. In a sense, Maroons have largely been written out of and marginalized by history, notwithstanding the voluminous works about them, because others have spoken on their behalf.

Roy T. Anderson's film *Akwantu: the Journey* is by far the most successful, far-reaching and accessible work of scholarship produced by anyone – Maroon and non-Maroon alike – which endeavors to depict the Maroon

epic. As a scholar of Maroon descent, and as a filmmaker of Maroon ancestry, we hope that the collaboration between Roy Anderson and I, as well as the works of other Maroons inside and outside of academia, can make a significant contribution to our understanding of the dynamic history and culture of the Maroons and their contemporary descendants in Jamaican and the Maroon Diaspora. As *Akwantu* shows, the collaboration between Maroon and Maroonist scholars and intellectuals is an essential alliance to build, which can produce representations of Maroon people's history and culture that is objective, balanced, inclusive, insightful and engaging.

Harcourt Fuller, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor, Department of History
Georgia State University

Educational Outreach Director
Akwantu: the Journey

Introduction to Maroon History



Captain Kojo, Leeward Maroon leader.
Illustration by Frank Lumsden

Considered the successful “Spartacus” of their time and viewed by some scholars as the New World’s first successful freedom fighters, *Akwantu: the Journey* documents the struggles for freedom of the Jamaican Maroons, rebel slaves of West African (Akan speakers from the Gold Coast - modern day Ghana) origin who defeated the mighty British army and formed independent communities in the rugged and remote regions of Jamaica in the early-mid 18th century. Decades of relentless guerrilla warfare against the British colonial army forged small pockets of runaway slave communities into feared fighting forces, uniquely suited for the treacherous contours of the mountainous rainforests. By the 1730s, Maroons had substantial control over large portions of the island. Standing as a palpable threat to the ever-expanding plantation system of the British, Maroons confronted both colonial militias and imperial troops. Despite setbacks, such as the loss of a main settlement to the British, the Maroons never surrendered in their fight. As the end of the 1730s approached, it became increasingly apparent that the two sides had reached a stalemate. In

response to the serious threat of defeat and thus a loss of their colonial gem, the British entered diplomatic negotiations with Maroon representatives, signing two almost identical Peace Treaties with the Leeward and Windward Maroons in 1738 and 1739, respectively. The eventual British acquiescence to Maroon autonomy within acquired territories of the interior signified two important aspects: 1) The British now officially recognized the independence of formerly enslaved Africans; at this time slaves had been defined by the British laws as “commodities” and; 2) The Maroons now legally possessed territories. In both cases, they had accomplished something previously unimaginable. The descendants of these old-time Maroons still maintain their proud heritage today. In 2013/2014, the Maroons celebrated the 275th Anniversary of their Treaty with the British, and peoples of Maroon descent hold this document as an eternal testimony to their long and arduous journey to sovereignty. A timeline of important dates in the history of the Jamaican Maroons is presented at the end of this Discussion Guide.

How to Use this Discussion Guide

We are pleased to present to you this Discussion Guide, which is designed to encourage and promote dialogue and debate around the film, *Akwantu: the Journey*, an award-winning feature documentary on the indomitable Maroons of Jamaica, and their gallant fight for freedom. The Guide is divided into five modules, which correspond to the major themes of the film. The five modules are (I) *Genealogical Research*; (II) *The Transatlantic Slave Trade*; (III) *Maroons in the Americas*; (IV) *Old-time Jamaican Maroons*; and (V) *Modern-day Jamaican Maroons*. The scenes or tracks of the film, which correspond to the particular module is indicated at the beginning of the module's narrative. At the end of each module, there is a list of related questions, some of which are designed to test their knowledge of the material and others that require critical

thinking and debate. Additional sources for further research and to help students write papers about the lessons follow the module questions. The film and this Guide will assist professors, teachers, instructors, tutors, group leaders, or any other person in charge of presenting lectures, workshops, seminars and discussions on the Maroons in formal educational settings including colleges, universities, and high schools. The film can also be used in community centers, cultural spaces, public libraries, churches, and with general audiences to foster discussions around African ancestry, ethnic identity, slavery, resistance, race, diversity, tolerance, reconciliation, healing, etc. Here are some suggestions on how to effectively use the film with this Discussion Guide:

STEP I: Preparing for the Presentation(s)

1. Watch *Akwantu: the Journey* in its entirety, before showing it in the class, seminar, workshop, community center, library, etc.
2. Read this Discussion Guide in its entirety, so that you are familiar with its contents and structure.
3. Decide which of the five modules best fit the overall structure of your course(s), lecture(s), presentation(s), etc., and review the questions at the end of each module.
4. Circulate a copy of the particular module from the Discussion Guide that you want your students or other participants to read beforehand.

STEP II: Delivering the Presentation(s) & Facilitating Discussions

1. Show *Akwantu: the Journey* in its entirety, or show only those tracks that correspond to the particular module that will be the focus of your presentation.
2. For group work, divide the class into groups with a manageable number of members.
3. Assign selected or a set of questions from the module to each group and give them sufficient time to discuss the module questions among themselves.
4. Reconvene the class and have each group (or their designated group leader) openly discuss the questions and debate points.
5. The instructor should then bring the class to a close by summarizing the main arguments and points brought out in the film (or film clips) and the discussions, stressing the major takeaways and overall developments.

STEP III: Assigning Homework, Research Papers, etc.

1. For high school, college or university courses, instructors may continue to use *Akwantu: the Journey* and this Discussion Guide to assign written homework, research/term papers, theses or follow-up discussions.
2. Students may use relevant module questions as the basis of research questions, lines of inquiry or thesis statements.
3. The sources listed at the end of each module should be used to begin the research and writing process

Please visit the film's website, www.akwantumovie.com, which will provide more useful information on conducting successful screenings and facilitating engaging discussions.

Scheduling Screenings & Discussions with an *Akwantu* Facilitator

Educational and community organizations, or other interested groups or individuals may also want to screen *Akwantu: the Journey* for a class, seminar, panel discussion or other events, with the film's Director, Roy T. Anderson, myself, or another *Akwantu* facilitator present for a post-screening Q&A or panel discussion. For more information on availability, scheduling and fees, please contact:

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Module I

Genealogical Research



Roy conducts research at the LDS Family History Center in Scotch Plains, NJ.
PHOTO/AGWA

At the heart of *Akwantu: the Journey* is the story of Jamaica’s Maroon communities and the ideas they represent; concepts such as independence, sovereignty, and self-determination. However, it is also a history of self-discovery. As the movie plots Roy Anderson’s quest to discover his family’s lineage, it raises salient issues regarding traditional cultures in the face of modernization and the importance of oral histories. Through his extensive research at archives and family research centers, he attempts to ascertain his own place in the continuum of this debate. In the process, Roy discovers that only by traveling to the Maroon stronghold of Accompong where his lineage began, as well as the other Maroon territories of Moore Town, Charles Town and Scott’s Hall, could he truly



understand his family’s roots and the Maroon heritage he represents.

Roy Anderson discovered that, despite all the information available to him online or in his community, the biggest gains in his ancestral research was made by conversing with his elder family members. In doing so, Roy uncovered the history, not only of his family, but also Jamaican Maroons and the West African origins of the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Individuals should keep this lesson in mind during the course of their own research.

Viewers inspired to conduct their own genealogical inquiry might be surprised by the amount of sources available for free, online or in their community. Also online are links to more specialized resources, such as genetic genealogical or DNA testing for maternal and paternal ancestry. As Roy Anderson encountered, these tests, while costly (prices range from around one hundred dollars to several

thousand depending on the type of report requested), can be pivotal for persons researching their lineage. For example, anyone interested in doing so might employ various means of financing such an endeavor, like a bake sale or car wash. In any case, it is best one exhausts those options available at no charge prior to investing money into

DNA testing for ancestry. Listed below are invaluable sources in the process of researching one's own genealogy. While some of these websites are resources unto themselves, others are helpful tools in gathering the physical location of genealogical research centers.



Ralston Reid, Accompong's chief abeng blower - PHOTO/Adisa S. Oji

Module I Discussion Questions:

- 1 Who are the Maroons?
- 2 What is the Abeng, and what purpose did it serve during the slave rebellions?
- 3 What concept is embodied by the word "Kindah"?
- 4 How did Roy Anderson conduct his genealogical research?
- 5 What role does oral history play in Maroon traditions?
- 6 What is Kromanti, and how does it represent Maroon history and culture?
- 7 How are Maroon communities positioned within the modern Jamaican state?
- 8 What is the relationship between the Jamaican police and Maroon communities?
- 9 Why is an understanding of the history of the Gold Coast/Ghana important to the history of Jamaica and the Maroons?

Sources

Online US Government Agencies:

- <http://www.archives.gov/research/genealogy/start-research/>
United States National Archive website, a free resource dedicated to genealogical research.

Online International Government Organizations:

- The Gambia International Roots Festival
<http://www.rootsgambia.gm/>

Online Private Companies:

- <http://www.ancestry.com/>
- A genealogical research website that offers both free and more in-depth, with charge, services.
- African Ancestry, Inc.
- <http://www.africanancestry.com/>
- AfricanDNA, a genetic genealogical company headed by Harvard Professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr.
- <http://www.africandna.com/>
- www.familytree.com

Online NGOs:

- <http://www.pbs.org/opb/historydetectives/technique/african-american-genealogy/>
- Helpful search tool for locating family search centers near you: <https://familysearch.org/locations>

Online Religious Organizations:

- Church of Latter Day Saints Family history center locations:
<http://www.archives.com/genealogy/records.html>
At these LDS family history centers, visitors can access microfilm archives that include birth/death and marriage certificates. Centers are privately owned and operated, but open to the public during business hours.

Online Educational Organizations:

- The African-American DNA Roots Project, run out of UMass Lowell
<http://www.uml.edu/roots/default.html>

Oral History Organizations:

- The Oral History Association
www.oralhistory.org
- Oral History in the Digital Age
<http://ohda.matrix.msu.edu/>

Films/TV Programs:

- Alston, Macky, Family Name (DOCU-DRAMA, 2008)
- *Capturing the Past: How to Prepare and Conduct an Oral History Interview* (Direct Cinema Limited, 2000)
- Carrier, Tim, Dir., *Family Across the Sea* (1990)
- Dash, Julie, Dir., *Daughters of the Dust* (Kino Video, 2000)
- Gates, Jr., Henry Louis, *African American Lives* (PBS, 2006)
- Gates, Jr., Henry Louis, *African American Lives 2* (PBS, 2008)
- Gates, Jr., Henry Louis, *Faces of America* (PBS, 2010)
- Gates, Jr., Henry Louis, *Finding Your Roots* (PBS, 2012)
- Toepke, Alvaro and Angel Serrano, Dirs., *The Language You Cry In: Story of a Mende Song* (1998)
- Wells, Spencer, *Journey of Man: The Story of the Human Species* (PBS, 2003)
- *Who Do You Think You Are?* (NBC TV Series, Seasons 1 and 2)

Books:

- Ball, Edward, *Slaves in the Family* (Farrar, Straus & Giroux, 1998)
- Barnickel, Linda, *Oral History for the Family Historian: A Basic Guide* (Oral History Association, 2006)
- Clarke, Linda Weaver, *Writing Your Family Legacy* (www.lindaweaverclarke.com)
- Hunt, Marjorie, *The Smithsonian Folklife and Oral History Interviewing Guide* (Smithsonian Institution, 2003)
Free download at <http://www.folklife.si.edu/resources/pdf/InterviewingGuide.pdf>
- Jackson, Lawrence P., *My Father's Name: A Black Virginia Family After the Civil War* (University Of Chicago Press, 2012)
- Kennett, Debbie, *The Surnames Handbook: A Guide to Family Name Research in the 21st Century* (The History Press, 2012)
- Smolenyak, Megan, *Who Do You Think You Are? The Essential Guide to Tracing Your Family History* (Penguin Books, 2010)
- Yow, Valerie Raleigh, *Recording Oral History, Second Edition: A Guide for the Humanities and Social Sciences*, 2nd Ed. (Altamira Press, 2005)



Roy's Grandfather Alfred Rowe twisting tobacco.
PHOTO/Adisa S. Oji



Roy interviews his mother, Geraldine Scarlett.
PHOTO/Models Ent.

Module II

The Transatlantic Slave Trade and the Middle Passage



Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Route / Map re-imaged by Matt Hooban

As the demand for slaves surged in the early 18th century, slaving activities ran rampant across much of Western Africa. From 1700-1850, it is estimated that upwards of 10 million slaves were produced from this region alone. Often captured by rival tribes or neighbors, African slaves were taken from their native lands and cast into bondage. They were thrust into a Transatlantic Slave Trade dominated by European countries, which largely considered them to be veritable commodities. In his travels to Ghana, Roy Anderson was granted the opportunity to confront this difficult past. He was able to trace the same paths traversed by enslaved peoples centuries prior, visiting the sites where his own ancestors had been sold like cattle at auction.

At the beginning of his own journey, Roy was “cleansed,” just as millions of slaves had, at the “Slave River.” From there he traces the route the

slaves had walked to reach the massive slave castle on the West African coast. Finally, he arrived at the notorious slave dungeons. These cold, damp, windowless caverns marked the final stop for slaves before the transatlantic voyage. In retracing these steps, Roy was given a glimpse into the highly mechanized nature of the slave trade. This process was a conscious attempt by slave traders to dehumanize their captives, convince them to the inescapability of their situation, and, as these traders hoped, break their will. Captured slaves were confronted with a future that offered only unending, oppressive manual labor and/or death. However, as *Akwantu: the Journey* details, the will of every person was not broken. Instead, slave revolt and protest was a consistent thread throughout the entirety of the transatlantic system.



Reenactment: The captive's last bath at *Slave River* - PHOTO/MACPRI

The overall structure of the Transatlantic Slave Trade has varied over time. The early centuries (16th and 17th) were marked by the slow, steady exportation of slaves from Africa to the Spanish and Portuguese colonies. This period represents only a small portion of the slaves traded in the transatlantic system. Not until 1713, when the Spanish first awarded the *Asiento* (a contract given by the Spanish crown to allow the sale of slaves to their colonies) to the British, did it take shape as a dominant global economic force. Upon the inception of this second period of the Transatlantic Slave Trade dominated by the British, the volume of slaves traded increased astronomically. By some measure, upward of 10 million slaves were produced from the western coastal region of Africa.

The remnants of this explosion in slaving activities manifest itself in Africa even today. As demand increased, labor was reallocated away from agricultural and industrial work, and towards the slave trade. This shift emphasized slavery as the dominant economic pursuit, which encouraged violence and exacerbated social feuds. Raiding and invasion by neighboring villages or states soon became the dominant manner in which slaves were taken. Unmistakably, this complete restructuring of African economic pursuits, coupled later with the imposition of colonial rule, forestalled development. It likewise fostered ethnic divisions that persist in

the current social and political climates of West Africa.

The extent to which the Transatlantic Slave Trade permeated life in the 18th and 19th centuries was largely the result of European demand for cash crops and precious metals. In Jamaica, sugar was king, and as such plantations dominated the landscape. Slave labor was organized almost exclusively around harvesting sugar cane, in response to the ever-growing European affinity for the luxury good. All the while, the Spanish kingdom sought gold and silver to repay debts and finance further endeavors. Not until late in the 18th century would the first substantial abolitionist movement commence. As such, nearly unimpeded expansion of the Transatlantic Slave Trade persisted until well into the 19th century.



Roy on the high seas (Cape Coast Castle in the background).
PHOTO/MACPRI

As Roy discovered in his journey, the Transatlantic Slave Trade permeated all aspects of life in Africa. It uprooted communities, robbed Africa of its agricultural and industrial workforce, and instigated brutal conflicts between villages and ethnicities. The pursuits of European powers had come to completely redefine the course of African history. However, as *Akwantu: the Journey* details, the slave trade, despite all its oppressive and exploitative modalities, also brought about the indomitable spirit and remarkable history of the Jamaican Maroons.

Module II Discussion Questions:

- 1 What purpose did conversion serve in the history of the Transatlantic Slave Trade?
- 2 How was the West African coast divided and named by European powers?
- 3 How did the Transatlantic Slave Trade transform the Gold Coast?
- 4 How did the plantation system affect the demand for labor?
- 5 What was the "Asiento?"
- 6 Who directed slaving activities on the West African coast?
- 7 What was the effect of the increase in demand for slaves after the Asiento was awarded to the British?
- 8 How did the emergence of the Asante transform the Transatlantic Slave Trade?
- 9 How were women fundamental to the independence struggles of the Asante and the Maroons?
- 10 Who and how are the Asante emphasized in Maroon oral histories?
- 11 With what region or territory of Africa do Maroons most closely identify?
- 12 How did the slave trade continuously reinforce the power of European authority?
- 13 What forms of resistance did slaves employ?

Sources

The links below provide a helpful illustration of locations, trade routes, and pertinent facts/figures regarding the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

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Module III

Maroons in the Americas



Escaping capture. Illustration by Frank Lumsden

Inasmuch as the Transatlantic Slave Trade represents the history of the colonial plantation system, it likewise details the birth of new, heterogeneous peoples in the Americas. One vibrant modern remnant of this syncretic process is the Jamaican Maroons. One consistent aspect of the slave trade was the ceaseless attempts by African captives to escape their enslavement. Few were as successful as the Asante people, who constituted a large portion of those slaves brought to the island of Jamaica (called Xaymaca by the native Taino peoples). The Asante people of modern-day Ghana are essential to the history of the Maroons. As detailed in *Akwantu: the Journey*, many of the initial runaway slaves in Jamaica were of the Asante nation. Having risen to prominence following years of tribal warfare in the area formerly known as the Gold Coast, the Asantes were well-known for their leadership and tactical military prowess. As such, Asante slaves were widely feared by captors and traders alike. It comes as no surprise then that

Cudjoe and Nanny, leaders of the Maroons in Jamaica, were both reputedly of Asante descent.

The Maroons of Jamaica were, by no means, the only runaway slave community formed in the Americas during Transatlantic Slave Trade era. Quite to the contrary, runaway slave communities were a consistent feature throughout the New World. In Brazil, the term *Quilombo* referred to such fugitive slave settlements, populated by *quilombolas*, or Maroons. Quilombolas professed lineage in Angola in central West Africa. Much like the Jamaican Maroons and their Asante predecessors, the quilombolas were initially led in their resistance by a female figure. Aqualtune, a princess from the Kingdom of Kongo and military general captured during a Congolese war, was enslaved and brought to Brazil. The Brazilian labor force was almost exclusively comprised of slaves from the modern-day Democratic Republic of Congo and Angola. It is claimed that Aqualtune guided the initial slave revolt, which was followed by the foundation of the Palmares Quilombo in 1605. Little else is known of Aqualtune's life, other than that she was mother to Gana Zumba, who himself was revolted against by quilombolas for entering into treaty with the Portuguese. Unlike the Jamaican Maroons, the quilombolas were eventually defeated and their main settlement of Palmares, later named *Angola Janga*, was destroyed. Despite this, slave revolts and slave flight from the plantations were a persistent, palpable issue for the Portuguese, like all European empires, throughout their colonization of Brazil and elsewhere in the Americas.

Slave uprisings permeated even those colonies where African slaves were not typically considered prevalent. In fact, the emergence of the first free black community in the Americas was not in Jamaica or Brazil. Instead, the first of its kind was a *Palenque*, or "maroon community", founded near Veracruz in

Mexico. Established around 1570 by Angolan slave and member of the royal family of present-day Gabon, Gaspar Yanga, this Palenque maintained veritable autonomy for a period of 30 years. It was not until 1609 that the Spanish colonial government engaged in conflict with the community. The subsequent decades were marred by constant onslaught of the Palenque, during which an elderly Gaspar Yanga directed the *palenqueros* to employ guerrilla tactics. In doing so, he hoped that they could prolong the engagement and cause enough damage to Spanish forces that it would force them to sign a treaty. This vision was realized in 1630, and was followed immediately by the official settlement of the Palenque as a free community, the first of its kind in the Americas.



Garifuna parade in Livingston, Guatemala
PHOTO/Eve Demaziere

In each of these distinct runaway slave communities, there arose new cultural and ethnic identities. The examples of Brazil and Mexico are similar in that the quilombolas and palenqueros consisted of creolized peoples. They were the descendants of African slaves that had intermarried with indigenous peoples, and were often led by slaves brought directly from Africa. Jamaican Maroons differed in that there was no discernible indigenous community upon the arrival of African slaves, although some historians argue that the indigenous Taino peoples had intermingled with African runaways to form the early Maroon enclaves. This should not be mistaken for

homogeneity, given the intermingling of distinct African ethnic groups comprising the Maroons. Another example of a runaway slave community in the Americas differs still from the palenqueros, quilombolas, and Maroons - the Garifuna. This runaway slave community stands apart from others given its unique composition.

The Garifuna reside today mostly in the Caribbean coastal regions of Honduras, Belize, Guatemala, and Nicaragua. What differentiates this community is not its location, but rather the manner by which the Garifuna came into being. African captives, survivors of a wrecked Spanish slave ship, found refuge on the island of St. Vincent in 1675. These peoples, hailing from the Mokko people of present-day Nigeria, were taken in by a settlement of Carib and Arawak. Inter-marriage, as was customary for all males in Carib tradition, began almost immediately. This community persisted relatively undisturbed until the 1760s, upon which time they were besieged by British troops. When this series of wars was finally decided, the Garifuna people were exiled to the island of Roatan off the coast of Honduras. From there, the Garifuna petitioned the Spanish government to migrate and work along the coast of Central America. Permitted to do so by the Spanish, the Garifuna arrived on the mainland and formed numerous communities. Garifuna culture is largely organized around oral tradition, much in the same manner of other communities comprised of runaway slaves. However, the Garifuna are set apart by linguistic and cultural differences. They employ an Arawakan language that is distinguished by Carib-derived male terms and those inspired by Arawak females. The influence of African descendants is most palpably observed in the music and religion of the Garifuna.

Each of these examples of runaway slave communities highlights the indomitable spirit of freedom sought by enslaved Africans. Roy Anderson observed the modern reverberations of this concept in his travels to Accompong and other Jamaican Maroon communities. He was privy to this vibrant

Maroon heritage that still maintains its autonomy, even within the context of an independent Jamaica. His journey accentuated an aspect of the Jamaican Maroons that is tangible in every historical example of runaway slave communities; the unquenchable thirst for freedom and a future free of servitude.

Members of these communities came to form organic identities that redefined their captivity. It is in these enclaves of defiance that Roy finds his own peoples' history, along with the history of so many others that refused to accept the yoke of slavery.

Module III Discussion Questions:

- 1 What was unique about Kromanti?
- 2 What role did the Kromanti play in slave revolts?
- 3 How did the increase of sugar production affect the occurrence of slave revolts?
- 4 What did the resolution of the First Maroon War bring about?
- 5 What aspect of Maroon guerrilla warfare is still utilized by armed forces around the world today?
- 6 In what other areas of the Americas were there distinct Maroon communities?

Sources

The links below provide further exploration of Maroon communities in the Americas:

Books/Articles:

- Gonzalez, Nancy. *Sojourners of the Caribbean: Ethnogenesis and Ethnohistory of the Garifuna*. Urbana, Illinois: University of Illinois Press, 1988.
- Kent, R.K. "Palmares: An African State in Brazil." (1965): 161-175.
- Rodriguez, Junius. *Encyclopedia of Slave Resistance and Rebellion, Volume 1*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2007.
- Rowell, Charles. "The First Liberator of the Americas." (2008): 1-11, 181-192.
- Wilson, Samuel. *The Indigenous People of the Caribbean*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 1999.

Internet Resources

- Abeng Central - <http://abengcentral.wordpress.com/>
- Atlantic Slave Trade and Slave Life in the Americas: A Visual Record
<http://hitchcock.itc.virginia.edu/Slavery/index.php>
- Gullah-Geechee Nation - www.officialgullahgeechee.info and www.gullahgeechee.net
- MHRP - Maroon Heritage Research Project - <http://www.maroonheritage.pdx.edu/>
- National Geographic, "Where Slaves Ruled"
<http://ngm.nationalgeographic.com/2012/04/maroon-people/mann-hecht-text>
- Richard and Sally Price's (website with PDFs of their publications)
<http://www.richandsally.net/>
- The Smithsonian Institute, "Creativity and Resistance: Maroon Cultures in the Americas"
<http://www.folklife.si.edu/resources/maroon/tour/visit/a1.htm>

Module IV

Old-Time Jamaican Maroons



The Blue Mountains of Jamaica: Queen Nanny's battlefield - PHOTO/MACPRI

Upon capture, African slaves were introduced to a reality dominated by violence and forced subservience. Their experiences in the Transatlantic Slave Trade were characterized by brutal oppression at each juncture. This oppression was largely exacerbated by slave traders' constant, but realistic fear of uprising. While captors attempted to impose their unquestionable will, the captive Africans sought recourse. Just as Roy Anderson learned in his discussions with Professor Marcus Rediker, slaves employed every feasible means of defiance during their journey to, and settlement in, the Americas. During the transatlantic voyage, many slaves took their own lives by diving overboard. Those who arrived in the Americas often took part in covert industrial sabotage on plantations. From defiance to outright rebellion, Africans by no means acquiesced to their captivity.

The most palpable fear of slave traders was a slave uprising. Their trepidation was warranted, given the 382 officially-recorded slave ship revolts. The majority of these uprisings occurred during the loading process, or within the first week of setting sail from the African coast. One such uprising, in 1727, involved the capture of the Danish controlled

Fort Christiansborg on the Gold Coast. Slaves successfully usurped their captors, later beheading the fort's governor. Those that emerged from the fray uninjured were able to escape. Slaves that remained were executed, beheaded, and tossed into the ocean as a warning to future rebels. Such reprisal was stereotypical of responses to rebellion throughout the Transatlantic Slave Trade era.

Amongst the greatest fears of slave ship captains were uprisings during the Middle Passage. While fewer in number than near the coast, they were a greater threat, since slaves vastly outnumbered the crews. These revolts always resulted in bloodshed. Rebellions were also a prevalent aspect of life in the Americas and gained in significance as African slave populations swelled. Nearly a century after the British signed treaties to bring an end to the First Maroon War, another slave uprising formed in Jamaica. Led by Samuel Sharpe, between 30,000 and 60,000 slaves congregated in what was meant to be a peaceful demonstration. Instead, the protest took on a dimension of its own, becoming a violent island-wide rebellion. Although it was eventually stamped out by the British military, the Baptist War (also known as the "Christmas Rebellion")

galvanized support for, and accelerated the process of, emancipation in Jamaica.

Despite the significance attributed to slave rebellion and the pervasive nature of industrial sabotage, runaways were, without exception, the most prevalent form of protest. During the era of slavery, Caribbean newspapers were constantly littered with runaway notices. In fact, as the Jamaican Maroons would surely attest, the history of the Caribbean is incomplete without mention of such activities. Runaway slave communities are essential to understanding the Americas during the Transatlantic Slave Trade. They provided the staunchest, most unwavering opposition to the plantation system and were a constant thorn in the side of European imperial powers. In the case of Jamaica, the first Maroons took root in the frontier zones long before the signing of the initial Maroon Treaties.



Queen Nanny
Illustration by Frank Lumsden

During this pre-treaty history, Queen Nanny and Captain Kojo would make their escapes into the frontier zones of the island and establish the Windward and Leeward Maroon settlements, respectively. Slaves that

fled captivity near the port of Montego Bay fled

into the Cockpit Country, the location of the Leeward Maroons. Meanwhile, those that originated nearer the port of Kingston found refuge in the Blue Mountains, occupied by Queen Nanny and her Windward Maroons. During his journey, Roy encountered a vibrant cultural heritage wholly dependent on oral history. Orators often evoke the

names of Queen Nanny and Captain Kojo, credited with the foundation, organization, and formalization of a Maroon resistance to British forces. While Jamaican Maroon creation mythology prefers to emphasize these charismatic figures and vague tribal heritages, the persistence of this “Kromanti” culture is a testament to the Maroon spirit. Thus by evoking Queen Nanny and Captain Kojo, respect is paid as to their unmistakable roles in the initial foundations of Maroon settlements.

Within this Kromanti tradition, there exists a cosmological reverence for the number four. For Jamaican Maroons, it represents multiple vital concepts; the four founding fathers, their four “tribes”, the four cardinal points that referred to each tribe, and the four primary categories of more spiritually powerful Kromanti songs. Each of these four tribes falls under the all-embracing Kromanti: Papa, Mandinga, Ibo, and Mongala. The concept of tribal “descent” for Jamaican Maroons is, however, limited to the traditional religious experiences of elders. This “tribal” nuance highlights the most important aspect of Jamaican Maroons: as representatives of both an individual and group struggle. Maroons are an organic, syncretic people, forged from the shared experiences and struggles of runaway slaves from numerous distinct African tribes. Roy, in his journey to the Maroon territories, both observed and personified the Jamaican Maroons’ resilient spirit of defiance. Despite capture, enslavement, removal from their homelands, and relentless oppression by the world’s most formidable military force, the Maroons joined together and overcame. In the process, these old-time Maroons established the identity, and thus, the essence of a singular people, comprised of many.



Traditional Maroon dancers from Accompong
PHOTO/MACPRI



Defiant Maroons: 'Brother Jack' and his wife 'Miss Daisy'
PHOTO/MACPRI

Module IV Discussion Questions:

- 1 How did the Maroons utilize the environment of Jamaica's interior to magnify weaknesses in the British Army?
- 2 How were/are the Abeng and drums utilized by Jamaican Maroons?
- 3 What did the signing of the "Blood Treaty" signify in Maroon history?
- 4 What set the Maroon Treaty apart from others in the Americas?
- 5 What is the most contentious of conditions set out by the Maroon Treaties?
- 6 Why are the Maroons criticized for their role in the Easter Rebellion?
- 7 How did the Jamaican Maroons inspire revolution elsewhere in the Americas?
- 8 What historical figure remarked about the tenacity and work-ethic of Jamaican Maroons?
- 9 What happened to the Trelawney Town Maroons following the Second Maroon War?
- 10 Who led the brutally defeated Morant Bay Rebellion?
- 11 What did the independence of Jamaica in 1962 from the British colonial government mean for the Maroons?
- 12 Why is it significant that the Maroon Treaty was a "Blood Oath"?

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- Higman, B.W. *Slave Population of the British Caribbean, 1807-1834*. Kingston: The University Press of the West Indies, 1995.
- Kopytoff, Barbara. "The Early Political Development of Jamaican Maroon Societies," *The William and Mary Quarterly*, 35, no. 2 (1978): 287-307.
- Olsen, Eric. "Mountain Rebels." *World & I*. 15. no. 2 (2000).
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- Taylor, Eric. *If We Must Die: Shipboard Insurrections in the Era of the Atlantic Slave Trade (Antislavery, Abolition, and the Atlantic World)*. Baton Rouge, LA: University Press of Florida, 1999.

Online Sources:

- <http://www.maroonheritage.pdx.edu/jamaica-map-pic.gif>
Map of original Maroon settlements in Jamaica
- <http://www.cockpitcountry.com/maps/map1794.gif>
Map of Cockpit Country during the era of the First Maroon War
- <http://www.yale.edu/glc/nanny.htm>
Page dedicated to the history and imagery of Queen Nanny:
- http://www.folklife.si.edu/resources/maroon/educational_guide/63.htm
From the Smithsonian Institute's "Creativity and Resistance: Maroon Cultures in the Americas"

Module V

Modern-Day Jamaican Maroons



Roy celebrates with his mom under the 'Kindah Tree'
PHOTO/AGWA

Roy Anderson concludes his journey with a trip to the “Kindah” tree and a celebration in Accompong. Along this route, he details the modern realities faced by the Jamaican Maroons. While the autonomy of the various communities remains intact, their role within Jamaica, as a whole, has undeniably changed. Since gaining independence in 1962, the island nation of Jamaica has been transformed. No longer a colonial holding of the British, Jamaica was thrust head-first into an increasingly globalized world. Domestic political and economic issues gained significance as they represented the sovereign actions of an independent nation within the global community. Meanwhile, Jamaican Maroons celebrated nearly 225 years of independence from the British. In this discrepancy lies one of the most salient issues for modern-day Jamaican Maroons: how will Jamaicans alter the future status of Maroon self-governance? Roy explores this question in *Akwantu: the Journey* as he experiences, for himself, the modern remnants and representations of Maroon cultural traditions.

Within this debate, Roy briefly touches upon the pervasive trend of out-migration. The foundation of an independent Jamaica has, both directly and

indirectly, contributed to the problem of population loss in Maroon communities. The international legitimacy gained through the establishment of Jamaica as an autonomous nation greatly affected migration. No longer did executive decisions regarding border issues rest with the British colonial government. Instead, they now fell under the purview of a sovereign Jamaica. The removal of previously enforced travel restrictions increased access to and from Jamaica. As such, Jamaicans and Maroons alike were exposed to an international community far larger and more diverse than their microcosmic world within the Caribbean island nation. Despite their reputation for isolationist tendencies, even Jamaican Maroon communities were unable to evade the influence of the global community. Younger generations have, increasingly, sought out economic and educational opportunities beyond the island. In their reluctance to assimilate into the Jamaican state, or to relax their stance on accepting outsiders, Maroon populations have been on a steady decline. Undoubtedly, the lack of local economic opportunity largely accounts for this trend. Elucidated in *Akwantu: the Journey*, this dearth may be the most significant issue concerning the future of Maroon communities in Jamaica.

In his interviews, Roy encounters a recurring theme regarding the need for Jamaican Maroon communities to open themselves up to investment and entrepreneurship. This signifies a vital difference between the mentality of modern-day Maroons and their ancestors: an attitudinal shift away from isolationist policies. While Maroons maintain a great deal of secrecy regarding Kromanti practices and traditions, they do actively acknowledge the need to integrate external sources of



Col. Sydney Peddie
PHOTO/MACPRI

capital and enterprise into their communities. This attitudinal shift is also representative of the effect globalism has had on settlements like Accompong, where Roy spoke with multiple Maroons who outlined the need to attract investments. Old-time Maroons understood the international community within the context of their colonial experiences, while their descendants confront a far disparate continuum of influences. The Jamaican Maroon population can no longer neglect the rest of the world in favor of mere subsistence. Economic development is paramount to the maintenance of their communities, and thus, of their distinct cultural heritage.

One essential aspect of the vibrant Maroon spirit lies in the Jamaican national motto, “out of many, we are one.” This concept represents not only the compositional roots of their syncretic communities, but is likewise a distillation of their historical



Maroon dressed in ambush
PHOTO/Contributed

experiences. In their struggle for autonomy from the British, runaway slaves of every origin came together and formed settlements. Just as importantly, to combat and withstand the might of the colonial military, women and children also played vital roles. Defined gender roles were cast aside as the Maroons

looked to utilize the abilities of all their peoples. Women were especially essential in the course of their history, such that the progenitor and most influential leader was none other than Queen Nanny. Her role as the executive military strategist situates Nanny centrally in all of Jamaican Maroon lore. It was under her directive that the long since abandoned “Woman Town” was founded as a refuge for those women and children who were unfit for engagement with the British. Furthermore, she was said to be the head of the Maroons, such



Marker for Captain Kojo’s burial site - PHOTO/MACPRI

that no man ever held a higher position. Nanny’s dual role as “mother” of her people and commander of soldiers speaks directly to the Jamaican ethos, “out of many, we are one,” as it refers to both an ethnic and ideological diversity.

Modern-day Jamaican Maroons, such as those who contributed to the making of *Akwantu: the Journey*, are fully cognizant of the manner in which globalization continues to transform their lives. Essential concepts like economic development and foreign investment are paramount to any attempts regarding the modernization of communities. The struggle confronting modern-day Jamaican Maroons can thus be most accurately summarized by this interplay between globalization and cultural maintenance. Roy’s journey draws to a close with his visit to the parade grounds and a celebration of Queen Nanny and Captain Kojo. While dancers, musicians, and oral traditions manifest ongoing attempts at cultural maintenance, Roy concludes with unanswered questions regarding the future of his people. Only by confronting the challenges facing them, as Jamaican Maroons have always done throughout their history, can such issues be addressed. Just as the old-time Maroons united under a common banner of resistance, so too must modern-day Maroons collectively and comprehensively approach this tenuous interplay between tradition and globalization.

Module Discussion Questions:

- 1 What is the relationship between the Maroon communities and the Jamaican national government?
- 2 Why is the maintenance of independence important to Maroons and what do they believe it symbolizes for Jamaica collectively?
- 3 How do Maroon communities refer to themselves?
- 4 What do Maroons claim distinguishes them from other Jamaicans?
- 5 How are Maroon communities governed?
- 6 What religion is most prominent in Maroon communities?
- 7 How is cultural education important to the future of Jamaican Maroons?
- 8 How do Maroons establish their lineage?
- 9 Do you have to be black to be a Maroon?
- 10 How does "Chiny Man" reflect the Jamaican motto "Out of many, one people?"
- 11 What is "Obeah" and how is the supernatural evoked in Jamaican Maroon traditions?
- 12 What is "Yankipong" and from what culture does it originate?
- 13 How is homeopathic medicine used in Jamaican Maroon societies?
- 14 What role does religion play in traditional Maroon herbal medicine?
- 15 Why is the proposal of mining on Maroon territory so controversial?
- 16 What are the consequences of self-imposed isolation and sovereignty for Maroon communities?
- 17 How do modern-day Jamaican Maroons make a living?
- 18 Assess the struggle between cultural maintenance and economic development in modern Maroon communities.
- 19 Is crime an issue of concern in Jamaican Maroon communities?
- 20 Why is the "Blood Oath" Treaty celebrated at the Kindah tree?
- 21 How does the Abeng figure into modern Maroon traditions?
- 22 What method of preparing meats was invented by the Jamaican Maroons?

Sources

The links below offer further exploration of modern-day Jamaican Maroon culture:

Books/Articles:

- Bilby, Kenneth. *True-Born Maroons*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2005.

Online Sources:

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TBKoDaR12UQ>
The Kromanti Language of the Jamaican Maroons: a 13-minute video documenting, in depth, the roots and nuances of the Kromanti language.
- http://www.lameca.org/dossiers/musique_marronne/eng/p3.htm
Website dedicated to Kromanti music and modern-day Jamaican Maroon musicians.
- https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=72ZQQk_Maao
Video excerpts from the Accompong Maroon Festival, 2008.

Timeline of Jamaican Maroon History

- **1655:** The British capture the island of Xaymaca from the Spanish. In their flight, the Spanish free a number of slaves who settle in the frontier zones and form a guerrilla resistance force. These escaped slaves were dubbed “Maroons” in reference to the Spanish word *Cimarron*, which was initially used to refer to feral cattle in the hills of Caribbean islands.
- **1655-1739:** Period of continuous conflicts with the British.
- **1720-1739:** The general period of the First Maroon War. During this time, the Maroons are led in two distinct groups; the Windward by Queen Nanny and the Leeward by Captain Kojo.
- **1733:** Quao emerges as one of the main leaders of the Windward Maroons.
- **January 6, 1738:** Captain Kojo leads the Maroons to a rout of British forces, slaughtering all but one soldier.
- **March 1, 1738-39:** Leeward Maroon leader, Captain Kojo meets with British military envoys, who negotiate the First Maroon Treaty and an end of armed conflict between the warring parties. The Treaty includes a provision that Maroons must return runaway slaves to their masters.
- **June 23, 1739:** Treaty signed with the Windward Maroons. Nanny protests the Treaty and refuses to sign it. This results in a split between the Windward Maroons; Nanny and her followers formed New Nanny Town (today Moore Town), while Quao went on to form Charles Town.
- **1740:** Nanny's name appears on a land grant.
- **1750s:** Nanny is believed to have died.
- **1795:** The appointment of a new British governor reignites tensions with Maroons. This leads to the start of the Second Maroon War.
- **1796 – 1798:** As a result of the Second Maroon War, nearly 600 Maroons from Trelawny Town are exiled to Nova Scotia by the British colonial government, despite an agreement to the contrary.
- **1800:** The Trelawny Town Maroons are transported to Freetown in Sierra Leone. Some will remain in Africa, while others return to Jamaica.
- **1807:** The Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade is abolished by the British Parliament
- **Christmas, 1831:** The Baptist War, a large-scale slave revolt that began as a peaceful protest led by Baptist preacher Samuel Sharpe. Brutal reprisal by British follows. This accelerates the movement toward full emancipation.
- **1838:** Slavery itself is abolished throughout the entire British Empire.
- **October 1865:** The Morant Bay Rebellion; disenfranchised blacks, led by a Baptist Deacon Paul Bogle (who was subsequently made a Jamaican National Hero), take up arms against the British for greater rights. Paul Bogle was executed.
- **1866:** The Jamaican legislature relinquishes powers, and the island becomes a British Crown Colony.
- **1944:** First election held under universal adult suffrage.
- **August 6, 1962:** Jamaica gains full independence nearly 225 years following the First Maroon Treaty.
- **1976:** Queen Nanny named National Heroine of Jamaica. Her image is henceforth used on the Jamaican \$500 bill.
- **2013/14:** The Jamaican Maroons commemorate the 275th Anniversary of the signing of the Peace Treaties with the British in the early 18th century.

How to Buy the Film?

To purchase the educational DVD and for additional information, please visit the film's website: www.akwantumovie.com.

Akwantu is also available online for digital download at www.vimeo.com/ondemand.

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