Geographies of Resistance: Interpreting Blank Spaces and Locating Marronage on Imperial Maps of Colonial Jamaica

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Geographies of Resistance: Interpreting Blank Spaces and Locating Marronage on Imperial Maps of Colonial Jamaica

by

Patrick J. Nichols

Under the Direction of Julia Gaffield, PhD

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the College of Arts and Sciences Georgia State University 2022
ABSTRACT

European imperialism in the Americas was predicated on violent regimes of indigenous genocide, transatlantic enslavement, and environmental exploitation. Conquest of pre-contact indigenous societies in the New World intended to secure possession of valuable reserves of natural resources, like the gold and silver mines of colonial Mexico and Peru. European empires commissioned maps of these territories to generate and shape knowledge. Maps are the product of specific social and political frameworks and are informed by the priorities and preoccupations of empires. What they represent or omit reveals much about the colonial regimes that were imposed on the landscapes of the Americas. Maps present an image of imperial dominion that was totalizing even in places beyond the bounds of the colony. Blank spaces featured on colonial maps were not merely unconquered or unincorporated space, but rather spaces where the colony – and thereby the empire – failed to project or maintain authority. This dissertation demonstrates that these landscapes were never blank, they were instead home to indigeneity and resistance.

In the mountainous interior and on the northside of Jamaica, the indigenous persisted and resisted imperialism long after European conquest. Intricate networks of communication, subsistence, and collaboration connected these spaces and formed geographies of resistance that were the foundations of Jamaican Marronage. Maroon ecological practices and social traditions embedded in these geographies evolved over time in response to both an influx of African runaways and colonial aggression. In the early eighteenth century, colonial settlement invaded the blank spaces featured on maps of Jamaica. By this time, the Maroons had occupied and cultivated these lands for well over half a century in defiance of the colonial government and its forces. Their existence and persistence reveal how colonial maps inadvertently outlined geographies of resistance where indigeneity and Marronage found refuge, where Maroon
identities coalesced, and where Maroons waged their war against the onslaught of European imperialism.

INDEX WORDS: Jamaica, Marronage, Resistance, Imperialism, Geography, Maps
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August 2022
DEDICATION

To Christina and Adele, all your unconditional love and support made this possible. I love you both more than everything in the world. To my parents for introducing me to history, my Aunt Carol who always wanted a doctor in the family, and Jonathan who showed me the way.
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I began my graduate career at Georgia State University in the fall of 2012 without a grand plan. I simply knew that I would always regret it if I did not pursue history further. The History Department at GSU has been a tremendous support network and resource along my journey. I am grateful to the entire department, including the faculty members whose seminars broadened my perspectives and challenged me to refine my approach to history and the staff who kept everything running amidst the chaos. A special thanks to Robin Jackson, who helped me out of countless jams and was a kind and calming presence in some very difficult moments.

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1 INTRODUCTION

On August 10, 2021, troops from the Jamaican Constabulary Force (JCF) invaded the land owned by Accompong Maroon farmers in St. Elizabeth Parish. After entering, the JCF troops destroyed the farmers’ marijuana crops until they were chased away by local Maroons armed only with drums and camera phones. The tense stand-off came to a non-violent conclusion once the recently elected leader of the Accompong Maroons Chief Richard Currie confronted the interlopers and demanded they lower their weapons and vacate Maroon territory. Two days later, Jamaican Minister of National Security Horace Chang distanced the JCF from the actions of the six “rogue” agents who instigated the incident. He seized the opportunity, however, to simultaneously question and undermine Maroon sovereignty by claiming that, to his knowledge, “there is no such thing as Maroon lands.”

Months later, in December 2021, the JCF again challenged the sovereignty of Jamaican Maroons by using the COVID-19 pandemic to justify an attempted shut down of the annual January 6 celebrations of the Maroon Treaty of 1738-39. The Maroons resisted and the celebration went ahead as planned, in defiance of the order. Colonel Currie unequivocally defended the sovereignty of his people, citing the Maroon Treaty, and called upon the national government to answer for what he said was another nefarious attempt by JCF troops to extort the farmers. These recent tensions are part of a longer pattern and came just four years after Maroons legally defended their territories against efforts by the national government of Jamaica to permit private leases to mine Cockpit Country for bauxite. Their defense was ultimately successful, and the Cockpit Country Protected Area was granted legal protections under the National Resources Conservation Authority Act, which temporarily staved off mining in Maroon lands in 2017.

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Debates over interpretations of the territoriality of Cockpit Country persisted, and in March 2022 the Jamaican Ministry of Economic Growth and Job Creation codified an interpretation of the Maroon Treaty that protected some of the most disputed lands, while opening others to mining interests.  

Each of these instances highlight the two related fronts on which the Maroons of Jamaica continue to defend their sovereignty: interpretations of geography and the text of the Maroon Treaty. “Successive governments, over the years,” Colonel Wallace Sterling of the Moore Town Maroons argued in 2021, “have tried to make unilateral decisions as it relates to the treaty…It is rather strange for anybody to be thinking at this time that we (the Maroons) do not have lands. We do have lands and it belongs to us.”

These tensions are not without precedent. They stem from incompatible understandings of land use and possession that began with Spanish conquest and continued through the British colonial era and into the independent Jamaican state. Over the course of Jamaican history post-contact, externally imposed approaches to natural resource exploitation – namely hyperexploitative western capitalism as it evolved – have butted up against indigenous land tenure practices that were instead based on adaptation and mutual subsistence. The tensions that arose between these two social modalities impeded the settlement and development of plantation agriculture in Jamaica. The Council of Trade and Plantations made this clear in 1739 when it issued a warning to the Jamaican plantocracy that, “not one half of your lands are at present cultivated, and that Great Britain does not reap half the benefit from your Colony,”

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might do if it were fully settled.”⁴ Open warfare arose from the colony’s aggression toward Maroons in response to these conditions, but the geographic battle lines were drawn far earlier.

Life in the Greater Antilles before European contact for the indigenous peoples of Jamaica featured an array of overlapping and interlocking territorial caciques, or chieftains, whose authority was unquestioned within the contingent space of their community. These caciques were organized in a political configuration called a cacicazgo that was hierarchical, with one cacique holding ultimate authority over the entire island in the case of Ayiti (later renamed Hispaniola). The natural resources of each of the unique microclimates that make up the landscapes of the islands of the Greater Antilles were effectively exploited by the islanders for subsistence and conucos (crop fields) complemented what could be gathered, hunted, and fished.⁵ Cassava and sweet potato were essential staples of the local diet and necessitated arable, unforested lands for tilling and sowing. Each of these geographical regions were part of a larger, island-wide system predicated on networks of exchange, mutual subsistence, and collaboration. Through these networks, the indigenous peoples of Jamaica maintained stable supplies of crops as well as protein from hutia (small rodents), turtles, fish, and mollusks.⁶ Spiritual practices revolved around wooden zemis (idols) and on Jamaica burial rituals were intimately connected to the caves of the island interior.⁷ Turtle shells were used as cooking tools and were widely disseminated throughout the island. The cultural practices and networks of exchange that constituted daily life for the indigenous necessitated an intimate knowledge of the rivers, mountain passes, places of refuge, and sources of subsistence of Jamaica, which could only be

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⁶ Allsworth-Jones, *Pre-Columbian Jamaica*, 23-30. It is also possible that the indigenous of all regions of Jamaica semidomesticated the hutia.
gained through experience. This knowledge was passed down through oral traditions and first-hand experience, but Taíno was not a written language.

In 1509, Juan de Esquivel declared the conquest of Jamaica under orders from Diego Columbus. To maximize their profits, the Spanish instituted the *encomienda* labor system in the colonies of the Americas in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries. This feudal, land-based system of enslaved labor was implemented in Jamaica in 1515 and the colonial state assigned indigenous individuals and their caciques to conquistadors who exploited the laborers as they saw fit.\(^8\) Conquistadors like Francisco de Garay, who traveled with Columbus on his second voyage to the Americas, used Jamaica much in the same way that the Spanish used the Kingdom of Granada, Madeira, and the Canary Islands. These were semi-peripheral territories that featured a mill built on the outskirts of an urban center that was operated by the wealthiest landowner of the community. In Jamaica, this meant either genocidal regimes based around sugar production on the *haciendas* of Garay and others, or equally violent and exploitative schemes to discover rumored, but never found, gold deposits.\(^9\) Rather than expanding settlement and encouraging a robust local economy of raw cash crop production and luxury consumption, Jamaica was instead the domain of whichever conquistador was granted the most arable land. In the earliest era this was Garay, but in 1536 the Crown granted the island to the heirs of Columbus. In both instances, there was remarkably little capital invested into the ongoing operations of the Spanish Jamaican colony.

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\(^8\) James A. Delle, Mark W. Hauser, and Douglas V. Armstrong, *Out of Many, One People: The Historical Archaeology of Colonial Jamaica*, Caribbean Archaeology and Ethnohistory, (Tuscaloosa: University Alabama Press, 2011), 39-40. There were some superficial differences between the *encomienda* and the system of slavery that predominated the French and English Americas, but in practice the Spanish construct was no less exploitative, violent, or destructive.

The Spanish colony of Jamaica was physically constructed in the imperial image that had been shaped by metropolitan culture but was otherwise isolated from Spanish society. Open-range hog-rearing and sugar production seized and transformed the readily available arable land, which had previously been used by the indigenous as semi-agricultural crop fields (conucos), and uprooted and severely limited the mobility of the indigenous. The encomienda thereby decimated the indigenous population of Jamaica by removing people from their communities and settlements and parasitically exploiting their labor and semi-cultivated landscapes. Just as devastating was the disruption to the networks of exchange and cooperation that had been so central to the lives and social geographies of the indigenous of pre-contact Jamaica. Bartolomé de las Casas famously detailed the countless atrocities he witnessed across the many colonies of the New World in the mid-sixteenth century in *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias*. But violent enslavement and ethnic cleansing were not the whole story in Jamaica or elsewhere; the indigenous resisted. In the case of Jamaica, it was reported to the Crown as late as 1601 that Governor Fernando Melgarejo de Córdova had commissioned Francisco de Castro with his personal funds to lead an expedition into the Sierra Bastidas (Blue Mountains) to “discover” gold mines and native rebels. The party was either unsuccessful or may have never taken place at all; a letter written by the vecinos of Villa de la Vega reached the Spanish Consejo in 1604 that detailed the many lies and depravities committed by Melgarejo during his term as Governor. The encomienda, despite all its genocidal depredations, did not wipe out the

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11 Bartolomé de las Casas, *Brevísima relación de la destrucción de las Indias*. (Madrid: Juan F. Hurtel, 1821).
12 Francisco Morales Padrón, *Spanish Jamaica*, trans. Patrick E. Bryan, Michael J. Gronow, and Francisco Oviedo Moral (Kingston: Ian Randle Publishers, 2003), 152-153. The party was either unsuccessful or may have never taken place at all; a letter written by the vecinos of Villa de la Vega reached the Spanish Consejo in 1604 that detailed the many lies and depravities committed by Melgarejo during his term as Governor.
native population of Jamaica. They persisted in the mountainous interior alongside the colony and in the margins of the archive.

The Spanish needed enslaved Africans to supplement indigenous labor in Spanish Jamaica by the 1530s. In 1523, 300 enslaved laborers were consigned by the Casa de Contratación for the colony. It is possible that a maximum of 1,000 enslaved African lived on the island during the sixteenth century. By 1611, the enslaved population stood at 558 individuals, with an additional 107 “negros horros” or, “free blacks.” The enslaved were put to work on the few sugar plantations and trapiches of the colony, along with the many “hatos” or “ranches” on the plains nearby the colonial capital. Conditions had changed, but the labor regimes instituted by the encomienda continued to dictate the lives of enslaved Africans imported to Jamaica well into the seventeenth century.

The indigenous approach to land tenure was both communal and collaborative. Disparate geographic locations were independent in their immediate oversight, but intimately connected in complementary systems of exchange that redistributed natural resources throughout the island. This meant that regional caciques might not agree on all matters, but that the continued functioning of the island-wide network of cacicazgos – the name of lands where the cacique held authority – took precedent over internecine conflicts. Spanish colonization destroyed that social framework, but the geographic infrastructure of pathways and spaces they navigated were fundamental to indigenous resistance to the colony in the form of Marronage. It is for this reason that geography is the lens through which this work analyzes and contextualizes resistance by undoubtedly would have been enslaved for their labor or for sale – also did not increase in subsequent years, which we know from the official census of Spanish Jamaica taken in 1611.

14 Padrón, Spanish Jamaica, 153, 157.
15 “Relación verdadera y breve de Jamaica, Don Bernardo de Balbuena,” July 16, 1611, Archivo General de Indias, Santo Domingo, leg. 177.
pairing maps with diverse sources such as manuscript and printed material that recount colonial communication and legislation, Jamaican Maroon oral histories, and anthropological and archaeological evidence to detail the lives of indigenous islanders.

The invasion of the Spanish ruptured the communal framework and uprooted the physical settlements of the indigenous, but oral histories and cultural practices are far more difficult to eradicate, and in Jamaica they persisted. During recent archaeological expeditions at Nanny Town, the stronghold of Queen Nanny in the Blue Mountains, archaeologists uncovered a rich tapestry of indigenous artefacts buried adjacent to a layer of indigenous earthenware intermixed with colonial tools and materials that raises the possibility of cohabitation of the site. Each of these disparate locations were part and parcel of pre-contact life for the indigenous and became vital to geographies of resistance. Continuity between pre-contact indigenous habitation of Jamaica and Marronage at the height of English colonialism in the eighteenth century can be found in the isolated spaces settled and cultivated by both groups. When Nanny Town was finally located and captured by the English in the early eighteenth it was only with the assistance of a defector from the Maroon camp. For almost two centuries spanning Spanish and English colonialism, the indigenous and African runaways successfully occupied and concealed the location of this mountain settlement in their resistance to enslavement.

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17 The indigenous method for planting, harvesting, and cooking cassava into a bread-like product was vital to settlement of the island and was demanded in ransoms by pirates who plundered St. Jago de la Vega throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.


19 Emmanuel Kofi Agorsah, Maroon Heritage: Archaeological, Ethnographic, and Historical Perspectives, (Barbados: University of the West Indies Press, 1994), 181.
The study of maps as historical documents offers tremendous insight into the imperial disposition toward geographic space and the indigenous resistance to that power. The very decision to create a map of a territory in the first place is vested with meaning. Cartographers may set out to record the natural world for posterity, but their commissions were often at the behest of either empires or individuals who sought to shape that landscape for exploitation, thereby coloring the very process from inception. “The steps in making a map,” J.B. Harley argued, “selection, omission, simplification, classification, the creation of hierarchies, and 'symbolization’—are all inherently rhetorical.” Material realities were often distorted, and silences were perpetuated within these textual mediations of reality. Understanding both the social context and the intertextuality of maps allows us to read maps, “for alternative and sometimes competing discourses.” Textual deconstructions of maps reveals the intentional and unintentional, conscious and unconscious designs of mapmaking projects and thereby the exercise of power and territorial authority. Maps do not actively create social dynamics, but by prioritizing and embedding these social frameworks, maps transcend their own materiality and become rhetorical tools of empire that can be used to shape social perspectives regarding territorial dominion and possession. Underneath these layers of rhetoric, maps portray a version of reality that – while distorted and mediated – can be revelatory to the material concerns and intentions of empire during that specific period in history.

The deconstruction of maps as texts involves a process of reconstructing the specific social frameworks that sought to conquer, dominate, and exploit the natural landscapes and

peoples of the New World. This approach reveals a geographic outline of the violent
machinations of a colony – what Michel Foucault called the “panopticon” – which includes forts,
garrisons, and other military installments as well as the roads and plantations that the colonizers
intended to control the enslaved and protect capital investments. The goal of these regimes of
oversight, observation, and violence was to render “cheap” and “plentiful” enslaved labor as
passive and thereby pliant and infinitely exploitable. This, however, was not the reality of
colonial life; resistance was omnipresent, enslaved Africans constantly tested the bounds of
authority, and dominion was assailed both from within the plantations and from those beyond
Jamaican shores. In their attempts to map a reality that represented a neat, uniform image of
colonial dominion that totalized the geographic space of the territory, cartographers also
inadvertently outlined where it could not be exercised. Blank spaces were not merely
unconquered or unincorporated space, but rather spaces where the colony – and thereby the
empire – failed to project or maintain authority. In these vacuums of imperial authority, those
who rejected the imposition of the colonial order occupied these liminal spaces. Cartographers,
in their quest to map empire, unintentionally outlined the spaces in which indigenous and
African resistance found refuge and subsistence.

My research also prioritizes anthropology and archaeology to approximate how the
indigenous lived pre-contact and how Marronage in Jamaica evolved over time. I will use these
sources alongside the colonial record to reveal the lines of resistance that appear as blank space
on imperial maps and in imperial archives. This narrative of resistance does not reject the
colonial record and instead embraces the biases laden in these documents to better understand the
intentions of the colony during both the Spanish and English eras. Archival sources from Spanish
Jamaica are limited due to the destruction wrought during and after the English invasion of 1655,
but numerous valuable accounts remain that detail how the colony functioned and the extent and nature of settlement. For the years comprising English Jamaica, deeds, land surveys, and requests for support in the form of capital, soldiers, and fortifications complement these sources and help to reconstruct more hyperlocalized outlines of the spaces where Jamaican Maroons and colonial settlers clashed in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries. By understanding the geographic shape and social foundations of resistance in Jamaican history, we problematize the very nature of colonialism and imperialism.

In June of 2016, I attended and took part in the Eighth Annual Charles Town Maroon Conference near Buff Bay on the northeastern end of Jamaica [see Figure 1.1]. Charles Town is situated on the banks of the Buff Bay River, which originates in the Blue Mountain range in between Silver Hill Peak and Catherine’s Peak and is home to the descendants of a branch of Maroons led in the Maroon Wars by the famous leader Quao. Over time, Charles Town became sacred grounds for Jamaican Maroons because of its large cemetery. During the weekend of the conference, attendees observed a funeral procession and witnessed as every member of Charles
Town, along with Maroons from across the island and from as far away as Sierra Leone, paid respects to and remembered their loved ones. The processional ceremony was solemn at times and emotionally charged at others, vacillating between rhythmic drumming and outbursts of grief and celebration as each member of the community honored the fallen and ushered them to their final earthly resting place. Each step of the ceremony emphasized the connection between Maroons and their natural surroundings, beginning at the meeting grounds in their village in the shadow of the Blue Mountains, proceeding to Buff Bay River led by drummers, and then back through a well-worn path in the bush to the cemetery amidst a grove of massive, old growth trees. The participants imbibed and sprayed libations across the grounds and the body of their loved one in a practice tied intimately to West African burial rituals, especially in Akan communities. Each element of these burial rituals speak to the nature of Marronage in the context of Jamaica: a reverence for and reliance on the natural landscape, the importation and adaptation of disparate West African traditions to suit new surroundings, and an unwavering resistance to the stifling external pressures of imperialism.

During my time in Charles Town, fellow conference participants and I dined with Chief Michael Grizzle of the Trelawny Town-Flagstaff Maroons and engaged in a group discussion about Marronage and its place in the history of Jamaica. Chief Grizzle spoke at length about indigeneity, stating unequivocally that Maroons are the indigenous peoples of Jamaica and that their resistance was against more than enslavement. “The ancestors did not simply reject colonial rule and enslavement,” he told the group, “They opposed Western civilization in its entirety,

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which includes capitalism.”24 In his conceptualization of Marronage, Chief Grizzle emphasized a common ancestry with, as well as a spiritual connection to, the native peoples of Jamaica.25 According to this framework, indigeneity and Marronage are inextricably linked and resistance to the modalities of capitalism is inherited. Although I will distinguish between the indigenous and the Maroons of Jamaica throughout this work as a means of periodizing and advancing the narrative of resistance, this does not mean that indigenous Jamaican peoples and Jamaican Maroons are unconnected. On the contrary, the indigenous first engaged in Marronage as a response to invasion, conquest, and enslavement and as a means of maintaining the “fugitive ecologies” that were so central to pre-contact life. Mapping out these indigenous landscapes and the geographies they compose offers a means of bridging the knowledge gap between that which was recorded by imperial occupiers and experienced by those who resisted occupation.

Indigenous and African resistance to imperialism and enslavement challenges historical teleologies that depict conquest as a linear process with neat chronological sequences. Such histories of colonialism assume the dominance and preeminence of European empires and obscure resistance, which was ceaseless and omnipresent. Indigenous peoples as well as enslaved Africans resisted the conditions imposed on them by imperialism in every conceivable manner, every step of the way. Maps depict the places in which resistance found refuge and strength as blank, unsettled and unincorporated space, but nevertheless as part and parcel of the larger landscape of European dominion. For example, we know from Mavis Campbell’s archival research in The Maroons of Jamaica that the Maroons of the northeast of the island nearby Port

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24 Michael Grizzle (Chief of the Trelawny Town-Flagstaff Maroons), in discussion with the author at the Eighth Annual Charles Town Maroon Conference, June 2016, Charles Town, Jamaica.
Antonio relied on natural sources of salt to complement their subsistence diets, which also necessitated means of accessing these sources. Colonial roads and pathways were patrolled by local militias, so Maroons had to make use of alternative routes in areas beyond the reach of the English. This meant that despite the biases of maps and the imperial archive, cartographers unknowingly outlined the geographies of resistance, places of refuge and subsistence that were connected by an infrastructure of pathways.

The narrative framework this dissertation employs begins with a comprehensive survey of indigenous Jamaicans and the African societies from which the enslaved of Spanish and English Jamaica were captured. Making use of the work of archaeologists and anthropologists affords the opportunity to speak about the indigenous of Jamaica with some degree of certainty. Returning to this base of knowledge during an analysis of imperial archival documents and maps, especially regarding the era of Spanish Jamaica, helps to locate the history of the indigenous of the island.

The creation of maps of the Caribbean and the Greater and Lesser Antilles was largely dominated by the Dutch during the first century of New World imperialism. Cartographers like Abraham Artelius, Gerard Mercatur, Joost de Hondt, and Willem Blaeu were pioneers in mapmaking, creating privately commissioned and marketed maps that depicted the lands claimed by the various European powers. These maps were dramatically different from those commissioned on behalf of the Spanish Crown. Rather than reflecting imperial priorities, the Dutch maps depicted the natural landscape of the island and its natural resources. Maps and land surveys were fundamental to two processes that emerged during the early seventeenth century: the enclosure and privatization of land as possession and the scientific push to catalog and categorize nature. This proto-capitalistic push coincided with the Enlightenment focus on
recording and defining the natural resources of imperial territories to transform English colonialism. When the English invaded and conquered the island from the Spanish, Maroons adapted to the strategies they employed. Maps of Jamaica did not include what I call “geographies of resistance” because the way these populations used the land was in direct conflict with the early modernist approach to colonialism. These were configurations of space within territories claimed by imperial conquest but wherein imperial authority could not be exercised, and dominion could not be forcibly maintained. This vacuum allowed networks of subsistence composed by rival ecologies to persist. These geographies of Jamaica predated, withstood, and outlasted colonialism, and tell a story of indigeneity unbound by European imperialism. Maroon communities during the Spanish and English eras created what Sarah L. Lincoln calls “fugitive ecologies.” Lincoln defined the term in the context of postcolonial literature context to signify, “a dispossession of self in relation to the environment, a refusal to conceive of land, soil or planet in terms of property.” Subsistence and semi-agricultural fields planted by Maroons, enslaved Africans, and the indigenous – which compose “fugitive ecologies” – were not part of the colonial economy. These fields would have merely signified to colonists that the land was arable and exploitable.

In the context of Spanish versus English Jamaica, the pressures and geographic borders of the colony presented complex challenges and pressures. Blank spaces on the maps of the island, both Spanish and English, therefore provide the geographical outlines of those “fugitive ecologies” practiced by Maroons across centuries of imperialism. The fugitivity of these indigenous ecologies is defined in contrast to the hyper-exploitative ecologies of colonial

plantations. As Chief Grizzle put it: “The ancestors…opposed Western civilization in its entirety, which includes capitalism.” The idea of a fugitive ecology is essential to what Chief Grizzle described as a crucial anti-Western, anti-capitalist ethos in Marronage: a space in which Maroon communities refused, “to conceive of land, soil or planet in terms of property.” This work contends that blank spaces on maps unintentionally outlined the geographies of those fugitive ecologies.

If we use the geographic frameworks of colonialism as the photographic negative against which Marronage manifested and shaped itself, we can better interpret the realities of resistance across time. Interpreting blank spaces as the outlines of fugitive ecologies adds depth and context to the analysis of maps and imperial sources. Understanding how the various individuals who fled enslavement understood the world and interacted with and manipulated the natural landscape around them allows us as researchers to conceptualize the materiality of indigeneity. Fusing the approach outlined by Harley and others for translating the intertextuality of maps with this knowledge of those who composed indigenous resistance in Jamaica not only finds meaning in the blank spaces mapped by empire, but also attempts to fill in those blanks by reading against and along the bias grain of Spanish and English archives for traces of the marginalized and those forces that engendered marginalization. Reading against the bias grain reveals what is between the lines of archival sources, while reading along the bias grain highlights the social conditions that shaped life in Jamaica.

We know from the Spanish colonial archive that indigenous and African runaways, or “Maroons,” who fled into the mountains of Jamaica became a nuisance to vecinos, or residents of

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the capital of St. Jago de la Vega, as early as 1512.²⁹ It is also clear in the archival record that the vecinos of la Vega in the early seventeenth century were reliant on the many hatos – circular clearings used in raising large livestock – occupied and operated by the indigenous on the plains of Clarendon.³⁰ Spanish censuses accounted for more than one hundred known indigenous persons occupying the island during this period as well.³¹ The Spanish committed genocide against the indigenous of Jamaica in their attempts to exploit the island, but these people resisted and remained when the English invaded in 1655. They subsisted and survived using the same adaptive strategies that formed the bedrock of their pre-contact societies; resisting in the mountains and persisting on the plains, occupying those allegedly blank spaces on maps that Spanish colonists ignored whenever possible and English colonists failed to incorporate. The indigenous, as was always contended in oral historical records, were the ancestors of those who became the Jamaican Maroons.³² Locating sites of indigenous resistance allows us to build out the framework of indigenous geographies of resistance and reveals the limits of imperialism over time and problematizes neat, linear teleologies of conquest and exploitation. In this manner, resistance becomes the central, organizing narrative to the history of Jamaica.

Resistance to colonialism within Jamaica did not exist in a vacuum. Invasions from European imperial rivals, like the piratical raids of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the French invasion of 1694-95, and natural disasters like the destructive earthquake of 1692 were material factors in the colonization of the island. These events devastated the colonial economy and populace of St. Jago de la Vega (or Spanish Town as it was known to the English)

and invariably shaped resistance to it. Much like their predecessors facing Spanish colonialism, the Jamaican Maroons of the English era operated on the periphery of the colony itself but were nonetheless impacted by these events. Maroon populations swelled with the arrival of new plantation runaways who fled amidst the panic and destruction wrought during the 1690s. These communities – in manners different but no less impactful – also grappled with the effects of hurricanes, earthquakes, and invasions like their colonist counterparts. Maroons were not bystanders to Jamaican history, despite what the colonial record might lead you to believe: they lived, worked, communed, and created societies that withstood the onslaught of imperialism and shaped the world around them. The history and present of Jamaica are born out of this resistance.
2 “JAMAICA O SANTIAGO,” SPANISH MAPPING, COLONIALISM, AND STAGNATION IN JAMAICA, 1509-1655

Warriors armed with spears gathered in canoes on the island coast in alarm as a pair of Spanish caravels drew near to the shore. The massive wooden vessels dwarfed the resistance force, but the warriors pressed onward. Volley after volley of spears were hurled by the warriors but bounced off the hulls of the ships and fell innocuously into the sea. The captain aboard the nearest caravel countered. He sent a boat of Spanish crossbowmen ashore along with a hunting dog that was unleashed on those who had gathered on the beach to repel the arrivals. The mechanized bows rained bolts down on the defensive force, who at last relented in the face of inevitable destruction. The European interlopers parlayed with the cacique, or head of the local community, with assistance from an indigenous captive and guide. The sides soon arrived at a tenuous peace, consecrated by an exchange of gifts to signify supposed mutual respect. This violent meeting was the first introduction of the indigenous peoples of Xamayca (Jamaica) to Christopher Columbus and his Spanish Conquistadors.33

The resistance that the Indigenous people waged against Columbus and his men during the first contact remained a looming threat to the Spaniards on subsequent transatlantic voyages despite the arrangements that they made with various local caciques.34 The will of Diego Mendez, who sailed with Columbus on his fateful fourth and final voyage to Jamaica in 1503 when the captain and his crew were marooned on the island, suggests that authority among the island’s indigenous population was distributed amongst regional caciques who were the

33 Padrón, Spanish Jamaica, 1-3.
34 “Diego Mendez Last Will and Testament,” June 6, 1536, in Select Letters of Christopher Columbus, with Other Original Documents, Relating to His Four Voyages to the New World, ed. R.H. Major (Hakluyt Society, 2010), 215-222.
unquestioned executive power within that community. Mendez plied the leader of each
indigenous settlement with gifts and displays of fidelity to negotiate for provisions for the
stranded Spaniards, and he always adapted to local customs. The provisions that Mendez
acquired from the indigenous people were all that stood between the Spaniards and desolation
and starvation. Despite the establishment of these diplomatic relations, upon his return to
Jamaica Columbus was paranoid about the intentions of the indigenous; the aged Admiral
believed that their indigenous saviors could turn on them at any moment. Mendez did not doubt
the sincerity of the caciques he encountered, but also understood – like Columbus – that their
arrangements would not last forever; the men stranded with Columbus were restless and
ungenerous to their indigenous benefactors. In this profound moment of desperation, the Spanish
had to navigate indigenous social geographies of pre-contact Jamaica for survival. Adherence to
the customs and authority of each regional cacique, who in turn dictated where they could safely
travel and with whom they could trade, was essential.

The Spaniards stranded on the fourth voyage were entirely dependent on the indigenous
for survival once their victuals were exhausted. As the months dragged on, the tenuous peace
between the two populations – in large part because of tensions within the camps of the
Spaniards themselves – began to crack. Columbus resolved to send a rescue party with
indigenous rowers and guides across the Jamaica Channel to neighboring Ayti for rescue. When
no one volunteered to undertake the 120-mile journey across deep and rough waters, Columbus
turned again to Mendez to carry out the treacherous voyage. The journey across the open sea
proved to be the least of their worries. In one instance, a band of indigenous rebels attacked and

37 Padrón, Spanish Jamaica, 9. The Porras brothers – Francisco, a captain and Diego, who was the bookkeeper –
sowed the seeds of mutiny against Columbus over the many months the crew were stranded on the island.
robbed the canoe captained by Mendez and they were forced to turn back, delaying their crossing. Even upon arrival their arrival at Hispaniola, Mendez and his crew were taken captive by a local cacique and were later forced to wait in the colonial capital of Santo Domingo for months as the fate of Columbus and the Spanish on Jamaica hung in the balance. As the stranded Spaniards waited, ignorant to the predicament of Mendez and his crew, Captain Francisco de Porras and his brother Diego raised two successive mutinous rebellions against Columbus’s leadership. The rebels failed, both in their attempts to usurp Columbus and in a subsequent attempt to make a crossing in canoes to Santo Domingo. The Porras brothers and their fellow insurgents then returned to Jamaica and began ransacking the indigenous settlement of Maima. The devastation they wrought made the Spanish presence on the island untenable for the indigenous people, while Columbus and his loyalists insisted that these men were villainous scoundrels. Some caciques continued to trade with and aid the Spaniards, others attacked and sabotaged the camps, and still others kept their distance. The Europeans’ guns, crossbows, and hunting dogs did little to dissuade caciques from pushing back when the Spanish treated them badly and took liberties with their generosity.

The indigenous resisted, assisted, avoided, and harassed the Spanish, sometimes violently, throughout these early years. The episode in which indigenous rebels attacked and robbed the canoe captained by Mendez further highlights the lack of uniformity in indigenous interactions with the Spanish. Despite the existence of an island-wide hierarchy and the authority

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of caciques, rulers across different regions of the island acted independently. These dynamics of indigenous society in Jamaica organized life before European contact.

The Spanish constructed their early colonial settlements near indigenous villages as a means of instituting and streamlining the hyperexploitative encomienda labor system, which assigned enslaved indigenous populations to conquistadors who then used the laborers as they saw fit. Physical proximity to these villages, which were usually located in the low-lying hills that border the coastal plains in the vicinity of fresh water sources, facilitated the enslavement of indigenous laborers. The Spanish, therefore, in a very literal sense grafted colonialism onto indigenous geographies. Nearly a century and a half later, the English repeated this process during their capture of Spanish Jamaica. In both instances, the European invaders ignored or failed to appreciate the intricate networks of island-wide and inter-island exchange and communication that was vital to the ecologies practiced by the indigenous and their Maroon descendants and successors. The European colonists were preoccupied with the hyperexploitation of natural resources and labor, blinding them to the infrastructures that supported indigenous settlements across Jamaica.

Indigenous resistance is central to understanding the history and present of Jamaica. It represents the persistence of a way of life that was shaped and informed by the natural landscapes and cultural geographies of the island. This way of life transcends the timeline and reductive teleologies of European imperialism. Resistance to imperialism in Jamaican history is intimately linked, whether consciously or not, to indigenous geographies and knowledge.

Enslaved and freed Africans and the indigenous worked and lived nearby one another for more than a century. The enslaved of Spanish Jamaica – indigenous and African alike – lived either on haciendas (plantations) or in the hatos on the periphery of Villa de la Vega [Figure 2.1]. Work on the hatos provided the enslaved with greater autonomy and required mastery of the natural landscape to range herds and wrangle runaways. The Spanish preferred the indigenous for their knowledge of the surroundings, but over time transitioned to importing enslaved Africans to either complement or supplement this ranching population. Individuals from these populations of disparate origin formed kinship bonds in these experiences. Kinship bonds facilitated the formation of syncretic identities that fused the traditions and beliefs of each society and gave birth to unique forms of resistance against imperialism.

[Figure 2.1] Hatos y Rios de Jamaica, from Francisco Morales Padrón’s *Spanish Jamaica*, this map provides the rough location of the many rivers and ranches of Jamaica under Spanish colonialism. Map Taken from Padrón, *Spanish Jamaica*, 160.

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2.1 The African Origins of Resistance in Jamaica

By 1375 CE, the Mpemba Kasi Kingdom and the Mbata Kingdom merged to form the Kingdom of Kongo in the western African region that is today occupied by the countries Angola, Zambia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo. The House of Kilukeni, as the orchestrators of what was an amicable union of powerful families, ruled the kingdom over the course of the next two centuries, constantly expanding the territory. This process allowed the rulers to maintain and consolidate power, which inevitably created jealousies and rivalries within other houses.\(^\text{46}\) By the time Portuguese explorers led by Diogo Cão traveled down the Congo River in search of the mythic Christian king Prester John in 1483, the Kingdom of Kongo was the most powerful in all of Africa and featured a hierarchical society with a robust infrastructure that was technologically advanced and was broadly prosperous for those in power.\(^\text{47}\)

Cão arrived in the region a century into the House of Kilukeni’s reign, at which point external regional rivals had been – temporarily – subjugated and rendered as sources for slaving campaigns.\(^\text{48}\) Whereas previous Portuguese explorations had consisted of raiding and slaving parties along the western coastline, this journey sought the interior of the continent and its fabled riches. Cão witnessed that the Kingdom of Kongo had its own currency, a functioning domestic market (largely based on slavery), and an effective transportation infrastructure that both impressed and awed the Iberians. The King at that time, Nzinga a Nkuwu, engaged in a cultural exchange with the Portuguese, sending Kongo nobles to Europe, while hosting men left by Cão.


Nkuwu also briefly converted to Christianity and in short order so had his son – who would prove to be a devoted Christian – and the nobility of Kongo.\(^{49}\)

By the time the Spanish colony on the island of Jamaica was established by Juan de Esquivel in 1507, Afonso I had assumed the throne from his father Nzinga a Nkuwu. The Portuguese and Afonso I established a mutually beneficial political and economic relationship whereby the Portuguese tapped into the slave and ivory markets of Kongo and in return the Kongo received fire-armed support in their war against the Teke and access to the European markets and cultural currents.\(^{50}\) Before long, the Spanish, through the Portuguese, gained access to the slave trade by way of the asiento, a royal contract that gave monopoly control to the Spanish over the distribution of enslaved African labor to its colonies. The first persons of African descent likely arrived in Jamaica with Juan de Esquivel himself, but by 1523 Spanish colonists had become desperate for enslaved laborers to maintain the colony. For this reason, the Spanish Crown consigned 300 enslaved Africans for the island. The Spanish Crown also mandated that African women be sent along with the men to provide wives for the enslaved. Within the decade, the Crown sent another 700 enslaved Africans, but Spanish Jamaican colonists remained far from satisfied. As of the Balbuena census of 1611 – which gathered its numbers through recorded confessions rather than a true headcount – there were 107 “negros libres” and 558 “esclavos” accounted for in Spanish Jamaica, which colonists decried as insufficient.\(^{51}\)

The Teke were a Bantu speaking people who were known as traders, hunters, and fishermen and they domesticated dogs and cats to assist in these endeavors. Above all else,

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\(^{50}\) Oliver and Atmore, *Medieval Africa, 1250-1800*, 170.

however, they were famous for their fighting abilities. The Teke violently opposed the expansion of the Kingdom of Kongo and were poised to win their war against it were it not for the firepower provided by the Portuguese. The Mbundu were a more agricultural people who waged, and eventually lost, a near two-decade war against both the Kingdom of Kongo and Portuguese Angola. As was the practice at the time in Africa and throughout much of European history prior, the soldiers of the any vanquished foe presented a quandary to the victors. The defeated soldiers remained a threat if the victors did not deal with them decisively. Two options for punishment were enslavement or execution and enslavement was more profitable. However, it was not only defeated soldiers who were captured, enslaved, and sent to the New World; entire societies were targeted. In this genocidal process, the agricultural traditions of the Mbundu and the trading, hunting, and fishing of the Teke also made their way across the Atlantic Ocean. Evidence of this exists in the archival records of both the Spanish and English, who detailed the skills of the enslaved and freed African population as ranchers in the hatos, hunters in the woods, and by the existence and persistence of West African cooking traditions, herbs, and grains like rice that made their way to Jamaica.52 While the traditions and experiences of the enslaved African peoples of Spanish Jamaica do not and cannot account for the entirety of the enslaved experience of that era, when paired with our knowledge of the indigenous garnered from anthropological and archaeological studies conducted on the island and limited mentions in the imperial archives, we can begin to imagine the subtleties and contours of indigeneity and early Marronage.

The vast majority of the enslaved brought to Jamaica by the Spanish throughout the second half of the sixteenth century were illegally imported from ships hailing from Angola, a coastal Portuguese colony in western Africa south of the Kingdom of Kongo. This meant that by

the turn of the seventeenth century, the enslaved population of Spanish Jamaica was almost exclusively composed of Bantu speaking peoples of the region constituted today by Angola, the Democratic Republic of Congo, and the Republic of Congo and the remaining indigenous population on the island.\textsuperscript{53} These African peoples shared experiences even prior to their enslavement, as they all hailed from societies that resisted the expansionary aims of the Kingdom of Kongo and their Portuguese allies. This meant that a sizeable percentage of the enslaved African population of Spanish Jamaica arrived with prior working knowledge of imperialism and especially Portuguese efforts at colonizing Africa. This population was sub-divided into two distinct social groups: the horros (freedmen) and the enslaved.\textsuperscript{54} Despite having obtained freedom, the horros of Spanish Jamaica were relegated to an inferior social standing than that of the vecinos and moradores, who were of Spanish or other European descent. Horros could not hold office or legally own land in Villa de la Vega, but along with the “mulattoes” were an important part of the island’s meager cavalry and defense militias. Based on the observations of Vázquez de Espinosa, the horros lived as peasants on the rural periphery of the colony.

We also know that social and cultural traditions of the enslaved African population of Spanish Jamaica survived the transatlantic voyage. In the 1610s another priest, Antonio Vázquez de Espinosa, journeyed to the Americas to preach and work in the Spanish American colonies. Like Balbuena, Vázquez de Espinosa recorded his observations during his travels. During his time in Jamaica, the Spanish priest did not conduct an official census, but wrote that there were,

\textsuperscript{53} Oliver and Atmore, \textit{Medieval Africa, 1250-1800}, 166-179. The exact regional origin of these various linguistic and ethnic groups shifted over time, from the Teke to the Mbundu and so on, but these distinct societies shared broadly similar historical experiences.

\textsuperscript{54} Padrón, \textit{Spanish Jamaica}, 156; Margaret M. Olsen, “‘Negros Horros’ and ‘Cimarrones’ on the Legal Frontiers of the Caribbean: Accessing the African Voice in Colonial Spanish American Texts,” \textit{Research in African Literatures} 29, no. 4 (1998): 52-72. \textit{Negros horros} were formerly enslaved individuals of African descent who were either granted freedom for their services to the colony or who purchased their freedom.
“more than 1,000 black slaves and mulattoes.” This population, he continued, “occupy themselves in the field in the cattle ranches, hatos, and works of corn, tobacco…rice, cassava, and some honey trapiches.” In these rural spaces of Spanish Jamaica, where colonial authority was tenuous and the enslaved could grow whichever subsistence crops they chose, we see the organic blending of African and indigenous ecological competencies through the cultivation of corn, tobacco, rice, and cassava. Rice cultivation was dependent on agricultural knowledge brought from Africa, while corn, tobacco, and cassava were semi-cultivated in Jamaica long before the arrival of the Spanish. The history of rice cultivation in the Americas is intimately linked to the provision grounds of enslaved Africans, as well as the settlements of Maroons and Quilombos. Additionally, the labor required for tasks like cattle ranching and honey cultivation was specialized and implies a certain amount of personal freedom to tend to ranging herds and hives. In this way, Vázquez de Espinosa paints a far more nuanced and detailed image of the daily lives of the Spanish Jamaican population than Balbuena, describing an island where inhabitants supplemented their lack of imports from Seville and neighboring Spanish territories with subsistence production on the island. Much like Balbuena, however, he emphasizes the meagerness of the colonial population, the island’s defenses, and the limited footprint of the colony, which remained confined to the vicinity of Villa de la Vega.

56 Maud Irène Tenaillon and Alain Charcosset, “A European Perspective on Maize History,” *Comptes Rendus Biologies* 334, no. 3 (March 2011): 221–28; Woodward, “Medieval Legacies,” 77. Woodward includes that cotton was also a native cultigen and was exploited by the Spanish and English in limited quantities thereafter.
2.2 La Reconquista: Spanish Imperialism and the Colonization of Jamaica in the Sixteenth Century

Its existence on the periphery of the Spanish empire had an indelible impact on the settlement and land usage of colonial Jamaica. The Spanish Crown – which will be used as a stand-in for the monarchs who governed over the united kingdoms of Castile and Aragon during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries beginning with Isabel of Castile and Ferdinand of Aragon – did not invest substantial capital in its Caribbean territories. The Casa de Contratación governed trade by Spanish colonies in the New World and mandated that all commerce must be conducted with the port of Seville, where the Casa de Contratación was located, and using Spanish currency that was in short supply in territories like Jamaica. Spanish Jamaican colonists regularly complained that many years passed between the arrival of Spanish ships to the Jamaican ports.\(^\text{58}\) The routes of the New Spain fleet – by which all Spanish commerce and thousands of Spaniards entered the Americas each year – simply bypassed Jamaica altogether. In 1608, one such fleet carried 1,028 passengers bound for the New World and of this coterie only one person intended to visit Jamaica and only on their way to their ultimate destination of Tierra Firme.\(^\text{59}\) By the seventeenth century, the vecinos of Villa de la Vega (renamed St. Jago de la Vega by the English and known today as Spanish Town) relied entirely on subsistence agriculture, small-scale local production, and contraband. Each year more and more left the island for more lucrative colonies or to return to Spain.

\(^{58}\) Jamaican vecino Manuel del Río to the Casa de Contratación, 29 April 1585, ES.41091.AGI/25AGI, folder 177, branch 4, Records of the Audiencia de Santo Domingo, Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla, Spain. The Jamaican vecino, along with other vecinos and “tratantes” (traders), wrote to the Casa de Contratación begging for a yearly ship to be sent to Jamaican laden with goods from Europe. Del Ríö noted that while the vecinos of Spanish Jamaica could not purchase the entire load, even at the reduced price he hoped to negotiate, they could visit other Spanish Caribbean ports to sell their goods.

\(^{59}\) Passenger list on the Flota de la Nueva España, 27 January 1608, ES.41091.AGI, folder 5302, Records of the Casa de Contratación, Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla, Spain.
The union of Spanish kingdoms forged in the Reconquista quickly became dependent on the wealth extracted from the mines of Tierra Firme to repay the overwhelming debts accrued in European warfare. Ventures that did not require significant financing in the form of gold or silver, but promised unfathomable returns in the form of mineral wealth, were prioritized. Early modern maps of the Spanish Americas are imbued with this perspective; locations that offered sources of wealth were richly detailed. The detailed topographies of Nueva España – which includes present day Mexico, parts of Central America, and the southern United States –

[Figure 2.2] Luis de Velasco, *Mapa de la costa y parte de la provincia de Venezuela*, No Scale, March 7, 1590, Maps and Plans - Venezuela, Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla, MP-VENEZUELA,276.

61 Lincoln Paine, *The Sea and Civilization: A Maritime History of the World* (Vintage books, 2015), 394. The ships used in the initial voyages of Columbus were not commissioned by Isabel and Ferdinand but were rather acquired as a debt repayment by the town of Pulos de la Frontera, who paid for the caravels *Niña* and *Pinta*. The Santa Maria was rented from Galician Juan de la Cosa, who sailed with Columbus, while the rest of the venture was financed by ecclesiastical revenues fronted by the church, the security for which loan was Queen Isabel’s royal jewels.
contrasted with the relative featurelessness of Jamaica and other Caribbean colonies make these differences plain [Figure 2.2]. The maps of Tierra Firme – which included the lands that are today Colombia, Venezuela, and Guyana – emphasize the imperial prioritization of territories, such as the Amazon rainforest, the Andes Mountains, and the vast circulatory systems of rivers and waterways are recorded in exhaustive detail.62

The era of colonial Spanish Jamaica formally began when Juan de Esquivel declared conquest in 1509 under orders from Diego Columbus, heir to Christopher. Within a year, the Spanish constructed the first permanent settlement Sevilla la Nueva on the northern coast of the island alongside three indigenous villages in the vicinity of what today is St. Ann’s Bay [Figure 2.3].63 This began nearly a century and a half of genocidal exploitation by the Spanish as they parasitically grafted the various settlements that constituted the colony onto indigenous geographies and networks of subsistence.64 The Spanish understood land tenure and possession in semi-feudal terms, of which the encomienda labor system was part and parcel. Each semi-feudal lord of early sixteenth century Spanish Jamaica was apportioned groups of enslaved indigenous Jamaicans in the guise of Catholic salvation and exploited their labor either in cash crop fields on the island or in the mines of Tierra Firme. In this part feudal, part agrarian capitalist construct, land was not cleared and converted into plantations for the purposes of agro-industrial production; instead, the Spanish engaged in small-scale production of sugar, cassava, cattle, and pigs. Ships rarely visited Jamaica and any plantations or agricultural operations on the island were only intended to provide victuals to conquistadors in search of mineral riches on

64 Woodward, “Feudalism or Agrarian Capitalism?” 38.
Tierra Firme or small-scale export and sale in local Caribbean markets. A 1536 court case decided in favor of the Columbus estate further constrained investment into Jamaica, placing the island under the family’s absentee, oligarchic rule. The Audiencia of Santo Domingo and the Crown generally ignored affairs in Jamaica for the remainder of the sixteenth century.

Spanish-commissioned maps of Jamaica from the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are exceedingly rare and only eight remain, including maps of fortifications and harbors. Each of these maps were produced in the wake of English conquest and reflect an imperial preoccupation

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with maintaining possession of the island. The commissioned maps of island territories like Jamaica alongside concurrent pleas and reports to the Crown authored by vecinos of the colony demonstrate how the Spanish outlined dominion and how they perceived of and structured these peripheral colonial spaces. The segregation of living spaces around the administrative and ecclesiastical centers established means by which Spanish colonists could impose social hierarchies on the colonial space. In the case of Jamaica, Francisco Garay governed the colony from 1514-1523, during which time individual agricultural operations like sugar production operated on the organizing logic of agrarian capitalism, while colonial society itself retained rigid, hierarchical feudal characteristics of the medieval era. Enslaved indigenous and African populations grew, milled, and readied sugar for sale in Jamaica in this era, but the profits of all saleable production of the island belonged to Garay alone. The ability to structure colonial society and enforce a particular order within the contingent spaces of a claimed territory was fundamental to the exercise of colonial dominion. Garay did not commission any maps because he did not want to attract interest and the Crown had almost no investment in the island. In this way, the absence of mapping altogether is itself vested with meaning. The imperial process of mapping space possesses both tangible and rhetorical dimensions. The act of representing what Marisa Fuentes calls the “geographies of domination” outlined by the built environment of the colony was predicated on a specific concept of colonial hegemony that both informed the making of the map, while the production of the map also inherently shaped knowledge regarding these places and spaces.

The inclusion of specific natural resources or geographical features alongside the omission of others on imperial maps grew out of imperial priorities and preoccupations; Spanish cartographers constructed maps with a certain subjectivity as a natural extension of their royal commissions. The Spanish Crown and conquistadors were fixated on Tierra Firme and its mineral resources to the detriment of Caribbean colonial maps. Maps, as a reflection of imperial priorities, in turn influenced attitudes held by royals, religious factors, and administrators alike regarding these peripheral territories and thereby dissuaded interest and investment in places like Jamaica.

The featureless spaces depicted by Spanish maps of Jamaica emphasize what this work understands as liminal or contested spaces. These regions of the island remained unoccupied by Spanish settlement and were ignored by the colony. These liminal spaces were the product of indigenous geographies of resistance; the continued occupation and defense of these landscapes offered refuge to freed and enslaved runaways and afrodescendientes, those persons descended from African ancestors, just as it had offered the indigenous islanders who fled subjugation by the colonists. Blank spaces on maps therefore inadvertently demarcated where the Spanish were powerless and rival geographies of indigenous and Maroon Jamaica persisted and flourished. A thorough examination of these spaces alongside the colony and the disparate and incompatible social geographies of each offers remarkable insight into the exercise of dominion and the rationalization of hierarchy on the colonial frontier.

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73 J.B. Harley, “Silences and Secrecy: The Hidden Agenda of Cartography in Early Modern Europe,” *Imago Mundi* 40 (1988): 57-76. It is also important to note that at the time of British conquest of Jamaica, no empire had yet found a way to profitably exploit the islands of the Caribbean.
these divergent imperial geographies and approaches to the management of colonial territories and how did they independently interact with the persistent presence of indigenous geographies of resistance?

2.3 Mapping Spanish Jamaica

Spanish maps of the Americas prior to 1654-55 are scarce and at the time of their creation were of the utmost secrecy as a means of hoarding cartographic knowledge of the New World. In the sixteenth century, Jamaica was typically mapped as part of larger cartographic works that featured territories like Nueva España, Tierra Firme, and Florida. Jamaica, in comparison, was of little importance to the Spanish Empire and maps and atlases that included the island present a flat, featureless landscape with inconsistently named ports. The earliest official Spanish map of the New World is believed to have been the 1500 Planisferio de Juan de la Cosa [Figure 2.4]. It is the first attempt to cartographically depict the lands encountered by Columbus and the first representation of Jamaica as well. On this map, Jamaica appears as little more than a brown

[Figure 2.4] Juan de la Cosa, Planisferio de Juan de la Cosa, [map], 960 x 1830 mm, (Madrid: Naval Museum of Madrid, 1500).
smudge with the temporary names of ports listed. The Padrón Real was created in 1507 based on similar information gained through transatlantic voyages and includes very little topographical detail or placenames of the Americas. The Padrón Real was updated and reinterpreted several times before being renamed the Padrón General in 1527 and became the official map of the Spanish Empire. The Casa de Contratación governed the creation of the maps and would interrogate returning ship captains under oath to verify any new information about the Americas.

It was not until 1542 when an influential cosmographer of the Casa de Contratación named Alonso de Santa Cruz created a map of the islands of the Greater Antilles, the Islario General De Todas Las Islas Del Mundo, that the few settlements like Sevilla and Melilla and the
churches of Spanish Jamaica made an appearance [Figure 2.5]. Santa Cruz set out specifically to, “describe in maps something about all the parts of the world, putting in each province the cities, places, rivers, mountains, and other notable things. I will do the same for the West Indies, now rediscovered, and where I have been.” The Spanish cosmographer was also a contino, or attendant of the king, and resided part-time at the court. As such, he was given special dispensations by Charles V and tutored future King of Spain Philip II in the sciences. Given these connections to wealth and power, Santa Cruz was emboldened in his personal cartographical pursuits and became the singular cosmographical voice guiding the Spanish Empire by 1560. Less than a decade later, another cosmographer with the Casa de Contratación attempted a map of the world that again included the Americas and Jamaica. The Planisferio de Sancho Gutierrez was created in 1551 and is clearly influenced by the work of Santa Cruz and the famous navigator Sebastian Cabot. This map includes details that had not previously appeared on maps of Jamaica, including placenames that remain to this day, such as: Puerto de Anton (Port Antonio) on the northeastern coast, Punto de Morante (Morant Point) on the southeastern coast, and Punto de Negrillo (Negril Point) on the far western end of the island. Gutierrez also mapped some distinctive natural features of the island, like the many small cays laying off the coast, and provided locations for the original settlements Melilla, Sevilla, and Oristan Viejo. Despite the lack of topography, this early map of Jamaica would remain the most thorough map of the island for more than a century.

77 Alonso de Santa Cruz, Jamaica o Santiago, No Scale Given, in Islario General De Todas Las Islas Del Mundo, 1541, 641.
Later Spanish cartographical depictions of Jamaica contained fewer placenames and did not advance geographic knowledge of the island, at least in part because possession of the colony was awarded to the Columbus family in 1536. Juan Lopez de Velasco created a map of the Caribbean in 1575 that shows Jamaica as a featureless, but properly located, blob amidst the Spanish shipping routes between the Americas and Spain. Nicolás de Cardona spent twelve years exploring the Caribbean and the Atlantic and Pacific Coasts of Nueva España for pearl fisheries before creating his *Descripciones geográficas e hidrográficas de muchas tierras y mares del Norte y Sur en las Indias*, which he completed in 1632 [Figure 2.6]. This collection of maps of

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islands and territories in the Americas included a depiction and brief description of Jamaica. Cardona noted that there was a long river that emptied into a harbor that possessed a shipyard on the southeastern coast. Shortly after colonizing the island, Juan de Esquivel founded a port on the southern coast named “Puerto Esquivel” in what is today “Old Harbour,” into which the longest river in Jamaica, the Rio Minho, empties. Cardona also includes Punto del Negrillo, stating that it is “where the enemy hides.” Despite these accurate details of the harbors and coastline of the southside of the island, Cardona seems to have known little about the topography or inhabitants of the island beyond the location of the capital, which he incorrectly names “Ciudad de Xamaica.” The mapmaker roughly sketched some trees and a town in the interior, but nothing else.

Each of these Spanish maps were unpublished and available only to the Spanish Crown and the Casa de Contratación, who jealously guarded all cartographic information about their territories in the Americas. Maps were essential to imperial conquest and by restricting access to this knowledge the Spanish Empire protected its sources of wealth from rival powers and interlopers. The inherent biases of the Spanish Crown and the men who acted on its behalf over time – namely a fixation on precious mineral extraction – relegated the production of knowledge about island territories like Jamaica insignificant to their broader material goals. The very existence of some of these maps were unknown outside of the halls of the Casa de Contratación, like the *Planisferio de Juan de la Cosa* which was identified by a Dutch Ambassador visiting a

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Parisian bookshop in 1832. The embargo on Spanish maps of the Americas at a time when the Spanish Empire was amassing obscene wealth from its exploitation of conquered lands inadvertently created the conditions for a private European map trade to flourish. For Europeans, cartographical knowledge was power and by the end of the sixteenth century markets had arisen in bustling shipping hubs like London and Venice where private merchants side-stepped the monopoly of the Casa de Contratación to produce maps of the Americas that could be purchased by anyone with the capital to afford it.

In terms of private maps, in 1507 German cartographer Martin Waldseemüller published his *Universalis Cosmographia*, which was revolutionary in its representation of the Americas in a separate hemisphere but did not advance knowledge of Jamaica or neighboring islands. The Gerhard Mercator *Orbis Imago* of 1538 was novel in its use of “America” for both the northern and southern continents while saying little about the islands of the Greater Antilles. For the sixteenth century Spanish Empire, this meant an ever-expanding map of “discovered” lands to which they already laid claim, but geographical or topographical details about these territories were almost nonexistent. Islands did not capture the Spanish imaginary or inspire Conquistadors like the seemingly boundless lands and riches of the American continents. Once the Spanish Empire established possession of the coastlines of islands like Jamaica, investment was diverted elsewhere, leaving the territory unmapped but claimed by Spain.

In 1576, Italian writer and cartographer Thomaso Porcacchi published his *L’isole piu famose del mondo* (*The most famous island in the world*) in Venice. This map pioneered a copper engraving technique that allowed Porcacchi to depict the coastline and topography of Jamaica more accurately. *L’isole piu famose del mondo* included multiple mountain ranges, a lake, and several placenames across the island like Puerto Anton and Siviglia (Sevilla) on the northern coast and Punta del Negrillo at the westernmost tip of Jamaica amongst others that – while not always accurately located – did not appear on contemporary European maps [Figure 2.7].

Porcacchi’s map mistakenly situated the town of “Oristan” near the southern coast of the island

[Figure 2.7] Thomaso Porcacchi, *L’isole piu famose del mondo*, (Venice: Appresso Simon Galignani & Girolamo Porro, 1576), University of Virginia Library.
where the capital Villa de la Vega was established just decades prior and places “Guaigata” (later translated by the English as “Wagwater”) and “Anton” (Port Antonio) on the far eastern coast of the island due south of an island named “Melilla.” Although Melilla is believed to have been one of the original settlements of Spanish Jamaica, the only island lying off the northeastern coast of Jamaica is Navy Island, just off Port Antonio, which is just 64 acres and incapable of supporting a settlement. Despite these inaccuracies, the placenames and topographical details included by Porcacchi suggest that Spanish monopoly on cartographic knowledge of the Americas had been broken. *L’isole piu Famose del Mondo* remained the most comprehensive map of Jamaica available outside the confines of the Casa de Contratación until well into the seventeenth century.

The *Atlas Novus*, created by Jacobus Hondius and published in Amsterdam in 1641, contains the map of the Western Hemisphere *America Noviter Delineata*. This seventeenth century Dutch work includes Jamaica but is almost an exact replica of Porcacchi’s earlier work.\(^87\) It was not until the English invaded the island in 1655 that newer and more accurate maps of Jamaica were produced: the Spanish rushed to create maps in support of efforts to retain and then retake the island, while the English quickly set about surveying and mapping the island for settlement and plantation. Maps were tools through which Spain and England could wage inter-imperial warfare by creating and shaping knowledge of their conquests and possessions.

Exploitation of preexistent indigenous settlements, semi-agricultural crop fields, fisheries, and fresh water sources were essential to how the Spanish chose the locations of their colonial centers in Jamaica. The first permanent settlement, Sevilla la Nueva, was located nearby what is today Santa Gloria, in the proximity of three known indigenous villages and was built

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\(^{87}\) Jacobus Hondius, *America Noviter Delineata*, Scale: 1:40,000,000 (Amsterdam: Henrik Hondius and Jan Jansson, 1641), University of Washington Library.
within a year of Spanish conquest being formally declared. This began nearly a century and a
half of genocidal exploitation by the Spanish as they parasitically grafted the colonial settlements
onto indigenous geographies and networks. The Spanish saw land tenure and possession in semi-
feudal terms, of which the encomienda labor system was fundamental. As non-Catholics, the
indigenous were seen as heathens in the eyes of the allegedly devout Spanish Catholics and
indebted to the conquerors by nature of their conversion and salvation. By this rationale, the
indigenous owed service to the new masters of the island in the form of the encomienda. In the
part feudal, part agrarian capitalist construct of Spain at the turn of the sixteenth century, very
little land was cleared and converted into plantations or pastures for the purposes of agro-
industrial production. The island’s haciendas of this period were consolidated in the hands of a
select few oligarchs and the only other agricultural operations on the island were intended to
provide victuals to conquistadors in search of mineral riches on Tierra Firme, luxury goods for
Spanish aristocrats, or small-scale export and sale in local, Caribbean markets.88

In the long term, genocidal exploitation and abuse by the Spanish, famine as the result of
an unraveling of indigenous networks of exchange, and European diseases decimated the
indigenous population of Jamaica.89 Those few who remained after the sixteenth century worked
and lived on the periphery of the colony or engaged in Marronage.90 The reconfiguration of
Jamaica in this physical sense contributed to the decimation of indigenous life and gave shape to
Spanish dominion. Situating Sevilla la Nueva alongside major indigenous villages like Maima
underscores the hyperexploitative interests of the Spanish. Within a couple decades, however,
the Spanish recognized that Sevilla la Nueva was unsuitable for long-term occupation for

90 Robertson, Gone is the Ancient Glory, 20-23.
Europeans given its humid, swampy climate that served as a breeding ground for mosquitoes and tropical diseases. In 1519, Pedro Mazuelo, who was the colony’s treasurer at the time, requested permission from the Crown to construct a second site on the southern side of the island that would serve as an administrative center.

The Spanish Crown granted permission to resettle the capital in 1534. Mazuelo chose Villa de la Vega with geographic centrality in mind, given its situation on the banks of the Rio Cobre, which feeds into present-day Kingston Harbor. The site of Villa de la Vega also happened to be at the nexus of multiple pre-Columbian trans-island trading paths used by the indigenous.91 Much like Sevilla la Nueva, Villa de la Vega also neighbored a major indigenous settlement, which archaeological evidence suggests was one of the largest in Jamaica.92 The foundation, relocation, and subsequent expansion of Spanish colonial spaces were based upon proximity to readily exploitable resources. In the minds of the Spanish conquerors, this included the enslavement of the indigenous and the exploitation of their labor and forms of subsistence. Semi-agricultural fields, fishable coastlines, commodious harbors, navigable waterways, and indigenous villages were all targeted by the Spanish colonists in a parasitic process of hyper-exploitation of all that constituted indigenous life in Jamaica. Those who were not worked to death by the Spanish either in Jamaica or elsewhere in the Spanish Americas fled the encomienda and took refuge in the mountains of the island. This process of genocidal ethnic cleansing was formalized by the construction of Spanish buildings in pre-existent indigenous spaces, thereby rendering what had been indigenous geographies the domain of colonialism.

The diffuse and diverse collection of indigenous villages and settlements across the island [Figure 1.9] was soon replaced by a succession of semi-urban colonial spaces that served

91 Robertson, Gone is the Ancient Glory, 27-28.
92 Robertson, Gone is the Ancient Glory, 21.
administrative and local agro-economic functions, in contrast to any broader mercantilist interests.\textsuperscript{93} Based on the distribution of Redware found by archaeologists, there were significant indigenous settlements nearby what is today Savanna la Mar, Bluefields, and Old Harbour on the southeastern coast and St. Ann’s Bay on the northern coast. Bluefields is believed to be the former location of the Spanish settlement of Oristan, while Old Harbour was Puerto Esquivel and St. Ann’s Bay was the site of Sevilla la Nueva. Little changed in Spanish Jamaica over the course of the century following the foundation of Villa de la Vega. Despite numerous incursions by corsairs and privateers, the Spanish Jamaican colonists built little in the way of fortifications and on several occasions Villa de la Vega was either overtaken or held ransom.\textsuperscript{94}

\textsuperscript{93} Carla Gardina Pestana, \textit{The English Conquest of Jamaica: Oliver Cromwell’s Bid for Empire} (Harvard University Press, 2017), 221.

\textsuperscript{94} Padrón, \textit{Spanish Jamaica}, 145-146.
Unlike Sevilla la Nueva, the inland location of Villa de la Vega conformed to the Royal Laws of the Indies, which were born of Spanish encounters with Barbary pirates in the vastly different context of the Mediterranean but nevertheless enforced in the New World. For this reason, the Spanish constructed the new colonial center with intra-island administrative functionality, rather than with inter-island commerce or military strategy, in mind. This further constrained the economic potential of Jamaica and left settlement and the functions of the colony itself to the very few with the capital and desire to invest. Meanwhile, Spanish Jamaican colonial oligarchs, especially the Columbus descendants, concerned themselves only with the few small-scale sugar estates on the island.95 The Spanish Crown and the colonial administration were so unconcerned with the colony that Spanish maps of Jamaica even as late as 1656, despite having

95 Robertson, Gone is the Ancient Glory, 24.
been a Spanish possession for more than a century, fail to portray with any real detail or accuracy
the topography or natural landscape of the island, or even the location of the colonial capital, in
stark contrast to maps of territories Nueva España [Figure 2.9].

2.4 Spanish Jamaican Realities

Piratical raids became a regular feature of life in Spanish Jamaica toward the end of the
sixteenth century.\(^{96}\) English corsairs were a particular nuisance to Spanish colonists, but the
danger they posed was material rather than mortal; plunder was the objective, not conquest. The
vecinos (residents) of the capital wrote the Real Audiencia often decrying the situation of the
colony and begging for support. “Take charge of bringing…one hundred and thirty laborers with
their wives and children,” one vecino wrote in 1585, “which is the most important thing for what
concerns the said city (Villa de la Vega) of this island (which) is in great danger from
corsairs…”\(^{97}\) The author reported that his own wife and child were leaving the island and that
there were undeveloped copper mines that he was left in charge of that he did not know how to
exploit.\(^{98}\) This desperate plea emphasizes how little concern the Casa de Contratación and the
Crown had for Jamaica. It also highlights a telling facet of Spanish Jamaican colonization by the
end of the sixteenth century: the vecinos of this era were not specialized or experienced in
colonial management, mining, agriculture, or anything that might have facilitated exploitation of
the natural resources of the island, nor were there regular regiments of soldiers to defend it. The

\(^{96}\) Don Fernando Melgarejo de Cordova, “The Spanish Version of Sir Anthony Shirley’s Raid of Jamaica, 1597,”

\(^{97}\) Vecino Pedro Lope Laso de la Vega to the Audiencia de Santo Domingo, 28 May 1585, ES.41091.AGI/25AGI,
folder 177, branch 4, Records of the Audiencia de Santo Domingo, Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla, Spain.

\(^{98}\) In 1598, Governor Melgarejo de Córdova sent samples of copper to the Governor of Cartagena to determine
whether it should be mined. No location was provided for these mines, and nothing came of this research.
vecinos of the colony were often distant relatives of minor nobles and conquistadors who sought the power and riches generations prior had attained in the New World.\textsuperscript{99}

Spanish Jamaican colonists were ill-suited and poorly armed for life in the Greater Antilles or in defense of the colony, but the faults were not all their own. The Casa de Contratación and the Audiencia de Santo Domingo were both abundantly aware of the material challenges confronting the vecinos and moradores (dwellers or commoners) and offered little assistance. Despite repeated pleas for yearly trading vessels to supply the Jamaican market, ships arrived inconsistently and sometimes years apart, and fortifications fell into disrepair from time and use. By the turn of the seventeenth century, Spanish Jamaica had become a regular target of pirates operating in the Caribbean. These pirates, often of English origin, would land on the southern coast and pillage the dilapidated fortifications and houses on their path to the capital. The colonial population, knowing the pirates would not pursue them and would instead hold the town for ransom, fled inland upon their arrival rather than engaging the invading force. The Spanish retreated to the woods beyond Villa de la Vega and waited to pay the pirates to vacate the island. However, things did not always go so smoothly.

English Privateer Sir Anthony Shirley landed troops on the southern coast of Jamaica in early 1597. The Spanish colonists fled, leaving behind their homes, churches, and any valuables they could not convey into the woods. In their advance on the capital, Shirley’s raiding party was frustrated by what they found: a derelict Spanish plaza lined with residences and containing little more than a church and a butcher shop. These buildings had been stripped of anything of material value before the vecinos retreated, leaving Shirley’s forces with nothing to plunder. Enraged, the English set off into the woods in search of the colony’s governor and abbot, who

\textsuperscript{99} Vázquez de Espinosa, \textit{Compendio y descripción de las Indias occidentales}, 108-111.
shared authority over any ransom negotiations.\textsuperscript{100} The Spanish abbot Don Francisco Marques e Villalobos eventually took refuge at a place named El Cayo de la Legua, while the governor Francisco de Nabeda Albarado parlayed with the English in hopes of preventing any further destruction. After brief negotiations, Albarado traveled to Marques e Villalobos and presented the head Catholic figure of the colony with the English demands: 1,000 arrobas (Spanish unit of measure roughly equivalent to 25 pounds) of meat and four hundred loads of cassava.\textsuperscript{101} The governor sought the spiritual wisdom of the abbot as to whether fulfilling the ransom demands violated their sacred covenant as Spanish Catholics. The abbot determined that they must deny the English corsair, but not simply because of their duty to the Church: the colony did not possess the requisite supply of either item. Infuriated at this denial, Shirley and his men laid waste to Villa de la Vega and set off into the woods to search for the abbot. The raiding party scoured the woods in vain before encountering an indigenous man named Pedro who willingly offered his assistance in locating the Spaniards. Along the way, the English met another indigenous man who also provided guidance. The motivations of these indigenous Jamaicans can only be surmised, but these individuals were well-acquainted with Spanish colonialism and the reign of terror enacted through the encomienda; a transition to English rule could not have been worse for those enslaved and exploited by the oligarchs of Spanish Jamaica.

Led by these two men, Shirley quickly located the abbot at Cayo de la Legua, who fled at a moment’s notice. The English looted this camp, giving the abbot time to make his way to the nearby plantation Maimon, which the raiding party again found with ease thanks to their guides. At this point, the secular Spanish authorities stepped in and relented to the English demands to the extent that they could. Shirley and his men soon departed, leaving a path of destruction in

their wake. Sir William Jackson attacked the Spanish Jamaican capital of Villa de la Vega again in 1642, emulating the audacious example of the infamous Sir Francis Drake. Jackson gathered nearly one thousand buccaneer recruits in St. Kitts and Barbados for the raid, landing five hundred to advance on the capital. A sizeable contingent of vecinos resisted initially, killing 40 Englishmen in the process before being overrun.102 Before taking the colonial capital, Jackson reported an encounter with Africans enslaved by the Spanish who informed him of their desire to “change their old masters.”103 Jamaica was ultimately ransomed for 200 cattle, 10,000 pounds of cassava bread, and 17,000 pieces of eight, leaving the island in an even more destitute state. In both instances of pillaging by English corsairs, the majority of the vecinos of St. Jago de la Vega fled with the belongings they could carry rather than risk their lives in a battle they were doomed to lose.104 They sought the safety of the woods and Jamaica’s interior, hoping that their superior knowledge of the densely wooded, mountainous interior would protect them from the marauding Englishmen, because the Spanish Crown surely would not aid them in their defense. In this way, they mirrored what some of the indigenous had done when they ran away to the mountains of Jamaica once Spanish conquest formally began. Knowledge of Jamaica’s geography is therefore essential to understanding resistance on the island against any external, overwhelming force.

Adherence to the Royal Laws of the Indies, along with absentee ownership by the Columbus heirs until the end of the sixteenth century and a general lack of investiture in the colonial infrastructure overall, constrained Spanish dominion and the ability to exercise authority in Jamaica to the immediate vicinities of original capital Sevilla la Nueva and the relocated capital at Villa de la Vega. Long before the arrival of the conquering forces under William Penn

104 Padrón, *Spanish Jamaica*, 146.
and Robert Venables in 1655, the Casa de Contratación and the Audiencia of Santo Domingo had proven themselves unwilling to intervene in matters of governance, the economy, or the military defenses of Jamaica. An appeal from Diego Aceves de Tapia in 1586, who had married the granddaughter of a conquistador and was a minor noble, underscores the desperation of vecinos in Spanish Jamaica: “I have served His Majesty on occasions of war with my person, arms, horses and servants and at my expense…(for) more than sixteen years…(in) the said island of Jamaica…I suffer greatly and my wife and my children…we cannot support ourselves.”

There was no denying that, even for the wealthiest and most connected of vecinos, life in Spanish Jamaica by the turn of the seventeenth century had become untenable. The colony was reduced to a single settlement, leaving much of the island without any discernible Spanish presence. In the vacuums of authority across the island – meaning those spaces within Spanish Jamaican jurisdiction that maps did not define – enslaved, free, and Maroon communities formed by the indigenous and *afrodescendientes* articulated social forms and subsistence pathways that relied upon traditional communalism.

Very early in the conquest of Jamaica, some indigenous caciques openly resisted and entire communities fled enslavement. Rebels retreated and fortified themselves in the mountainous and seemingly impassable spaces of the island interior. When the Spanish began killing the caciques of Jamaica, many indigenous Jamaicans submitted in despair, while others

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105 Hundreds of pleas were sent by vecinos, abbots, and administrators of Spanish Jamaica to the Audiencia de Santo Domingo, the Real Cedula, Casa de Contratación, and the Crown – all of which are now held in the Archivo General de Indias in Sevilla – throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries detailing the deplorable state of the colony and the many disasters that had befallen them. These documents were rarely, if ever, responded to with any kind of material support and the island remained largely without the forts and weaponry necessary to defend the island against invasion and many necessary repairs were never made. See: Audiencia de Santo Domingo, Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla, Spain, legajo 177.

106 Diego Aceves de Tapia to the Audiencia of Santo Domingo, 10 July 1586, ES.41091.AGI/25AGI, folder 177, branch 4, Records of the Audiencia de Santo Domingo, Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla, Spain.
remained in the mountains long after. Decades later, small communities of enslaved and freed African and afrodescendiente men and women who had been imported to supplement the dwindling indigenous population took root on the physical periphery of the colony’s capital and were an essential laboring force for the vecinos of the island. These populations existed in a liminal space in which they had attained legal freedom, but nevertheless lived at the discretion of the colony. In 1596, Governor Fernando de Melgarejo created a formal company of troops that included the indigenous and afrodescendientes, while in December of 1597 vecinos refused a call from Governor Fernando de Melgarejo to create a settlement for the remaining indigenous on the island, arguing that it would have left the hatos without laborers. In 1601, Governor Melgarejo wrote that he had commissioned an expedition – supposedly paid for with his own funds – into the Blue Mountains to subdue and enslave indigenous rebels. Nothing ever came of the slaving expedition and the rebels ostensibly continued to live in isolation in the mountains. The Spanish themselves regularly made use of the woods and interior of the island as refuge from piracy. The legacy of this space left unsettled and unrectified by the Spanish offered a landscape devoid of colonial settlement in which subjugated communities maintained and outlined rival geographies of freedom.

Under the aegis of Spanish colonialism, runaways who engaged in resistance through the process we now understand as Marronage removed themselves entirely from the limited – both in scale and size – system of hatos, sugar plantations, provision fields, and ports that constituted the entirety of the food pathways and commerce of that era. Simply put, there was ample space and cause for indigenous peoples to distance themselves from the colony and engage in

107 Padrón, Spanish Jamaica, 152-153.
108 Padrón, Spanish Jamaica, 129, 156-157; Frank Cundall and Joseph Luckert Pietersz, Jamaica under the Spaniards, Abstracted from the Archives of Seville (Kingston: Jamaica, Institute of Jamaica, 1919), 22.
109 Padrón, Spanish Jamaica, 152-153.
subsistence. We know this because of the repeated piratical raids of Villa de la Vega, which by the seventeenth century was the only remaining occupied Spanish settlement, which were always conducted to reap cassava and meat rather than material goods. The few riches to be had were personal trinkets and the colonists possessed almost no ability to defend themselves from attack.\textsuperscript{110} Given that the indigenous had no use whatsoever for personal valuables of the vecinos – value here is entirely dependent on the Western, European capitalist notion – and the Spanish had almost nothing in the way of tools or goods that would have benefited life in Marronage (the Spanish were entirely dependent on indigenous food pathways and agriculture), the decision to retreat to the Blue Mountains and live a life of subsistence in solitude was rational and based on the material realities of Jamaica.

What can only be glimpsed through archival and oral histories was the confluence of runaways, both African and indigenous, in the mountainous interior of Jamaica prior to the arrival of the English. We can, however, be sure that such kinship bonds were formed in this period based on mitochondrial DNA research conducted on Accompong Maroons that proves their indigenous lineage.\textsuperscript{111} Long before the English invaded and forced the inhabitants of Spanish Jamaica to flee, the forebearers of populations that we came to know as the Jamaican Maroons articulated the ecologies and rival geographies of resistance that became fundamental to their prolonged opposition to either European occupier. However, the full lineage that contributed to what we know of today as Jamaican Marronage is incomplete without incorporating the traditions of the West African populations that were enslaved and transported across the Atlantic to Jamaica.

\textsuperscript{110} These piratical raids were met with no armed resistance, the Spanish instead repeatedly fled and waited out the pirates.
\textsuperscript{111} Madrilejo, Lombard, and Benn Torres, “Origins of Marronage,” 432-437.
Both the form and function of Spanish colonization of Jamaica were determined by imperial standards established during the *Reconquista* (reconquest of Spain from Moorish rule that preceded the voyages of Columbus). The encomienda system was enacted as a means of extracting labor from Muslims occupying reconquered territories, the physical shape and location of the colonial capital were based on settlement experiences in the Mediterranean, and the social and political hierarchies were imported from Spain and adapted to the Americas. Capital investment and colonial authority were concentrated in centralized, urban capitals surrounded by vast, undeveloped, and essentially unincorporated forests, mountains, and valleys. According to one of the final maps commissioned by the Spanish during the last year of its possession of Jamaica, the mapmaker still errantly positioned Villa de la Vega as the geographic center of the island. These places possessed no utility for a Spanish empire hellbent on extracting every bit of gold, silver, and other precious metals from every possible vein the Americas offered. Jamaica simply did not present the kind of opportunity sought by the Crown. Maps yet again offer remarkable utility as insights into imperial perceptions, such that the cartographic oversights highlight the relative unimportance of Jamaica in comparison to the mainland or even to nearby Cuba and Hispaniola.

Spanish imperial strategies related to the rectification and definition of space became more unmistakable after conquest of the island by the English, who made it a foremost priority to establish coastal fortifications for protection against piratical attacks or invasion, pacify hostile

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112 Robertson, *Gone is the Ancient Glory*, 21.
elements within the island, and to develop the agricultural and commercial infrastructures. The proliferation of commissioned maps of the Americas across the sixteenth- and seventeenth-centuries, which emphasize sites possessing vast mineral wealth, like Potosí, or those that were the targets of large scale imperial conquest, like Perú, neither of which describe Jamaica, underscores the Spanish preoccupation with *Tierra Firme*. In turn, the realities represented by these maps demonstrate the historical process by which the Spanish Empire unwittingly fostered the liminal spaces in which Marronage flourished. The Spanish colonies of the Caribbean in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries were frontier zones of interaction under constant threat of invasion from without and reprisal from within. In the borderlands of Empire, the colonial agents of the Crown engaged in ongoing processes of negotiation with rival empires, native and Maroon populations, and the realities of the American landscape. Commissioned surveys and maps of the colonial territories recorded and standardized subjective and momentary perceptions of the New World. Setting these maps in contrast to those commissioned within the initial fifty years post-English conquest emphasizes the dissonance between these rival imperial approaches to incorporating and managing the same places and spaces. This juxtaposition alongside a deeper analysis of the maps and surveys of Jamaica produced under English colonialism provide a blueprint for the evolving geographies of resistance inherited by the island’s Maroons.

114 Despite these intentions, however, it would take until the turn of the eighteenth century for the English to realize these measures.
115 Willem Blaeu, *Americae Nova Tabula* (Amsterdam, 1665), David Rumsey Historical Map Collection.
3 MAKING JAMAICA ENGLISH – FROM CONQUEST TO COLONIAL FOUNDATIONS

In the heat of the mid-afternoon on May 9, 1655, two fishermen hunting the coastal waters of Jamaica for turtles spotted a fleet of ships rounding Morant Point on the eastern end of the island. Without delay, the pair set off in their canoes to warn the population of Santiago de la Vega (St. Jago de la Vega). Spanish reconnaissance quickly identified the ships as English as they entered Caguaya Bay and dropped anchor. After a brief volley from a Spanish battery on the shore, the detachment of Spaniards fled inland and allowed the English soldiers to make landfall unopposed. Soon thereafter, the vecinos and moradores of Villa de la Vega, the capital of the colony, abandoned their homes, stores, and ecclesiastical buildings, taking with them only what they could carry. From the woods on the outskirts of the capital, the Spanish colonists offered a truce to the English, mistaking the intentions of the invading force based on their prior interactions with privateers like William Jackson and Anthony Shirley. It quickly became clear that the invaders, under the fraught leadership of Robert Venables and William Penn, had no intention of merely plundering and moving on from Jamaica; they intended to take the island and make it English by force.

Escape from the English invasion necessitated a treacherous hike through the unsettled, nearly impassable mountainous interior to reach the northern coast for rescue. The Spanish vecinos, moradores, and free and enslaved Africans and indigenous people of Jamaica took to these spaces beyond the geographies of Spanish colonialism to use the protection afforded by the

118 Vecinos were typically wealthier, better-connected residents of Spanish Jamaica who held influence in local colonial politics. Although they were more often born on the Iberian Peninsula, some lived their entire lives in Jamaica and a minority of vecinos were “creoles” of mixed ancestry. The moradores were commoners, almost exclusively “creoles,” and did not possess land or property.
natural landscape against the English invaders. A strategic retreat into the mountainous interior of the island was precisely what the indigenous people had done when the Spanish invaded in the early sixteenth century and what the colonists had done for decades prior when under assault from privateers.\textsuperscript{119} Meanwhile, the beleaguered and exhausted English troops, still reeling from their unsuccessful attempt to conquer Santo Domingo, swept into the capital of Villa de la Vega and secured it without firing a single shot and raided what little remained after the inhabitants fled. For decades prior, the vecinos of Spanish Jamaica warned the Crown and colonial administration of the threat of English conquest and for decades the Spanish Crown refused to take decisive action. The arrival of the English and the Western Design had begun what the vecinos of the Spanish colony long feared: the loss of Jamaica to a European rival.\textsuperscript{120}

3.1 Sowing the Seeds of Conquest: England in the Seventeenth Century

The period between the late sixteenth and mid-seventeenth century was a time of tremendous, but gradual, change in English society. The Tudor regents of this era presided over a series of parallel political and religious “reformations” that severed ties with Catholic Rome, birthed the bureaucratic state, and reshaped the very nature of English religiosity – all to varying degrees across time and space.\textsuperscript{121} These changes were the product of collaborations between the Tudor state and the subjects it governed. At the same time, the English economy was also being transformed by far more top-down processes like the enclosure movement, disafforestation,

\textsuperscript{119} Padrón, Spanish Jamaica, 152.
\textsuperscript{120} David J. Weber, The Spanish Frontier in North America (Yale University Press, 1992), 11.
cutbacks in royal households, and the growing power of new merchants in London.\textsuperscript{122} These concurrent transformations led to the creation of a landless, “masterless,” and thereby transient class of impoverished laborers and the creation of stark cultural divisions. This displaced population migrated in large numbers to London, where men sought work in clothmaking and metalworking, or later in soldiering as part of the New Model Army created in the 1640s.\textsuperscript{123} England enjoyed dominance over the textile trade in northern Europe throughout the sixteenth century thanks to the power of the Merchant Adventurers in London, but the emergence of “new merchants” at the end of the century began to transform the English economy. These new merchants of London established the Levant Company in 1592 and the East India Company in 1600, which were focused on imports from the Ottoman Empire, India, and the islands of Southeast Asia. By the 1640s, this rising class of new merchants constituted the core of London’s merchant leadership.\textsuperscript{124}

The Merchant Adventurers brought about their own demise with their rejection of overseas trade and thereby left the exploitation of the Americas and Asia to the new merchants. The transformation of the English economy augmented the political power of these newcomers, like the merchants of the Levant and East India Companies, as the Crown became increasingly reliant on taxes on trade to finance the monarchy. For their part, the new merchants depended on royal licenses for their monopolies. Despite the general working relationship between Crown and

\textsuperscript{122} Christopher Hill, \textit{The World Turned Upside Down: Radical Ideas During the English Revolution}, (New York: Viking Press, 1972). The enclosure movement saw the conversion of common lands into enclosed manorial lands, which uprooted local populations and traditional cultures from their sites of subsistence and economic security. These properties were then often converted into pastures for sheep and cattle, while the uprooted local populace was forced to adapt or depart to find work elsewhere. Disafforestation was part and parcel of the enclosure movement, whereby the legal status of royal forests was changed to allow for its private sale.

\textsuperscript{123} Lien Bich Luu, \textit{Immigrants and the Industries of London, 1500-1700}, (Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2016), 34. During the period of 1550-1650 the population of London increased from an estimated 80,000 to 350,000 residents.

merchants, however, there were tense periods of opposition to King Charles I in the early
seventeenth century, during which period he ruled without calling or consulting Parliament.\textsuperscript{125}

During the 1630s, some prominent new merchants rapidly developed sugar plantations in
Caribbean colonies. In response to the 1641 Spanish conquest of Providence Island, new
merchants in league with the 2\textsuperscript{nd} Earl of Warwick, Robert Rich – who was a major factor in the
colonization project off the coast of Tierra Firme – commissioned Captain William Jackson to
raid a series of Spanish colonies in the Caribbean between 1642-1645, including Jamaica.\textsuperscript{126} This
connection to Jamaica later proved influential when a close acquaintance of the Earl of Warwick,
Oliver Cromwell, rose through the ranks to lead the New Model Army.

Tensions between King Charles I and the English Parliament, which featured prominent
Puritan voices like John Pym, continued to build into the 1640s. The king further enraged his
religious opposition with the appointment of William Laud as Archbishop of Canterbury, who
reintroduced some of the more ceremonial aspects of Christianity that had been associated with
Catholicism in England.\textsuperscript{127} His gravest transgression, however, came in 1637 when – to enforce
liturgical uniformity – he instituted the Book of Common Prayer throughout all of Britain.\textsuperscript{128} The
majority Presbyterian Scottish revolted and in February of 1638 drafted the National Covenant,
which banned the book and expelled the bishops who were seen as extensions of royal authority.

\textsuperscript{125} Brenner, Merchants and Revolution, xii.
\textsuperscript{126} Brenner, Merchants and Revolution, 410.
\textsuperscript{127} See, for instance: David Cressy, England on Edge: Crisis and Revolution, 1640-1642, (Oxford: Oxford
Row, 1972); Peter Lake, The Boxmaker’s Revenge: ‘Orthodoxy,’ ‘Heterodoxy,’ and the Politics of the Parish in
Early Stuart London (Manchester University Press, 2001); Anthony Milton, Catholic and Reformed: The Roman
\textsuperscript{128} By this time, the Book of Common Prayer had already been established in England for decades.
This necessitated a response by King Charles I against those who signed the document, known as Covenanters, and led to the Bishops’ Wars of 1639-1640.\textsuperscript{129}

Portions of the English population, especially Puritans, likewise resented the Laudian religious reforms and provided material support to the Scottish. When Charles I realized that he could not fund the English war effort through royal authority, he reluctantly called the Short Parliament with Pym, who had served as treasurer of the Providence Island Company from 1630-1639, leading the radical Puritan opposition. The failure of the English forces in the Bishops’ Wars was compounded by the obstinate refusal of Parliament to provide the funding requested by Charles I. Tensions between the Puritan opposition led by Pym and others later manifested as concrete demands in the text of the Great Remonstrance in 1641. This document outlined a host of parliamentary prerogatives and detailed plans for an anti-Spanish campaign of conquest in the Caribbean.\textsuperscript{130} When Charles I attempted to have Pym and four additional members of Parliament arrested in January 1642, it ignited the events known as The English Civil War.

Parliamentarian forces created a standing army in 1645 to buttress the flagging war effort.\textsuperscript{131} The New Model Army was born out of three smaller armies led by veteran Puritan officers who had risen through the ranks in the three years of preceding warfare and imbued their command with a certain religious zeal, including General Oliver Cromwell. The common soldiery was drawn from the transient population that had been displaced over the preceding decades by the enclosure movement, disafforestation, and the reduction in households. This meant that much of the officer class of the New Model Army were zealous Puritans who opposed the religious leanings of King Charles I and supported a constitutional monarchy, while the

\textsuperscript{129} Mark Fissel, \textit{The Bishops’ Wars: Charles I’s Campaigns Against Scotland, 1638-1640}, (Cambridge University Press, 1994).
\textsuperscript{130} Brenner, \textit{Merchants and Revolution}, 357-359, 410.
\textsuperscript{131} Ian Gentles, \textit{The New Model Army: Agent of Revolution}, (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2022), 4-17.
soldiers themselves tended to hold far more radical political views.\textsuperscript{132} Initial hostilities ended in 1646 when the king surrendered, but a second wave of fighting initiated by royalists in 1648 led to calls from the more radical wing of the New Model Army, as well as revolutionaries who hoped to institute sweeping changes to the constitution, to execute Charles I.\textsuperscript{133} The execution of King Charles I in 1649 upturned English society, if only for a brief period, and parliamentarians quickly declared England a Commonwealth.\textsuperscript{134}

The Rump Parliament governed England between 1649-1653, during which time Oliver Cromwell as head of the New Model Army conquered Ireland and Scotland.\textsuperscript{135} In 1653, Cromwell forcibly dissolved parliament and was named Lord Protector of England. A devout Puritan, Cromwell was vehemently opposed to Catholic Spain and anything even tangentially “papist” in nature. His connections to the Providence Island Company and other Puritan colonies in the Americas, the intentions outlined by parliamentarians in The Grand Remonstrance, and the new merchant power in London propelled the English to action against the Spanish in the Americas. In 1654, following a four-year build-up in naval forces, Lord Protector Oliver Cromwell launched an audacious plan to conquer Spanish territories in the Caribbean known as the Western Design.\textsuperscript{136}

\textsuperscript{132} Rachel Foxley, \textit{The Levellers: Radical Political Thought in the English Revolution}, (Manchester University Press, 2016), 157-162. These political leanings changed over time and radicalism waxed and waned.


\textsuperscript{136} Pestana, \textit{The English Conquest of Jamaica: Oliver Cromwell’s Bid for Empire}, 6. The republic under the Rump Parliament and the Protectorate built as many ships in four year that the monarchy had in the preceding 50 years.
3.2 The Western Design: Making Jamaica English

Under the Western Design, the English intended to capture Hispaniola, Cartagena, or Cuba, the latter two of which were vital nodes of the Spanish flota routes. Hispaniola, the chosen target, was fundamental to Spanish imperial governance over its many colonies in the New World and was both the political and ecclesiastical seat of power in the Spanish Americas. Cromwell’s closest advisors, like the Anglican-converted priest Thomas Gage who in 1648 authored, sensationalized, and plagiarized tales of his journeys as a priest throughout the Spanish Americas in *A New Survey of the West India’s: Or, The English American his Travail by Sea and Land*, were keenly familiar with the many successes of privateers from previous decades. Raids of Jamaica and other Spanish Caribbean territories by Francis Drake, Anthony Shirley, and William Jackson – who was commissioned for his raids and outfitted by prominent new merchants involved in the Providence Island Company from 1638-1641 and 1642-1645 – provided ample evidence that the Spanish territories were ripe for the taking. The Western Design satisfied the long-held desire for retribution for those involved with Providence Island and was a firm rebuke of the power of the Catholic Church.

The Western Design fleet consisted of 38 vessels and launched from Portsmouth on orders from admiralty commissioner and general-at-sea John Disbrowe (or Desborough) on December 25, 1654, carrying an estimated 2,500 troops, only about 1,000 of which were trained.

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137 Herman Moll, *A Map of the West-Indies or the Islands of America in the North Sea*, Scale: 1:1,800,000 (London: Thomas and John Bowles, 1720).

138 Ponce Vázquez, *Islanders and Empire: Smuggling and Political Defiance in Hispaniola, 1580–1690*.


soldiers. The fleet sailed under the command of William Penn and Robert Venables, the latter who earned Cromwell’s respect as a commander during the conquest of Ireland, while the troops were divided into five regiments under five commanders that ultimately answered to Venables. The Western Design was fraught from the outset, in part because of its confusing leadership structure and a woeful lack of food and water for troops. Despite being the first state-backed, launched, financed, and managed attempt to strike at the core of the Spanish Americas, these structural and material failures doomed the campaign to take Santo Domingo.

Issues with the invasion of Santo Domingo included the landing of soldiers miles away from the intended location, fierce resistance from Maroons, and clumsy and ineffective advances on the colony’s defenses combined to undermine the invading force, leaving them defeated and exhausted. Venables later related his frustrations with the Western Design in The Narrative of General Venables in which he defended his actions as commander of the land forces and emphasized the restrictions of the chosen landing spot along with a lack of food and supplies for the troops. Major Robert Sedgwick, who arrived at Santo Domingo with reinforcements shortly after the forces had fled, blamed the defeat on divine wrath and God’s indisputable disapproval of the campaign. In truth, blame for the failure of the Western Design can be shared by all who planned, organized, oversaw, and carried out the project, from Cromwell and Disbrowe to William Penn, Venables, the field commanders, and the soldiers who routinely fled upon engagement with the Spanish. Cromwell, Disbrowe, and other prominent Puritan supporters of the Western Design believed that divine provenance was on the side of the English

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144 Robert Venables, The narrative of General Venables, with an appendix of papers relating to the expedition to the West Indies and the conquest of Jamaica, 1654-1655, ed. C.H. Firth, (London: Longman, Green, and Co., 1900), 81-82. “Myself and Officers voted the River Hine, from which place, unless beat off, we resolv’d not to go, as the Votes yet extant will declare, but our Guide brought us elsewhere, which was not my fault, that part of the service belonging to the Seamen over whom I had no command.”
and would see their forces to victory over the Catholic Spaniards. Penn, Venables, and the commanders disembarked their troops ill-equipped and failed to maintain discipline. During their exhausting 25-mile march from the point of disembarkation to the city of Santo Domingo, the English troops were routed repeatedly by the Spanish, enslaved Africans, and the Maroons of Hispaniola. By the time Venables and the other commanders determined to return to the ships, an estimated 1,000 English troops had been lost. 

The English left Santo Domingo defeated, exhausted, and disillusioned. The Western Design was a failure and Penn and Venables had two options: they could return to England with their tails between their legs and beg forgiveness or they could attempt to salvage the campaign by setting their sights elsewhere in the Spanish Americas. They chose the latter. The closest colonies were Cuba and Jamaica, two very different propositions: Cuba was well-fortified since it was a major entrepot on the Spanish flota routes, whereas Jamaica possessed almost no fortifications and had been successfully raided and captured by William Jackson just the decade prior. In short order Penn and Venables decided to invade Jamaica. 

By the 1650s Spanish Jamaica was a colony with only one town, sparse agricultural fields, and hatos restricted to the southern coastline and plains only miles inland. These sites were colonized because the indigenous had, for hundreds of years prior, made use of these same locations for their own exploitation of the island’s natural resources. However, while the indigenous may have sown conucos and hunted mammals for subsistence, the Spanish grew crops like sugar and coffee on the haciendas of oligarchs for luxury consumption in Spain and

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146 Padrón, Spanish Jamaica, 160.
introduced herds of cattle and hogs that transformed the natural landscape.\textsuperscript{147} Both the indigenous and Spanish colonial populations relied on native plants like cassava to survive, but the Spaniards brought with them a system of labor and land tenure that mimicked the process of re-feudalism applied by Spanish aristocrats in reconquered Moorish territories in the Iberian Peninsula.\textsuperscript{148} The repartimiento, encomienda, and the ecclesiastical structures borne out of the Reconquista left permanent marks on Jamaica that, rather than being destroyed, were the very foundation for English colonization.\textsuperscript{149}

Indigenous geographies based on patterns of settlement, exchange, and subsistence were coopted by the Spanish for the benefit of oligarchs, which laid the groundwork for an English

\begin{figure}[h!]
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\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{fig3.png}
\caption{Edmund Hickeringill, \textit{Jamaica Viewed}, No Scale, (London: John Williams, 1661).}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{147} Padrón, \textit{Spanish Jamaica}, 157-168.
\textsuperscript{148} Robyn P. Woodward, “Medieval Legacies: The Industrial Archaeology of an Early Sixteenth-Century Sugar Mill at Sevilla la Nueva, Jamaica” (Ph.D. diss., Simon Fraser University, 2006).
\textsuperscript{149} For more information on the architectural foundations of Spanish Town – formerly St. Jago de la Vega – see: James Robertson, \textit{Gone is the Ancient Glory: Spanish Town, Jamaica, 1554-2000}, or James Robertson, “Jamaican Architectures Before Georgian,” \textit{Winterthur Portfolio} 36, no. 2/3 (July 2001): 73–95.
colony founded by Puritans and private capital and developed on the logics of land enclosure and mercantilism. Each step in this historical process shaped Jamaica for exploitation based on an imperialist cultural understanding of the relationship between the individual, society, and the natural environment. Edmund Hickeringill created *Jamaica Viewed* in 1661 as the first attempt to map the island since the English invasion arrived in 1655 [Figure 3.1]. Hickeringill did not attempt to depict topography, but his exhaustive detailing of the coastlines demonstrates an advancement in mapping techniques from earlier Spanish cartography.

Indigenous approaches to land tenure came to represent an alternative model to the imported hyperexploitative methods of the Spanish and English. The indigenous Jamaicans and the Maroons first confronted the part-feudal and part-mercantilist Spanish colonial system dominated by the interests of a few oligarchs and then later English mercantilism brought by the Western Design. However, the “rival geographies” articulated by Maroon communities, along with the contingent ecological practices therein, shaped the world around them just as they were shaped by it. Camp adapts the idea of the “rival geography” as set forth by Edward Said to include, “alternative ways of knowing and using plantation and southern space that conflicted with planters’ ideals and demands.” I employ “rival geography” here to encompass the many natural landscapes that constituted Jamaican Marronage in this period, which included provision grounds, hunting grounds, housing, coastal salt harvesting locations, places of ritual, and networks of communication and exchange.

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150 Philip J. Stern and Carl Wennerlind, *Mercantilism Reimagined: Political Economy in Early Modern Britain and Its Empire*, (Oxford University Press, 2013): 3-22. Mercantilism is defined here less as a concrete and coherent set of beliefs and more as a collection of economic behaviors, practices, and conditions that were flexible across time and space but bound together by social forces. It is the pretext for capitalism, but not a coherent or rigidly dogmatic economic program.

Analyzing historical maps alongside manuscript colonial records highlights the competing geographies of English imperialism and Maroon resistance. The distinct landscapes of each represent dramatically different understandings of the relationship between the individual, society, and nature. The movement of people and goods within and across these spaces established a geographic narrative of imperialism and anti-imperialism that allows us to rethink the chronology of colonialism in Jamaica.

After the English defeated and ousted the Spanish, all land in Jamaica became property of the English Crown. To distribute land to settlers, accurate surveys of the natural landscape needed to be conducted. Surveyors could then isolate parcels of arable land that could be distributed by the colony through grants to settlers known as Letters Patent. Landholders would then be required to pay an annual quitrent. As a result, surveys and maps became paramount to the plans of Jamaican planters as the method for parceling and then deeding the land for settlement. There was a burgeoning demand for land from planters who arrived from nearby island colonies in these early years: an estimated 12,000 English men came to Jamaica in the first six years after the initial invasion. However, as a result of disease and famine due to a lack of agriculture, a census conducted in 1661 found there were only 2,458 “white men” residing in Jamaica of whom most were not planters. The English first hunted wild cattle and hogs to feed the colonial population but then quickly relied on tamed livestock. They organized the economy around a variety of cash crops like indigo, cocoa, cotton, tobacco, and sugar to create a viable trade in those raw goods to turn a profit. English mercantilist practices and the capitalist logic

that evolved from these economic foundations informed how the colony of Jamaica expanded.

King Charles II and his colonial administrators prioritized surveying, parceling, and commoditizing all land possible, and settlement was incentivized in myriad ways. At the most fundamental level, mercantilism necessitated the constant acquisition and exploitation of new territories and un-, or under-, tapped natural resources to perpetuate the most positive export to import ratio possible. Profits under capitalism were ensured by the monopolization and hyperexploitation of natural resources and enslaved labor in increasingly efficient manners. By possessing sole control over the supply of a resource and minimizing cost outlays for labor, wealthy plantation owners and investors generated economic wealth. However, to achieve maximum profits within the framework of mid-seventeenth century English mercantilism necessitated control over the entirety of the landmass of Jamaica.

In the case of English Jamaica, Englishmen like Oliver Cromwell, Robert Rich, John Desbrowe, and Thomas Gage declared that their inspiration for the Western Design was divine providence.\textsuperscript{156} They believed themselves ordained by God to repossess the Spanish Americas from their Catholic enemies. When the Western Design failed in its embarrassing fashion at Santo Domingo, the operation was stripped of this divine motivation and the underlying economic purposes of this imperial conquest were laid bare. Throughout the latter half of the seventeenth century, the English colony of Jamaica began, with fits and starts, its inexorable expansion in the pursuit of arable land for the purposes of capitalist exploitation. This totalizing mindset drove the English into violent conflict with Jamaica’s Maroons and it did not take long for these tensions to surface.

\textsuperscript{156} Pestana, The English Conquest of Jamaica: Oliver Cromwell’s Bid for Empire, 100.
3.3 Marronage and the English Conquest of Jamaica

The English may have faced little discernible armed resistance in the taking of St. Jago de la Vega, but that did not mean the conquest of Jamaica was without English casualties. In the early weeks of 1656, Vice Admiral William Goodson, who had taken over command of the English forces at Jamaica when General Venables and Admiral Penn returned to London to defend themselves against their detractors, wrote to the Naval Commissioners that the Spanish of the island were in a sickly state and that, “they dare not resist 50 English,” but continued that, “when the negroes found any English straggling in the woods they butchered them with lances.”157 Months later, Captain William Godfrey wrote to Robert Blackborne, Secretary of the Commissioners of the Admiralty, that, “Most of the Spaniards have deserted the Island…now and then we receive opposition from the negroes and mulattoes who slew about 40 of our soldiers about a month since.”158 Mere weeks thereafter, Captain Mark Harrison reported in April 1656 that, “A party of soldiers lately fell upon some negroes as they were in Council and killed eight, the rest excaping [sic] save one woman, which is the first service they have done upon the enemy since his arrival, and it is supposed they were the negroes who killed so many of our men.”159 In just under four months, scores of English soldiers and at least eight Maroons were killed in raids. Despite this constant threat, the invaders had almost no intelligence about the Maroons.

157 “March 13, Vice Admiral William Goodson to the Navy Commissioners, America and West Indies: Addenda 1656,” in Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies: Volume 9, 1675-1676 and Addenda 1574-1674, ed. W Noel Sainsbury (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1893), 105-116. Subsequent references to the “Calendar of State Papers Colonial, America and West Indies” will be abbreviated as, “CSPCAWI.”
158 “April 30, Capt. Wm. Godfrey to Robt. Blackborne, America and West Indies: Addenda 1656,” in CSPCAWI: Volume 9, 1675-1676 and Addenda 1574-1674, 105-116. The date of this letter is listed as April 30, 1656 but was written and sent on March 14th, 1656.
159 “April 30, Capt. Mark Harrison to the Admiralty and Navy Commissioners, America and West Indies: Addenda 1656,” in CSPCAWI: Volume 9, 1675-1676 and Addenda 1574-1674, 105-116.
The English came to Jamaica as a last resort, a means to salvage the reputation of those behind the Western Design. They arrived with only the knowledge imparted by privateers who had raided the island in decades past, which meant that the English arrived knowing only the settlements of Spanish Jamaica. The English knew little about the natural landscape and even less about those who had taken up residence in its densely wooded and mountainous interior in “palenques,” a Spanish term for a fortified, defensive settlement. Early maps of Jamaica, like Richard Blome’s 1671 *A New & Exact Mapp of ye isle of Jamaica*, demonstrate how English settlement in the seventeenth century relied heavily on the areas previously settled by the Spanish [Figure 3.2]. St. Jago, St. Ann’s Bay, and the lands bordering Old Harbour were all sites of Spanish occupation that became early estates and plantations of English Jamaica. The interior of the island was depicted as mountainous and densely wooded, but with few other features.

In these early years of Jamaican conquest, the English and the Maroons mainly interacted in skirmishes and ambushes staged by the various palenques. One exception came in 1657 when Vice Admiral William Goodson ordered Captain Campoe Sabada – a Jewish pilot who was familiar with the island from his service under the command of Captain Jackson – and a detachment of troops to disembark at Point Pedro in search of the Spanish.  

160 “Capt. Sabada’s Journal,” in *A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe, Volume 4, Sept 1655 - May 1656*, ed. Thomas Birch (London: Fletcher Gyles, 1742), 535-548; [Figure 3.2] “Poynt Pedro” is found on the southern coastline of Jamaica on Blome’s map due east of “S. Iago”. While this specific placename is no longer used, the name “Pedro” still appears on local streets and buildings around Great Pedro’s Bluff, which lies on the southern coast in St. Elizabeth’s Parish.
and set off in search of the Spanish at the small settlement named Paretty. When the group made camp at nightfall, they encountered a pair of Maroons on horseback who issued a warning to the English,

a negro came on horseback demanding what we came for, for victuals? answer was no, but to seek out the Spaniards in those parts; his, that they had no more to do with the Spaniards than with us, and if we came to kill them, they would kill our men when they pleased. Being asked what they did there? they did intend to live there so long as there was any cattle to kill.\textsuperscript{161}

This interaction sheds light on the differing conceptions of land tenure and possession at play between the two groups. The Maroons make clear that they would “live there so long as there was any cattle to kill,” meaning that they did not lay claim to the land as privately held property in perpetuity, but instead contended that the community possessed exclusive rights to hunt the wild cattle that roamed the region. This framework of land tenure was a common feature of customary, pre-colonial West African practices (especially in the plains and savannahs), where the boundaries of communities or even kingdoms were intimately tied to rights of first possession and to natural resources, like exclusive hunting rights. The two groups were working off disparate assumptions. The English were bent on conquest of Jamaica from the Spanish and establishing dominion over the entirety of the landmass. Meanwhile the Maroons continued to exist and subsist in the manners to which they had grown accustomed under the aegis of Spanish imperialism and following traditions that originated in their pre-colonial West African homelands. The English pursued a strategic military goal to complete their conquest of Jamaica; the Maroons reiterated their claims to specific parts of the island based on their first-comer status and hunting rights. This exchange did not lead to violence between the two parties, but briefly revealed the foundations of these incompatible social conceptualizations of land tenure.

Previous encounters with African and indigenous populations during raids of Spanish Jamaica had imparted the English with the belief that they would welcome new “masters.” Those who had raided the Spanish colony with William Jackson reported as much and the stories told by Thomas Gage reiterated these lessons. Instead, English encounters with these populations

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162 Carol Lentz, *Land, Mobility, and Belonging in West Africa*, (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2013), 127-128. Spirituality and earth-shrines were vitally important to these claims in the context of West Africa as well and would become so for the Maroons as they established and defined their permanent settlements.
during the conquest of Jamaica were violent and unrelenting. As conquest progressed, the Maroons continued to forcefully defend land they claimed and eventually distanced themselves from the Spanish and carved out a middle ground between the two colonizers, intentionally or not. Captain Sabada and his troops heeded the threats and did not pursue these individuals. Shortly after this encounter, the English contingent captured two Spanish scouts who had been trailing them and discovered that the insurgents were awaiting supplies and reinforcements from Cartagena. The original goal of the Western Design was not only to displace the Spanish from their territory, but also to settle and plant as much of the land as possible for cash crop production, just as it had been with the Providence Island Company. Those aspirations could not be pursued, however, until the island was under English dominion. The battle for the capital at St. Jago de la Vega may have been settled without bloodshed, but the conquest of Jamaica was yet to be completed.

The English quickly established themselves in St. Jago de la Vega and began transforming the buildings of the Spanish colonial capital; the Catholic church was destroyed, a former hermitage was converted into a sheep pen, and older buildings were stripped and used as fuel.\(^{163}\) While this took place, the Spanish split into two camps: the majority of the vecinos fled to Cuba – some with their enslaved domestic servants – while the moradores and those vecinos born in Jamaica regrouped on the northern side of the island. The African and African-descended population of Spanish Jamaica, as far as we know from the available sources, formed three prominent, independent communities. There was the palenque of Juan de Bolas in the hills between Lluidas Vale and Guanaboa Vale in St. Catherine’s Parish, which from all indications

\(^{163}\) Robertson, *Gone is the Ancient Glory*, 43.
included “negros horros” (freedmen) and individuals who had been enslaved on Spanish Jamaican haciendas. On John Ogilby’s *Novissima et Accuratissima Insulae Jamaicae Descriptio*, based on a survey conducted by John Man from 1661-1670, this palenque is officially listed as part of the colony in far southwestern “St. Annes” [Figure 3.3]. By 1660, this group had allied with the English against the Spanish and were later integrated into the colonial forces. A community established in a region known as “Los Vermejales” was led by Juan de Serras and located in northern Clarendon Parish near what is today James Hill and appears to have been
largely composed of former hunters and ranchers.\textsuperscript{164} This palenque was not included on Obilgy’s map or any other map of English Jamaica, likely because the colonists never knew its precise location and by 1670 the community had relocated. The English believed this group to be so closely aligned with the Spanish as to take orders directly from the acting leader of the Spanish resistance, Cristobal Arnaldo Ysassi.\textsuperscript{165} There was a third group that is believed to have settled near the Mocho Mountains in western Clarendon Parish, but little evidence remains of this community.\textsuperscript{166} On Ogilby’s map, this palenque would have been found in the “Unnamed” precinct that lay south of St. James and St. Annes. These palenques consisted of sharpened pikes that surrounded a strategic location. Syncretic cultures and dynamic social configurations based upon African and indigenous practices and traditions took root within these spaces and formed the foundation of what we now know as Jamaican Marronage. The Spanish and this trio of Maroon palenques – sometimes in tandem, but more often not – raided the invaders at St. Jago de la Vega and often destroyed plantations throughout the island in these initial years, killing and kidnapping English soldiers and stealing weapons and tools.

The English had no clue how to capture the Maroons or root out the Spanish insurgents, in part because they were more preoccupied with securing the coastlines from an invasion from the sea than the island’s interior. On one occasion the insurgents attacked the English-occupied

\textsuperscript{165} Cundall and Pietersz, \textit{Jamaica Under the Spaniards}, 97.
\textsuperscript{166} Mavis C. Campbell, \textit{The Maroons of Jamaica, 1655-1796}, (Granby, Massachusetts: Bergin & Garvey Publishers, 1988), 17-18. “Los Vermejales” was the name of the savannah occupied by the palenque of Juan de Serras and the “Vera Ma Hollis Savannah” can still be found on some maps of Jamaica today.
capital in three separate locations on a single day, burning down strategic buildings in the town square and gathering intelligence on the English defenses in the port to communicate to the Spanish Crown [Figure 3.4]. In 1658, *Croquis de la bahía y puerto de Jamaica con sus fortificaciones* was created and conveyed to the Audiencia de Santo Domingo. This sketch details the main English housing and fortifications along the coast of what the English called “Port Royal Harbor.” The creator of this map included the locations of rivers, channels, and landings that would have been useful in the event of a reconquest by the Spanish.

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Ysassi capably led the Spanish in this guerrilla warfare in these first two years of English occupation despite his limitations as a military commander. The Spanish resistance established camps on the northern coast of the island near former settlements like Sevilla la Nueva and used Los Vermejales as a staging ground for periodic raids on the occupied capital. The Spanish forestalled attempts by planters to settle south, west, or north of St. Jago de la Vega while the beleaguered English soldiers succumbed to any number of ailments at an alarming rate [Figure 3.5]. The Maroons “frequently killed stragglers” near St. Jago de la Vega and even set fire to a building in town. These attacks continued unabated for the greater part of two years and many, including Major-General Robert Sedgwick in 1656, believed that the Maroons would “prove as thorns and pricks in our sides.” Just months later a Maroon ambush killed forty soldiers meandering about outside town. In August of 1657, Ysassi’s troops routed an English

![Map of Spanish, English, and Maroon Positions during English conquest (1655-1658). English planters settled Morant Point soon after the initial invasion, but the English land forces remained confined to St. Jago de la Vega for the first two years of conquest.](image)

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squadron and overran them entirely in the Guatibacoa region. This guerrilla warfare eventually forced the English to adjust their strategic approach to pacifying the island. A stockade was built in the capital, complete with three cannons, and fortifications were constructed on the north and south sides of the garrisoned town to cover any approaches.

The Spanish received reinforcements and supplies arrived at the northern shores of Jamaica but under great delay and in bits and pieces from Cuba. Some of the troops that arrived from Cuba, however, were more of a hinderance than help and most of the funds assigned for Jamaica never reached Ysassi. The Spanish advanced from Los Vermejales and routed an English troop detachment stationed in Old Harbour [Figure 3.5]. Meanwhile, English efforts to import planters and induce soldiers to settle and plant land near St. Jago and Morant Point began to pay dividends. By July 1657, an English regiment under Colonel Francis Barrington had developed a plantation so productive that Lieutenant-Colonel William Brayne expressed hopes that the Jamaican population could become self-sufficient, “within a short time.” When Edward D’Oyley resumed command of all English land and sea forces in September of 1657 he emphasized the use of cavalry forces against the Spanish insurgents to great success, decimating the troops loyal to Ysassi. The Spanish regiment stationed nearer the northern coast in the region of Santa Ana, known as St. Ann’s Bay to the English, made very little progress in the building of fortifications and some even began to desert. By the end of the

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170 Wright, “The Spanish Resistance to the English Occupation of Jamaica, 1655-1660,” 130; [Figure 3] Guatibacoa is in the southern extents of Clarendon Parish near “Old Harbour.”
175 “Lieutenant-colonell Brayne to John Barrington, esq. one of the gentlemen of the protector's bed-chamber, State Papers, 1657: July (1 of 5),” in A Collection of the State Papers of John Thurloe, Volume 6, January 1657 - March 1658.
year, the Maroons likely posed a greater threat to English conquest of Jamaica than the Spaniards.

The decisive battle in the Spanish effort to forestall the English conquest of Jamaica came in July 1658. The commander of the English forces in Jamaica, Edward D’Oyley, received word from scouts that Spanish ships had anchored Rio Nuevo Bay. D’Oyley quickly gathered what forces could be mustered and led a fleet of ships carrying approximately 700 English troops to the northern coast. The English forces landed near the mouth of the Rio Nuevo and advanced on the Spanish position, while the fleet secured vessels that had been reported by scouts. The Spanish forces, along with recently received reinforcements and supplies from the ships anchored in the bay, numbered around 450 soldiers. When the English ships were spotted, the Spanish retreated behind the walls of a coastal fortification. The sizable detachment of English bombarded the fort and, before long, discovered that one of the walls lay almost entirely unfinished. The Spanish were routed in short order. One hundred Spanish troops, along with Ysassi, escaped into the woods. This resounding English victory devastated the Spanish Jamaicans still clinging to hopes of retaking the island. Not all was lost, however, as the insurgents held out for another two years with support from the Spanish Crown. It was not until late 1660, a Maroon palenque was discovered by the English. Colonel Edward D’Oyley, commander of the English land forces and later Governor of Jamaica, reported to the Commissioners of the Admiralty that the Maroons,

have done more mischief than in the past two years, having snatched away a captain, two ensigns, and divers soldiers, and killed others, which hath necessitated him to set an impost on strong liquors which has had the good success of finding out where the negroes have lurked these four years undiscovered who have built a town and planted about 200 acres of provisions.177

The leader of this community, Juan de Bolas, subsequently parlayed with the English and the sides negotiated terms for an alliance. The English and De Bolas agreed on terms, guarantees of liberty and land grants in exchange for services rendered to the colony, and the 12 hostages were sent from the palenque as assurance of their good faith.

The English for their part were elated at the prospects of an alliance. “[I am] in hourly expectation,” Dalyson wrote, “of the issue of a party now gone forth in conjunction with some negroes that have lately, and indeed miraculously, made peace with us.” Soon afterward, the English and the maroons of this palenque began coordinating on operations against the Spanish and any Spanish-aligned Maroons. On April 10, 1660, Burrough wrote to Blackborne:

the enemy having proffered their friendship and delivered up twelve hostages to make good their promise; and they, with our men, routed and destroyed two settlements of other negroes and then took them to the Spanish camp where of about 140 we killed and took about 80... the Spaniards ‘not dreaming of the cheat’ were surprised by our men who lay in ambush. About four days since another settlement was destroyed where 30 negroes were taken.

The palenque of Juan de Bolas was integrated into the English Jamaican forces at a rapid pace. They were issued brass kettles, cooking pans, rations, and brandy in accordance with their place within the military administration and Juan de Bolas and his top officials were also paid twenty shillings each for their services.

The precise location of these palenques and the Spanish camps during these early years of English conquest can be surmised through a combination of English and Spanish archival

178 “Feb. 22, Capt. Wm. Dalyson to Robt. Blackborne, America and West Indies: Addenda 1660.” The original document was a letter from Captain William Dalyson to Robert Blackborne, but the section about this peace being made was part of a note on the same sheet written by Cornelius Burough to Blackborne on the same date, February 22nd, 1660.
179 “April 10, Cornelius Burough to Robt. Blackborne, America and West Indies: Addenda 1660.”
sources and maps. Blome’s 1671 map [Figure 3.2] situates the “Spanish Quarters” on the northern coast in the vicinity of what is today Montego Bay. It is likely that the Spanish had an encampment situated inland on the low-lying hills on the coastal plains – much like the indigenous had occupied before their arrival. From this location the Spanish could spot ships arriving with reinforcements, victuals, or to transport individuals to Cuba. Based on Spanish maps and manuscript archival sources, “el puerto de Santa Ana” (St. Ann’s Port) was also regularly used as a landing place for reinforcements and victuals because of its commodious waters. These operations were often done without alerting the English to their presence. In 1658, the Spanish colonial administration commissioned a map of St. Ann’s Bay, which included plans for a fortification at the mouth of what the English called “Negro River” [Figure 3.6]. The
passage detailing the allied English and Maroon operations records the group taking a series of settlements of “negroes,” in April of 1660 followed by the Spanish camp in short succession. Spanish sources recount at length the operations from “Las Chorreras,” “Guatibacoa,” and “Vermejales” and based on details of the devastation wrought in 1660, it is reasonable to conclude that these locations were all targets of this onslaught [Figure 3.5].\textsuperscript{181} These coordinated ambushes transformed the English conquest of colonial Spanish Jamaica. What had been a defensive posture in the strict confines of St. Jago de la Vega and the southern coast for the first five years became a proactive and aggressive strategy toward the rooting out of the remnants of Spanish possession and the establishment of English dominion. The outlying Maroons like “Los Vermejales,” however, were another matter entirely.

### 3.4 Restoration, Settlement, and Resistance: English Jamaica After 1660

Juan de Bolas accepted the English offers in 1660, but it would take another three years for these promises to be realized. In the interim, he and his community provided services in battle and in the construction of fortifications: “Heads of the declaration for the liberty of the negroes, to be drawn into a form to serve as a charter to them and their heirs for ever \textit{[sic]}. For carrying on the work at Fort Charles.” During these years, the palenque of Juan de Bolas was called upon regularly, setting the stage for their formal integration into the colonial administrative structure. On February 1, 1663, the Council of Jamaica formally proclaimed,

\begin{quote}
That Juan Luyola and the rest of the negroes of his Palenque, on account of their submission and services to the English, shall have grants of land and enjoy all the liberties and privileges of Englishmen, but must bring up their children to the English tongue. That other negroes in the mountains shall enjoy the same benefits, provided they submit within 14 days after receiving this notice.\textsuperscript{182}
\end{quote}

\textsuperscript{181} Irene A. Wright, “The Spanish Resistance to the English Occupation of Jamaica, 1655-1660,” 142-145. “Las Chorreras” is now known as Ocho Rios and “Guatibacoa” is known as Old Harbour.

It was also decided that, “Juan lu [sic] Bola and all the free Negroes shall be in the same state and freedom as the English enjoy, and shall for every head (being eighteen years old) receive thirty acres of improvable land to be set in such places as shall be thought fit by the Governor and Council…”

The English followed through on these offers, deeding land to individuals from the palenque as early as 1664. The outlying Maroon communities in the mountains did not submit within fourteen days and were instead emboldened, “they were better pleased with the more ample range they possessed in the woods, where their hunting-ground was not yet limited by settlement.” This passage in Edward Long’s *The History of Jamaica*, speaks explicitly to the geographic elements of Marronage and emphasizes that (in this case) the “Vermaholis Negroes” staked their claim to the land based upon its use as hunting grounds. Long mentions that these lands were “not yet limited by settlement” and that the terrain itself provided refuge and freedom. When Juan de Bolas traveled to Los Vermejales in 1664 to again extend the English offers of land and liberty, he hoped to recruit Juan de Serras to the English side. Such an alliance would have effectively neutered the Spanish insurgency.

Juan de Bolas seemingly believed that these legal guarantees would allow the Maroons to co-exist with the English and to maintain some limited form of self-determination. Juan de Serras disagreed and he killed de Bolas soon after his arrival. The leader of the “Varmahaly” Maroons – as they were most often named in the English colonial records – was not swayed by these English overtures and remembered the role de Bolas had played in their campaigns against

183 Buisseret and Taylor, “Juan De Bolas And His Pelinco,” 99.
184 Pestana, *The English Conquest of Jamaica: Oliver Cromwell’s Bid for Empire*, 210. For record of the landholding of Anton Rodriques, see: 1 June 1664, St. Catherine Platt Book, 1B/11/2/6:35, Jamaica Archive and Record Department.
the outlying Maroons. Grants of “liberty” and “land” from the Europeans who hoped to replace the Spanish as masters of the island merely signaled to de Serras that their harassment of the English was working. The divergence in approaches to English conquest is manifest of the diversity in Maroon communities; distinct cultural traditions and historical experiences inculcated disparate strategic approaches to imperialism. The would-be conquerors feared the Maroons that could not be treated with or parlayed.

After the alliance with the de Bolas palenque, outlying Maroon communities continued to exist in the mountains of Jamaica. Their attacks on settlers posed a direct threat to the English colony. As Edward Long argues:

other parties remained in the most inaccessible retreats within the mountainous wilds; where they not only augmented their numbers by procreation, but, after the island became thicker sown with plantations, they were frequently reinforced by fugitive slaves, and at length grew confident enough of their force to undertake descents upon the interior planters, many of whom they murdered from time to time; and, by their barbarities and outrage, intimidated the Whites from venturing to any considerable distance from the sea-coast. One of these parties was called the Vermaholis Negroes.186

The earliest map of English Jamaica that details settlement is Ogilby’s 1671 map, Novissima et Accuratissima Jamaicæ Descriptio, [Figure 3.3] which was based on the surveys of Surveyor General of Jamaica John Man conducted 1661-1670. This map demonstrates the reticence of settlers to venture northward or westward beyond Clarendon, corroborating Long’s writings. Archival documents from 1670 make the cause-and-effect relationship between Maroon aggression and a lack of settlement on the northside of the island explicit. For example, a letter to the secretary of state argued:

besides the frequent spoils and robberies they have committed, last week six Christian hunters were killed. They were the negroes that have been long out, which of late appear very frequently amongst the old settlements, and may at any time destroy them…whoever takes any such to the prison receives 20s., if from

the north side 40s. Can say nothing with certainty of the number out, but the number of Indians, mulattos, and negroes…much exceeds that of those who call themselves Christians, and daily increases. Christians daily decrease. 187

Restricting settlement on the northside of the island forestalled the agricultural development of Jamaica and prevented the English from achieving the initial purpose of the Western Design. Oliver Cromwell, Robert Rich, Thomas Gage, and John Disbrowe were all driven by the desire to conquer and colonize territories in the Spanish Americas and to develop them as plantation economies that would generate profit for England – and themselves – by producing cash crops. 188 This group clung to these aspirations for over a decade and saw Santo Domingo and then Jamaica as an opportunity to accomplish what had been denied them previously with the Providence Island Colony. However, when Cristobal Ysassi finally left Jamaica for Cuba in 1660, effectively ensuring conquest for England, these administrators of the Western Design were no longer around to enact their long-held plans. Thomas Gage died in Jamaica in 1656 shortly after the taking of St. Jago de la Vega and Robert Rich and Oliver Cromwell both died in London in 1658. Cromwell was succeeded as Lord Protector by his son Richard, but without the support of Parliament or the New Model Army. His eventual removal and the power vacuum that ensued led to the Restoration of the English monarchy and the coronation of King Charles II.

John Disbrowe, despite instigating the events that led to the removal of Richard Cromwell from power, was banned from holding public office post-Restoration and was imprisoned in the Tower of London on suspicion of treason in the 1660s. The peopling and exploitation of Jamaica became the project of the Crown and wealthy merchants connected and loyal to King Charles II.

187 “May 2, John Style to the Secretary of State, America and West Indies: May 1670,” in CSPCAWI: Volume 7, 1669-1674, ed. W Noel Sainsbury (London: Her Majesty’s Stationery Office, 1889), 64-68.
188 Stern and Wennerlind, Mercantilism Reimagined, 3-22. This program can be broadly described as mercantilist, or merchant capitalist, in nature.
In the short term, the Restoration led to turmoil in colonial administration; Jamaican colonists languished in anticipation of a decision whether the restored king would retain the island conquered by Cromwell. When Charles II declared in 1661 that Jamaica would remain English, it meant that the island would indeed remain part and parcel of the expanding vision of the English Americas. However, despite defeating the Spanish, ending warfare with the Treaty of Madrid, and installing a royalist colonial government, King Charles II and Jamaica’s administrators were frustrated in their attempts to realize the island’s agricultural potential thanks to the hostilities of the Maroons. The 1660s therefore represent a tremendous shift in the history of English colonialism of Jamaica. The battle for European conquest reached its conclusion and the victors began to plot a path forward for settlement.

Some holdovers from the Western Design, like Edward D’Oyley, continued to govern in Jamaica for a brief time post-Restoration, but Charles II wanted those loyal to him in power. D’Oyley was replaced by the staunch royalist Thomas Hickman-Windsor in 1662, who spent mere months on the island before being replaced by a more capable administrator. In 1664, Thomas Modyford was named Governor of Jamaica by a royal commission with a checkered past as a part-time royalist during the English Civil War and the era of the Protectorate. However, Modyford had amassed a fortune built on decades of enslaved labor on his sugar plantations in Barbados and, while doing so, established important connections as a factor in the Company of Royal Adventurers Trading into Africa. His uneven support for King Charles II paled in comparison to the wealth he could generate the English Crown in Jamaica using enslaved African labor. From 1655 to 1660, a single Dutch slaving ship arrived and disembarked 85 enslaved African laborers in Jamaica. In the year 1665 alone, nearly 3,000 enslaved African laborers.

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were disembarked on the island. The Restoration of King Charles II transformed Jamaica while conquest was effectively being settled. Now the only impediment standing in the way of the colony hyperexploiting Jamaica as an agricultural powerhouse were those who Robert Sedgwick had warned about in 1656. The Maroons remained as “thorns and pricks” in the English side, especially Modyford’s.190

The Maroon palenques of Juan de Bolas and Juan de Serras followed divergent paths following the final withdrawal of the Spanish, who continued to attack the island from the sea, raiding and burning down plantations often over the subsequent decade. After the Spanish were defeated by the allied English and “Spanish negroes” under de Bolas, the palenque was quickly integrated into the colonial administration. They were treated in a manner similar to other regiments in the colonial forces and were incorporated into the colony as landholders. These “Spanish negroes” were granted all the liberties of an Englishman and were also subject to the payment of annual quitrents. For all intents and purposes, according to the law of colonial English Jamaica these individuals were free and on equal footing with common English landholders of the day.

The English attempted to parlay with and make overtures to the palenque of Juan de Serras on numerous occasions during the 1660s. The maroons’ continued refusal to accept these offers and active hostilities toward colonists frustrated the administration. In August 1665 the island was put in a posture of war because of the aggressions of the “Carmahaly negroes.”191 A month later bounties were declared by Governor Modyford at a Council of War:

whoever shall bring to the Governor that Varmahaly negro commonly called the Sergeant-Major, dead or alive, shall have 30l. reward, 20l. reward for any other

190 Campbell, The Maroons of Jamaica, 19.
negro officer, and 10l. for any of the common negroes of that gang. Any servant
or slave killing or bringing in one of those negroes shall be free; any Varmahaly
negro bringing in one of his fellows shall be pardoned and set free; and any
persons finding out the pallenque of said negroes, shall have and enjoy to their
uses all the women, children, and plunder for their reward.192

The Varmahaly and other “outlying negroes” became the primary focus of English colonists on
the island after 1660, with notable exceptions in the 1690s. They represented an undeniable and
unavoidable threat to the colonial project: to persist as an independent and antagonistic force on
the island suggested to other enslaved Africans that marronage offered a viable alternative. The
threat posed by the Maroons was both real and existential.

Despite the considerable ethnic diversity of the population of Spanish Jamaica – enslaved
and free Africans, enslaved and free indigenous islanders, Spaniards and other Europeans, and
every conceivable combination of these backgrounds – the unifying identifier for any individual
of African descent to the English was their “blackness.” In the English record, there was a clear
distinction drawn between the “Spanish negroes” and the “rebellious,” “villainous,” or
“traitorous” “negroes” from the palenque of Juan de Serras, but “negro” was always included.

Over the course of many decades, this would evolve into a stark racial divide between the
“white” Europeans and the “black” Maroons and enslaved Africans even though the
“Varmahaly” themselves and other outlying Maroon communities explicitly rejected new
runaways recently imported from Africa, known as “bozales,” who had been imported by the
English.193 Despite their first-hand experiences with the allied “Spanish negroes,” the concept of
“blackness” in the minds of the English became an intrinsic and paradoxical part of an
individual’s cosmography: to be black was to be enslaved, the source of wealth for the colony,

192 “Sept. 1, Orders of the Governor and Council of War in Jamaica, America and West Indies: September 1665,”
in CSPCAWI: Volume 5, 1661-1668, ed. W Noel Sainsbury (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1880), 316-
320.
and its greatest threat. In the first decades of English colonization post-conquest these distinctions first began to coalesce and harden.

English dominion over the former Spanish colony of Jamaica was formally established with the Treaty of Madrid in 1670. The diplomatic resolution of these competing claims enabled the Crown to direct its energies to securing the island and surveying, parceling, and deeding land to those who would relocate from England or elsewhere in the English colonial Americas to settle and plant the island. This process began in earnest in 1661 when King Charles II proclaimed that any settler “above 12 years of age” be granted thirty acres of land if they take up residence in Jamaica, but planters were reticent to move to Jamaica amidst open warfare with Spain and soldiers often refused to become planters. In the second half of the seventeenth century there was also the broader emerging cultural emphasis on scientifically rationalizing and mapping the natural world that emanated from the Enlightenment. Each of these factors were mutually reinforcing. Maps allowed the English to project dominion over Jamaica while surveys of the island began the process of rationalizing the landscape in the scientific terms established by the Enlightenment. Surveys allowed for the Crown to deed parcels of land to prospective settlers who could implement the most effective, proven agricultural methods of the day. Production by these planters would then help to generate markets and attract private merchants to the island to whom these crops could be sold to generate wealth for themselves, the planters, the colony, and most importantly England. Fundamental to this process, however, was the artificial suppression of labor costs using enslaved African labor.

Early English maps of Jamaica feature the “Spanish Quarters” and various “Palinks [sic]” on the island. Rather than pretending as though the island was without contestation, mapmakers sought to present the frontiers and obstacles to English colonialism. Maps included these locations as a means of presenting a fully rationalized image of the realities of Jamaica: there was abundant land to be claimed and the only impediments to settlement were European rivals since defeated and small, isolated communities of “negroes.” The “Juan de Bolas Palink” makes an appearance on the Ogilby map published in 1671. This “Palink” is listed alongside dozens of English-owned plantations and depicted as lying in a valley between the “Porus Mountains” and “Mount Diabla [sic]” in St. Ann Parish [Figure 3.3]. This location almost assuredly refers to the pre-alliance settlement, which the English discovered, and not the land deeded to the community led by Juan de Bolas in 1663. The situation of placenames bearing “Juan de Bolas” today are all due south in the heart of St. Catherine Parish. The palenque formed during English conquest was situated there and the land deeded by the English later lay elsewhere, as will be explored.

These maps of Jamaica created by the English in the decades post-conquest provide a startling contrast to those produced by the Spanish over the preceding decades: the Spanish Crown’s disinterest and lack of material support prior to the English invasion is apparent from dearth of maps commissioned of the island, while the English began meticulous surveys as early as 1661. The English sought Jamaica for its abundant fertile lands for agricultural exploitation and therefore accurate mapping of topography and hydrography were paramount. Imperial administration of colonized territories dictated priorities and had material impacts on the lives of colonists, the lands they exploited, and the populations they enslaved on the frontier. The juxtaposition of three maps commissioned in 1656-57 by the Spanish colonial administration
with an eye toward retaking Jamaica and the Blome and Ogilby maps published in London in 1671 lay the prerogatives of these rival European empires bare. In the first case, the *Ysla de Xamaica* map of 1656 details only the ports and provides an accurate, yet featureless outline of the coastline of the island [see Figure 2.3]. Although the mapmaker dutifully accounted for the various cays bordering Jamaica, they did not attempt an accurate topographical image nor list the settlements. This map was, in all likelihood, created for the purposes of determining locations for landing troops in support of Ysassi and the Spanish resistance. Knowledge of the coastal waters was pivotal information in the case of a reconquest of Jamaica. *Costa del sur de la ysla de Santiago de Jamayca desde la punta de Morante hasta el río de Manatinese con todos sus cayos o ysletas, bajos y arrecifes*, No Scale, February 25, 1657, Maps and Plans – Santo Domingo, Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla, MP-SANTO_DOMINGO, 55.
o ysletas, bajos y arreñifes [Figure 3.7] and Planta de las fortificaciones de Jamaica [Figure 3.8] are complementary to Ysla de Xamaica and provide a more holistic picture of the natural features of the southern coastline of Jamaica, including the “Sierra de Bastidas” known today as the Blue Mountains, and an exhaustive account of the rivers, bays, and inlets. None of these maps provide intelligence on the English positions or operations beyond the coastal fortifications. Outlining the northern coastline and harbors eastward or westward of St. Jago de la Vega without the island’s topography demonstrates a fundamental disconnect between the colonial administration and the on-the-ground realities of the Spanish insurgency in Jamaica. The information provided by Planta de las fortificaciones de Jamaica depicts the English defenses in Port Royal with a startling degree of detail. Each armament and fortification is described and placed in relation to the natural features of the harbor, such as rivers, promontories, and canals, and provides the depths of the waters. The need for a map that provided this information raises questions about the colonial administration and highlights the Spanish Crown’s lack of investment in the colonization of Jamaica beyond the assertion of dominion.

Despite the marginalization of Jamaica in Spanish imperial schema, the commission of these maps in 1656-57 speaks to the Spanish Empire’s general political disposition: there was a tendency to react to the actions of European rivalries and to project dominion outwardly rather than proactively and effectively managing its colonial territories. Authority within individual colonies was typically diffused through local administrators and factors. Although rumors of Cromwell’s Western Design and its failed attempt on Santo Domingo reached St. Jago de la Vega in advance of the fleet, rivalries within the Spanish colonial hierarchy itself led to the governors of nearby islands to refuse aid. The Spanish maps of Jamaica produced in the wake of English invasion were composed after nearly a century-and-a-half of Spanish rule, yet the
[Figure 3.8] Ricardo Caer, *Planta de las fortificaciones de Jamaica*, 1657, Maps and Plans – Santo Domingo, Archivo General de Indias, Sevilla, MP-SANTO_DOMINGO, 55.
information these maps conveyed was very rudimentary.

Returning to the English map of Jamaica published by John Ogilby in 1671, obvious and abundant differences emerge [Figure 3.3].\(^{196}\) The Ogilby map illustrates the aspirations of a totalizing vision of English colonialism predicated on the hyperexploitation of arable land for cash crop production. Ogilby attempted to accurately depict the terrain of spaces inhabited by colonists and the rough outlines of those deemed “wilderness” by the colony, each of which had not been done by any prior Spanish cartographer. The Blue Mountains and Mount Diablo feature prominently on the map, constructing a limited representation of the interior. Moreover, Ogilby went to great lengths to place the many rivers, plains, and settlements on the island, outlining the initial English colonial precincts. The Spanish conceived of colonial authority as emanating from an administrative center that connected distant points for the purposes of intra-island agricultural commerce. The exhaustive accounting of the natural resources and topography by Ogilby offers a far more incorporative and comprehensive representation of the island in the process of survey, enclosure, settlement, and plantation that laid the foundation for the economy of British Jamaica in the late-eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.\(^{197}\) This work was published in London during the ascent of the Enlightenment and its contingent scientific revolution. Ogilby’s fixation on scientifically rationalizing the territory of Jamaica for the use of the English Crown and potential settlers and investors runs parallel to the work of Dutch cartographers and contributes to a standardization of English and European mapmaking methods. “Novissima et Accuratissima Jamaicæ Descriptio” is a snapshot of Enlightenment thought that would come to dominate the


18th century and make possible the work of scientists like Alexander von Humboldt whose work redefined European notions of imperialism and capitalism. Jamaica was English by means of conquest, but the island’s landscape itself needed to be re-defined to attract settlers.

For the English, the assertion of dominion necessitated the total utilization of the territory and the mapmaking of cartographers like John Ogilby visually rationalized Jamaica for prospective settlers and investors. The conquest and subsequent settlement of Jamaica by the English had brought to light the material and geographic contours of Spanish colonialism on the island, none more prominent than the liminal spaces left blank on maps. Upon conquest in 1655, the Spanish took to the wilderness of the interior for refuge. Whether consciously or not, Spanish encounters with indigenous rebels on the island had shown how the natural landscape could be used as a defense against invasion. Time and time again, the Spanish Jamaican colonists sought out these spaces in their flight from English privateers. Despite desperate pleas from vecinos, the Spanish Empire never invested its time or efforts into garrisoning or fortifying the colony. As a result, any settlement or plantation beyond St. Jago de la Vega and the scattered hatos of the southern coast of the island lacked material support of any kind from the colony or colonial administration and could not be defended. Vast swaths of the island remained virtually untouched by colonialism when the English arrived in 1655. The Ogilby map of 1671 makes efforts to include and accurately represent these spaces in its illustration of the Jamaican landscape. Unlike the Spanish before them, the English were single-mindedly focused on the exploiting the island through agriculture. Only by surveying and visually depicting these spaces could immigrants be attracted to settle and plant them.

The act of mapping the liminal spaces where indigenous and Maroon resistance persisted was fundamental to the process of survey, enclosure, commoditization, and incorporation into the capitalist system. Only by reducing or pacifying these elements could the English achieve their totalizing vision of colonialism. Their inclusion on maps is a recognition both of their existence and the threat they posed to the colonial order. Whereas Spanish colonists were content to ignore indigenous rebels until such time as the situation became untenable, the English were keenly aware of the geographies of resistance that paralleled the nascent plantation economy.

These maps of Jamaica, which depict nearly two centuries of European colonialism, emphasize the spatial dynamics of imperial dominion and resistance to it. They demonstrate how Jamaica was defined in contrast to other Spanish territories and rival European imperial powers, but a closer reading reveals the outlines of resistance. The very fact that the Spanish Crown or its colonial administration failed to accurately map the material realities of Jamaica elucidates how the Empire conceived of territoriality and jurisdiction and the rhetorical considerations inherent to its exercise of dominion. Maps, as documentary evidence of imperial perceptions, offer a cohesive representation of these strategies through an investigation of those cartographic and topographic elements featured or absent. These absences or negations are vested with meaning by the very nature of their omission. Discrepancies between maps provide insight into the preoccupations of imperial powers and the divergent methods of understanding and structuring space. By depicting the geographies of settlement and authority that constituted colonial Jamaica, cartographers inadvertently outlined geographies of resistance by their rendering of blank and inaccessible spaces. Maps of Spanish Jamaica constructed a parallel colonial reality that reflected imperial jurisdiction and framed the contested and liminal terrain of the colonial space. As a
result, the geographic contours of Spanish dominion, both intentionally and not, forever after shaped and were shaped by the geographies of indigenous resistance and Marronage in Jamaica.

As the 1660s ended, the external threat of the Spanish was pacified, but the internal economy of English Jamaica was threadbare. The monocrop plantation system that became a global powerhouse in the mid-18th century had not yet coalesced and the hundred or so plantations that existed at the time produced limited quantities of cocoa, cotton, indigo, and sugarcane, among other cash crops. They were all, with very few exceptions, built alongside the banks of rivers for access to fresh water for irrigation and concentrated in the inland plains of the leeward side of the island. The plantations that existed beyond these tight geographic settlement patterns were at serious risk for attack by Maroons and plunder by pirates or invading European colonial forces, both of which became omnipresent realities of life in Jamaica in the 1680s and 1690s. The few exceptions to these patterns tended to be larger, wealthier, and more connected plantation owners who could purchase large numbers of enslaved Africans and hire or indenture the requisite number of overseers and arms to defend their possessions. Even these plantations, like those of the Modyford brothers – factors in the Royal African Company –, were susceptible in the event of invasion, Maroon attack, or enslaved uprising. At this same time, the “Varmahaly negroes” were relocating to the north and northeast of the island and establishing settlements, facilitated in part by tricking the colonists through a diplomatic ploy to buy time.201 English dominion over Jamaica might have been established through conquest of the Spanish colony, but until the island was settled and fortified it could not be secured against additional threats from within the island or beyond its shores.

Once the Treaty of Madrid was ratified by the Spanish and English Crowns in 1670, King Charles II and the governors of Jamaica set about incentivizing settlement of the island. This diplomatic resolution allowed for the colonial administration to survey, parcel, and deed land to attract settlers, which inexorably led to the expansion of plantations and the physical footprint of the colony. The outgrowth of plantation agriculture necessitated the establishment and violent enforcement of colonial authority and its contingent geographies in these regions for defense against the myriad threats they faced. Maps of English Jamaica based on surveys conducted thereafter 1670 demonstrate the rapid proliferation of settlements on the northside of the island and their movement inland from the coasts, drawing settlers into close contact with Jamaica’s Maroons. Pairing maps with archival and anthropological sources reveals further how the foundations of English Jamaica were established only through negotiation with these communities.
Treaty negotiations between English diplomat William Godolphin and Spanish diplomat Gaspar de Bracamonte were nearing their conclusion in June 1670 when the governors of Cuba and Jamaica each began granting new Commissions of War. Jamaican Governor Thomas Modyford commissioned Admiral Henry Morgan on June 29, 1670, to, “do and perform all manner of Exploits which may tend to the preservation and quiet of this Island.” His instructions were in response to the Cuban governor having landed men on the north side of Jamaica where they began “burning all the Houses They Came at, Kill[ling] or taking Prisoners all the Inhabitants They met with.”

Godolphin and de Bracamonte signed the Treaty of Madrid on July 18, 1670 in an effort to end hostilities throughout the territories of the two colonial empires, with orders that the articles be published in every colony within eight months:

> Moreover, it is agreed, that the most Serene King of Great Britain…shall have…with plenary right of sovereignty, dominion, possession, and propriety, all those lands, regions, islands, colonies, and places whatsoever…in any part of America, which the said King of Great Britain and his subjects do at present hold and possess…

Before word of the treaty reached Jamaica, however, Admiral Morgan set sail from Port Royal on August 14, 1670, with “Eleven Sail of Vessels and 600 Men,” later rendezvousing with seven additional English ships and three French ships that offered their services in war against the Spanish. Within a month of its signing, the Treaty of Madrid was put to the test.


During a five-month period from October 1670-February 1671, Morgan and his privateers ransacked what they could of the Spanish Americas. They took Providence Island, Santa Catalina, and Fort Lorenzo on the mouth of the Chagres River on the Atlantic Coast of Panama in short succession. From Fort Lorenzo, the English staged their assault on Panama City, which they routed with relative ease. The Spanish suffered heavy losses in the battle, burning the city to the ground in their retreat to prevent the English from plundering it. For nearly a month, the privateers occupied the suburbs of Panama City, capturing Spaniards as prisoners and looting what little remained. In the immediate wake of the signing of the Treaty of Madrid, the privateer force led by Henry Morgan and commissioned by Thomas Modyford had dealt a devastating blow to the Spanish Empire; its once great port city of Panama lay in ruins.\footnote{April 4, Copy of the relation of Wm. Fogg concerning the action of the privateers at Panama, taken the 4th of April 1671, America and West Indies: November 1674,” in CSPCAWI: Volume 7, 1669-1674, ed. W Noel Sainsbury (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1889), 615-626.}

Henry Morgan’s 1670-71 campaign was officially regarded with opprobrium by King Charles II and the English colonial administration when word reached London. Outwardly, the English Crown lamented that Governor Modyford acted on his own volition and not under orders from the King, insisting that Morgan and Modyford had gone rogue. Morgan and his privateers had not yet taken Panama City when Charles II ordered the revocation of the Modyford’s governorship on January 4, 1670. Thomas Lynch reached Jamaica in June 1671 and replaced Modyford as governor, who was put under arrest and transported back to London to answer for his actions. Henry Morgan met the same fate in April 1672 on separate orders from the Crown meant to appease the infuriated Spaniards who were considering retaliatory measures. Both men were reported to have been imprisoned in the Tower of London upon arrival, although Morgan served his time under house arrest.\footnote{Alexandre Exquemelin, The Buccaneers of America, (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 1911).}
Modyford and Morgan’s fall from grace proved to be a brief interlude rather than the conclusion to their tales. Two years of attempts to entice the Spanish to open their ports to English ships and commerce had proved fruitless and King Charles II dropped the pretense and revoked their imprisonment as a result.\(^{206}\) In January 1674, the two were released and Henry Morgan was celebrated in London. In November, Morgan was named a Knight Bachelor and sent back to Jamaica to serve as Lieutenant-Governor alongside John Vaughan, also a Knight Bachelor and a Member of Parliament, after Thomas Lynch had fallen out of favor with King Charles II.\(^{207}\) The following April, Thomas Modyford also returned to Jamaica where he was named Chief Justice of the island. The very next day, Charles Modyford – cousin to James and Thomas – was named Surveyor General of Jamaica.\(^{208}\) This rapid reversal by the English King outraged the Spanish royals and the colonial administration in Sevilla, who saw the return of Morgan and Modyford to the colony as a provocation and a threat to their American territories. In 1670, King Charles II had sought peace with Spain and offered up the Jamaican duo of Morgan and Modyford – the rogue privateer and governor – as sacrifices for this cause, but by 1675 the English King was disabused of the notion that the two kingdoms could peaceably coexist in the region.

The return of Henry Morgan and Thomas Modyford to Jamaica reshaped the internal political dynamics of the colony overnight. Thomas Lynch had been hostile toward privateers during his governorship, in line with the stated position of the English Crown and made efforts to


\(^{207}\) “Nov. 6, Commission to Col. Henry Morgan to be Lieut.-Governor of Jamaica, America and West Indies: November 1674,” in *CSPCAWI: Volume 7, 1669-1674*, ed. W Noel Sainsbury (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1889), 615-626. An accounting of the “Revenue” of the colony after Lynch’s removal was also found to fall well short of expectations and the colonial administration grew frustrated at his inability to fortify the island.

\(^{208}\) “April 7, St. Jago de la Vega, P. Beckford to Secretary Sir Jos. Williamson, America and West Indies: April 1675,” in *CSPCAWI: Volume 8, 1675-1676 and Addenda 1574-1674*. 
prevent them from trading or selling plunder in Port Royal. The appointment of Morgan as Lieutenant-Governor and Modyford as the Chief Justice reversed, or at least softened, the stance of the colonial government in the short-term. This was much to the chagrin of Governor Vaughan, who did not see eye-to-eye with his second in command. Modyford was, however, a close confidant of Vaughan’s despite being widely hated by assemblymen and planters of the colony for having been in league with the privateers as governor.209

Upon their arrival and (re-)installation in Jamaica’s colonial government, Modyford, Morgan, and Vaughan each acquired plantations on the north side of the island. Modyford’s enslaved labor force cultivated “Cacao Walkes,” while Vaughan’s planted a “Cotton worke,” and Morgan invested in a “Sugar worke” [Figure 4.2].210 The cotton and sugar plantations were situated inland from Port Maria, with Vaughan’s property farther into the mountains. Modyford also acquired a sugar plantation in northern St. John’s Parish and had an estate in St. Dorothy’s Parish (both are now part of St. Catherine Parish).

This expansion into the interior from the coast signaled a transition in the official approach to settling and exploiting Jamaica. In March 1662, the colonial administration in Whitehall sent Thomas Windsor instructions, which included, “To contrive that the plantations be near together and the sea coast first planted, the better to prevent invasion.”211 The Treaty of Madrid meant that invasions – at least in the short-term and by the Spanish – were no longer the primary, immediate concern of colonists. The return of Modyford and Morgan to Jamaica in

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210 This map includes an exhaustive accounting of all the settlements and plantations of the island and distinguishes the main crops grown in each location. The term “colonial government” is shorthand for the Council, Assembly, Governor, and Courts of English Jamaica.
1675 also demonstrated that King Charles II felt confident that Spain would not attempt a reconquest of the island. Their subsequent efforts to obtain land for plantations on the northside were therefore a byproduct of peace with Spain, which allowed for a certain amount of security for these projects.\textsuperscript{212} The colonists could now focus their energies on expanding the colony to incorporate regions previously unsettled by the Spanish. Three months following the arrival of Governor Vaughan, Lieutenant-Governor Morgan, and Chief Justice Modyford, the trio contracted with the Royal African Company to purchase 41 enslaved African laborers for their respective estates.\textsuperscript{213} Vaughan and Morgan very quickly became regular fixtures at the slave markets in Port Royal from 1675-76 to supply their properties with labor. As the owners of sugar, cotton, and cacao plantations, all three men were distinctly aware of the need for enslaved African labor to achieve the rates of profit that had been heralded by planters in Barbados in the 1650s.\textsuperscript{214}

4.1 The Royal African Company, Sugar Production, and Resistance in Jamaica

The Company of Royal Adventurers Trading into Africa was chartered in 1660 by King Charles II and granted an exclusive monopoly over trade along the western coast of Africa. Within three years, the Company, headed by the King’s brother James II, was also given sole control over the slave trade. Despite these royal privileges, it fell into heavy debt during the Second Anglo-Dutch War in 1667 and relinquished its charter in 1672 only to be replaced by the

\bibitem{212} May., Sir Thomas Lynch’s account of the state of the Church in Jamaica, America and West Indies: May 1675,” in CSPCAWI: Volume 8, 1675-1676 and Addenda 1574-1674. “All the other parishes on the north side and St. Elizabeth’s on the south, are great and ill settled, without churches, being mostly planted in Sir Thos. Lynch’s time.” Lynch served as Governor of Jamaica 1671-1674, in the immediate aftermath of the signing of the Treaty of Madrid.


\bibitem{214} J.R. Ward, “The Profitability of Sugar Planting in the British West Indies, 1650-1834,” The Economic History Review 31, no. 2 (May 1978): 208. Barbadian planters in the 1650s reported rates of profit as high as 40-50% although this was due in large part to the warfare in Brazil between the Dutch and Portuguese that disrupted the production of plantations.
Royal African Company.\footnote{\textit{``Sept. 27, Westminster, Charter of Incorporation of the New Royal African Company, America and West Indies: September 1672,''} in \textit{CSPCAWI: Volume 7, 1669-1674}, ed. W Noel Sainsbury (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1889), 404-417.} The charter granted to the Royal African Company gave it far more latitude to impose brutal force in the subjugation and exploitation of Western African lands and peoples, including the building of fortifications and “castles” where the enslaved were processed for transportation to the Americas. To avoid the same fate that befell its predecessor, the Royal African Company pursued a payment process that required purchasers to pay in three installments.

Demand for enslaved labor in Jamaica grew throughout the 1670s and planters complained constantly that the supply from the Company was insufficient. Despite its expansion along the western coast of Africa and its measures to forestall taking on extensive debts, the Royal African Company took a conservative approach toward meeting the demands of Jamaican planters. Even still, Company officials complained to the colonial administration in 1676 that planters in Jamaica alone owed £25,000.\footnote{\textit{``Nov. 23, African House, Andrew King, sub-Governor, Gabriel Roberts, Deputy Governor, and seven [committee members] of the Royal African Company to Secretary Joseph Williamson, America and West Indies: November 16-30, 1676,''} in \textit{CSPCAWI: Volume 9, 1675-1676 and Addenda 1574-1674}, ed. W Noel Sainsbury (London: Her Majesty's Stationery Office, 1893), 494-507.} As the profitability of sugar production increased in the 1670s and into the 1680s, larger landholders were compelled to acquire and consolidate properties to maximize output.\footnote{Ward, \textit{``The Profitability of Sugar Planting in the British West Indies, 1650-1834,''} 197-213.} Demands for enslaved labor tracked with the growth of sugar plantations and rose precipitously during this period. The Royal African Company was hesitant to meet these demands due to understandable fears about insolvency related to approving large purchases entirely on credit. This depressed the supply of enslaved African laborers to Jamaica and the planters, for their part, complained constantly to the colonial administration that Company officers and factors were mismanaging assets on the island and in Company accounts.
Jamaican planters argued that they only owed roughly half of the debt reported by the Royal African Company to the Lords of Trade.\textsuperscript{218} The Company was ordered to supply Jamaica with enslaved laborers at a rate of 3,000 per year and by 1676 it appears that these needs were being met, albeit at a considerably higher price than more established colonies and with exorbitant interest rates.\textsuperscript{219} The Lords of Trade were called in to arbitrate the dispute between the colony and the Royal African Company in 1679 and, understanding the precarious position of the fledgling colony, decided in favor of the Jamaican colonists. In 1680, King Charles II ordered that the Company provide planters more time to repay their debts, while also providing the island with 3,000 enslaved laborers per year at a rate of £18 per person, nearly a 20\% decrease. The matter was not resolved until 1684 when the King scrapped the order and instead instituted a new contract: the Royal African Company must supply Jamaica with 5,000 enslaved laborers per year and in return the planters would forego all dealings with private traders.\textsuperscript{220} During the period of 1680-1687, an average of 3,287 enslaved Africans were disembarked in Jamaica, which placated the voracious desires of planters and achieved an amicable détente between the sides.

The influx of enslaved Africans throughout the 1670s and 1680s led to a sharp increase in the proportion of enslaved laborers to overseers on plantations. The population of Africans imported to Jamaica during this period was both large and diverse and planters had little discretion over the origin of the enslaved laborers they purchased.\textsuperscript{221} During the period of 1670-

\textsuperscript{218} Trevor Burnard, "‘A Pack Of Knaves’: The Royal African Company, the development of the Jamaican plantation economy and the benefits of monopoly, 1672–1708," \textit{Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History} 21, no. 2 (2020).

\textsuperscript{219} A.P. Thornton, “The Organization of the Slave Trade in the English West Indies, 1660-1685,” \textit{The William and Mary Quarterly} 12, no. 3 (July 1955): 404-405.

\textsuperscript{220} Thornton, “The Organization of the Slave Trade in the English West Indies, 1660-1685,” 405-406. The private traders had been undercutting the Company’s prices for years and if any planter were caught buying from these merchants, they would be levied heavy fines. Meanwhile, if the Company did not satisfy its end of the deal, the price would revert to £18.

1680, almost seventy-six percent of the enslaved Africans brought to Jamaica came from the Gold Coast, the Bight of Benin, the Bight of Biafra, and West Central Africa as the Royal African Company pulled from every region to meet growing demand.222 The rapid increase in the enslaved population during the 1670s emboldened runaways and Maroon populations across the island as the white colonial population failed to keep pace.223

Thomas Modyford, while acting as governor in 1670, responded to attacks by the “Varmahaly Negroes” in Clarendon with orders that any resident of the parish would be subject to fine and imprisonment if they “shall travel two miles or above from his dwelling place, without a pistol.”224 The situation became tense enough that the Varmahaly eventually removed themselves to the northeast of the island in the early 1670s. This led to a brief period of détente between the Maroons and the colonists on the island that was interrupted by enslaved uprisings in 1673, when 200 individuals rebelled in St. Ann’s Parish and fled southwest into Clarendon and St. Elizabeth and were never displaced by the colonists despite their repeated attempts.225

Tensions may have cooled momentarily between the colony and the “Varmahaly,” but there was no peace for the enslaved, who existed under the constant yoke of violent oppression and exploitation and never ceased resisting.226 These enslaved rebels from St. Ann’s likely formed the original Maroon communities that today occupy Cockpit Country and especially in its western extents.

224 “At a Council held at St. Jago de la Vega,” Journal of the Council of Jamaica, May 2, 1670, f. 171-175, 1B/5/3/1, Jamaica Archives and Record Department.
225 Campbell, The Maroons of Jamaica, 1655-1796, 36-37.
The Council of Jamaica first began to institute rules for the “better ordering” of the enslaved population in 1664, but with the influx of African laborers throughout the 1670s and 1680s, additional orders were put into effect. The colony had been preoccupied with the “rebellious negroes” in the 1660s and offered incentives for capturing or killing members of the “Varmahaly,” but the threat posed by the rapidly growing enslaved population was, for the most part, ignored by the colonial government.\(^{227}\) To further compound the matter, natural disasters, disease, and coastal raids on plantations by foreign powers during the twenty-year period of 1673-1693 reduced the white population of the colony from a high of 7,768 men, women, and children to as few as 1,400.\(^{228}\) In September 1686, these two internal pressures converged when the Assembly of Jamaica issued instructions for planters in the northeast of the island for the “reduction of rebellious negroes,” much like the Spanish Jamaican Governor Melgarejo had in 1601, and offered a reward of £1,000 for the “suppressors of the negro rebellion before Christmas.”\(^{229}\) The colony was confronting an internal war on two fronts: on the plantations and in the mountains. Africans and their descendants, rather than the rival Spanish or French, represented the most serious challenge to English colonialism in Jamaica.\(^{230}\) They saw both the threat to, and source of, the advancement of their economic interests as stemming from the “negro,” which by the 1680s had become synonymous with “slave” in the English imaginary.

The more that Jamaican planters expanded the footprint of sugarcane production on the island, the more arable land they needed, which increased the demand for enslaved African

\(^{227}\) The English referred to the Maroons as the “rebellious negroes” in their documents throughout the seventeenth century and I use the terms interchangeably. When detailing events from the perspective of the English, “rebellious negroes” is used, whereas when detailing events from the perspective of these communities, I employ Maroon.


labor. The result was a rapid increase in the disparity on the island between Europeans and Africans as the growth of the enslaved African population vastly outpaced colonial oversight. In 1670, there were an estimated 15,198 residents of Jamaica, with 10,942 enslaved Africans having been disembarked on the island during the 1660s. The only census available for the year 1680 is that of Port Royal and St. John – which was later merged with St. Catherine and included Guanaboa Vale – which lists 1,822 “white” inhabitants 1,421 “black” inhabitants. Given that Port Royal was primarily a merchant district, the ratio of 1,623 “white” inhabitants to just 670 “black” inhabitants is in line with expectations. In the far more agricultural parish of St. John, however, there were 751 “black” inhabitants as compared to 199 “white inhabitants.” By 1680, the “black” population of Jamaica represented twenty-three percent of the total living in all English possessions. Jamaica’s planters were vastly outnumbered and the size of the enslaved African population of the island continued to swell throughout the remainder of the seventeenth century until, in 1703, stricter laws were passed that mandated, “every planter to keep 1 white servant for his first 10 Negroes, 2 for the first 20 and 1 for every 20 thereafter.”

The “white” population of Jamaica was concentrated in Port Royal and St. Jago de la Vega as opposed to the “black” population that occupied plantations across the island. Although we do not have census data for parishes like St. Ann, St. Marie, and St. George where frontier plantations were cleared and planted in the late 1670s, the disparities of the population demographics were almost assuredly more pronounced than southern parishes. Moreover, because the “rebellious negroes” existed outside of the framework of colonial society, they were

232 Burnard and Morgan, “The Dynamics of the Slave Market and Slave Purchasing Patterns in Jamaica, 1655-1788,” 205.
not included in these censuses upon flight from bondage. During this period there were no discernible towns on the northside of the island and the colony offered what little it could in the way of protection without material support from the colonial administration. Maroons operated with complete autonomy outside of periodic clashes with irregular colonial forces that were raised when the necessity arose. Often these forces in the 1670s and 1680s were constituted by buccaneers and led by Henry Morgan, who was materially invested in the security of plantations on the northside of the island.

Amidst these transformations taking place within Jamaica, the Royal African Company successfully fulfilled the terms of the new contract outlined by King Charles II in 1684, and it appears from the lack of complaints about debts that the Jamaican planters were largely able to maintain payments on their debts as well. Despite internal instabilities, the plantocracy of Jamaica remained myopically focused on profit margins and acquired as many enslaved laborers as could be sold. However, this détente between the Jamaican planters and the Royal African Company was rendered irrelevant in 1688. Charles II died in 1685 and the successor to the throne, James II, who was the Duke of York and head of the Royal African Company, was deposed in the Glorious Revolution. The Company had been chartered based on the royal prerogative of King Charles II and with James II at the head of it. The removal from power and exile of James II therefore completely undermined their political position and forced Company officials to negotiate with the government of William of Orange and Mary II – the daughter of James II – to maintain their monopoly on the slave trade in England. The importation of enslaved African labor into Jamaica slowed almost to a halt in the period of 1688-1690 as the government of William and Mary refused to back the Royal African Company in the enforcement of its

234 Henry Morgan argued fervently that the necessity was constant, to no avail.
monopoly. The trade finally rebounded in 1691, but the supply remained inconsistent until the year 1700 when there were 8,948 enslaved Africans disembarked in Jamaica alone. However, this largely did not benefit the Company since a large portion were sold by private traders who had been emboldened and enabled by the government under William and Mary.236

4.2 Jamaican Plantations and the Emergence of the Maroons

Mapping the expansion of Jamaican plantations alongside colonial legislation that details encounters with, or campaign against, the “rebellious negroes” reveals the physical dimensions of territories claimed and occupied by Maroons. A life of Marronage is inherently dynamic given its reliance on the biodiversity of natural landscapes for survival and subsistence. In the late seventeenth century Jamaica’s Maroons in the northeast of the island embedded themselves in hills of St. George in an array of settlements that used the mountainous, isolated surroundings for protection, with dwellings built on rocky precipices. The slow, but inexorable expansion of plantations into regions bordering and encroaching on these rival geographies in the 1670s and beyond brought these communities into direct conflict with the English colony.237 The political boundaries drawn by the settlement, cultivation, and resistance of the so-called “rebellious negroes” constitute the geographies of Jamaican Marronage. Plotting these territories and their contingent spaces on maps produced from colonial surveys at the end of the seventeenth century demonstrates how the shape and nature of English colonialism that emerged later in the eighteenth century was founded through negotiation with these oppositional and antagonistic forces. Maroons embraced the isolation afforded by the nature of settlement in the late seventeenth century, but their near-constant raids on frontier plantations and their clashes with

237 Campbell, The Maroons of Jamaica, 35-36.
colonial forces make clear that resistance to expansion shaped the colony just as it was shaped itself by colonial aggression.

The expansion of plantations on the northside of the island began with a diversity of crop production. There were sugar plantations in great abundance on the southern side of the island, which was less mountainous and required less labor to clear, but these practices had resulted in soil exhaustion and extensive droughts by 1670. Initial settlers on the northern side, especially along the banks of Wag Water River and Dry River, focused their efforts on cacao production despite the “blast” that wiped out cacao crops island-wide in 1670. Indigo and cotton were also still grown in considerable amounts at the end of the 1680s, with cotton plantations concentrated along the northern coast between Rio Bueno and Ocho Rios, due west of settlements of Morgan, Vaughan, and Modyford in St. Ann [Figure 3.2]. The diversification of crop production meant that labor needs were not uniform and in these early decades the smaller landholders were able to produce crop harvests without the sizeable labor demands required for sugar plantations. Cacao, cotton, and indigo also required less land to be cleared and could be grown on a smaller scale at a profit, whereas sugar plantations necessitated large crop fields with an enslaved labor force of sufficient size. Thomas Modyford, Henry Morgan, and John Vaughan were early to sugar production in English Jamaica. They took advantage of their positions within the colonial government – and in the case of Modyford his cousin’s appointment as Surveyor General – to acquire estates large enough to support their aspirations. The proliferation of each

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239 Jorge R. Díaz-Valderrama, Santos T. Leiva-Espinoza, and M. Catherine Aime, “The History of Cacao and its Diseases in the Americas,” Phytopathology 110, no. 10 (2020): 1613. The source of Dry River lies in the Blue Mountains at a height of 4,000 ft above sea level and falls to just above 250 feet near the coastlines where the plantations were located.  
240 By comparing the settlements listed on John Ogilby’s “Novissima et Accuratissima Insulae Jamaicae” published in 1671 with those depicted on Bochart and Knolli's “A New & Exact Mapp of the Island of Jamaica” published in 1684, it is possible to date the establishment of new plantations on the northside of the island with some accuracy.
agricultural pursuit expanded the geography of the colony by incorporating additional regions of
the island into its regimes of oversight and authority. Evidence of the expansion of these regimes
is visible on Edward Slaney’s 1678 work *Tabula Jamaicae Insula*, which features “Gunters
Garisson [sic]” in northern St. John’s and a breastwork situated just west of the border of
Clarendon [Figure 4.1]. Neither military position existed on Blome’s map of 1671 or Ogilby’s
map of the same year, and both were established in the wake of significant enslaved uprisings
nearby. The Jamaican colonists constructed the garrison as a fortified location from which
they could venture further into the uncleared and unsettled territories to the north of St. Jago de
la Vega and as a bulwark against nearby uprisings of enslaved laborers. The breastwork west of
Clarendon provided defense against an invasion landing in the more unsettled territories of St.
Elizabeth. There were additional fortifications and breastworks constructed in and around Port
Royal for the defense of the island, but in the seventeenth century this framework of security
failed to reach the northside of the island. Proximity was necessary for these positions to serve a
purpose against opposing forces and the Maroons fought on their terms, in their territories,
except in the case of strategic raids on isolated plantations for needed supplies.

The colonial infrastructure existed to support efforts at settlement and plantation, which
included the building of highways, clearing of land, and armed assistance against the hostile
bands of “rebellious negroes” that took up residence in Cockpit Country and the Blue Mountains
throughout the 1670s. The building of frontier plantations did not explicitly target the

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241 The Bochart and Knollis map of 1684 also features “Fort Thomas,” which was later known as “Ocho Rios Fort.”
Little information about this fortification remains but was likely built sometime in the late seventeenth century for
defense against invasions from the sea in the vicinity of Ocho Rios. This would have little discernible utility in the
case of an uprising of the enslaved or Maroon antagonisms.
242 Highways were a concern of the colonial government and repeated orders were issued for “better laying out and
mending the highways,” but other than the routes already traced by Spanish colonialism there was little effort
applied to the task prior to the eighteenth century. See, for example: “Aug. 4, Bill for the better laying out and
mending the highways read and recommitted, America and West Indies: August 1703, 1-5,” in CSPCAWI: Volume
21, 1702-1703.
Maroons, but any expansion of the infrastructure of the colony was hostile to Marronage. These Maroon settlements, once isolated, before long began to feel the presence of the colony through these frontier settlements. On January 23, 1676, the Council of Jamaica was convened to discuss the ongoing issue of “rebellious negroes” in St. Mary Parish, which was home to the “Cacao Walke” of Modyford, the “Cotton worke” of Vaughan, and the “Sugar worke” of Morgan [Figure 4.2]. Given the proximity of Maroons to the plantations of the three most influential colonists on the island, Governor Vaughan and the Council of Jamaica decided that a standing force of twenty soldiers be established, “until said negroes be subdued,” and specified rewards
for capturing or killing the individuals “Peter,” “Scanderberg,” and “Doctor.” It is likely that these individuals were leaders of the rebels who had settled in the mountains of St. Mary and it is clear from their names that they were not of the “Spanish Negroes.” Less than a month later, the Council convened again to order that Articles of War against the “rebellious negroes” be published throughout the island and to station guards at the “crawles” of “Captain Bourden” and “Lieutenant Hysom,” the latter of which lay in the hills nearby Vaughan’s cotton plantation.

Governor Vaughan reported just three days later that “eight or nine have been taken and executed…hopes they are wholly reduced or dispersed.” The Maroons in the mountains of St. Mary Parish were under assault by the colony.

The differences between John Vaughan and Henry Morgan, his second in command, finally reached a breaking point as the campaign against the Maroons in St. Mary Parish took place. Vaughan wrote to Secretary of State Joseph Williamson and reiterated to the Lord Privy


244 “Feb. 20, Governor Lord Vaughan to Sir Robert Southwell, America and West Indies: February 1676,” in CSP Colonial, America and West Indies: Volume 9, 1675-1676 and Addenda 1574-1674.
Seal, the Earl of Angelsea, in May 1676 that his Lieutenant-Governor, “contrary to his duty and trust, endeavours to set up privateering, and has obstructed all my designs and purposes for the reducing of those that do use that curse of life…” 245

Morgan leaned on influential friends to maintain his position despite the repeated complaints of Vaughan to the colonial administration. On one occasion, King Charles II himself intervened on behalf of Morgan, reinstating him as Deputy Governor following his unilateral removal by Vaughan. 246 During his tenure as governor, Vaughan earnestly attempted to enact the King’s orders despite objections from planters. He was especially rapacious as it related to suppressing privateering and piracy in the Americas and used the full might of his position to prosecute interloping private slave traders. This was much to the benefit of the Royal African Company, but angered planters whose demands at the time were not being met by the Company and private merchants who opposed their monopoly. Vaughan’s assault on private slave trading and privateering effectively alienated a large portion of the Jamaican colonial elite during his time as governor, including Morgan and the Modyfords. When Vaughan was dismissed from office in April 1678, the Assembly declared martial law and Morgan wasted little time executing plans to fortify Port Royal Harbor (now Kingston Harbor) with two additional batteries, something the deposed governor had been loath to put into effect. 247 Despite this ignominious end to his tenure as governor, Vaughan joined the ranks of The Royal Society after his return to London, eventually becoming its president, and assumed the role of Third Earl of Carbery. His

245 “May 2, Governor Vaughan to Secretary Sir Joseph Williamson, America and West Indies: May 1676,” in CSPCAWI: Volume 9, 1675-1676 and Addenda 1574-1674.
247 “April 25, Minutes of a Council of War, America and West Indies: April 1678,” in CSPCAWI: Volume 10, 1677-1680.
actions as governor may have won him no friends in Jamaica, but John Vaughan was celebrated by his aristocratic peers in England.  

The Earl of Carlisle, Charles Howard, was appointed Governor of Jamaica in 1678 with strict instructions to institute laws emanating from London. Howard hoped to achieve this by dissolving the Assembly, which infuriated the plantocracy which dominated local governance. Opponents of this act, like future Governor William Beeston and Speaker of the House Samuel Long, were arrested and sent in chains to London to stand trial for their defiance. King Charles II once again sided against the governor he had appointed, reinstating the Assembly along with all prior members. Charles Howard was recalled to England in 1680 and was replaced by Henry Morgan as acting governor. The privateer-turned-politician once again found himself at the highest echelon of Jamaican governance, but his stay too was short-lived.

In September 1677 there was a “rebellion of the Northside negroes” that was brought before the Council of Jamaica for debate and in July of the following year, the then newly appointed Governor Carlisle wrote to the Secretary of State about, “the negroes who have been lately very outrageous.” The threat posed by runaways and “rebellious negroes” seems to have been underestimated or perhaps misunderstood by the King and colonial administration. In August 1681, Henry Morgan who had yet again risen to acting governor wrote to the Secretary of State Leoline Jenkins about concerns regarding “public remour [sic]” which intimated that King Charles II would disband the two companies of troops stationed in Jamaica. Morgan mentioned that this had long been whispered without substantiation in Jamaica, but his plea to Jenkins indicates that he had begun to take them seriously. In his letter, he emphasized the

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250 “Sept. 26, Debate on Several Acts, America and West Indies: September 1677,” and “July 31, Governor Lord Carlisle to Secretary Coventry, America and the West Indies: July 1678,” in CSPCAWI: Volume 10, 1677-1680.
importance of these troops to the internal and external security of the colony, “They are constant employed either at sea or ashore, in bringing in runaway or rebellious negroes or reducing of pirates, who…are very numerous.” The King and the English colonial administration largely ignored the warnings of the battle-tested Morgan, and the regiments were later disbanded.

The 1680s were a transitional period for English colonial Jamaica. The removal of Henry Morgan and his replacement by Thomas Lynch in 1682 was to be the final appointment made by Charles II before his passing in 1685. It emphasized the King’s desire to fill the highest ranks of colonial governments with men loyal to London alone. This further exacerbated the situation of planters on the northside of Jamaica who did not possess the means to combat enslaved uprisings and Maroon resistance, but who nevertheless purchased enslaved African labor in large numbers. During these years, the Royal African Company managed to satisfy the demands of planters who continued to expand inland from the coast on the northside of island. This expansion of plantation encroached on Maroon territories while also increasing the population of enslaved Africans on the island who in turn fled in larger numbers and engaged in Marronage. Populations on multiple plantations in Guanaboa Vale, located roughly eight miles northwest of St. Jago de la Vega in the hills of St. Catherine Parish, revolted in rapid succession in 1685 and laid waste to the area. These runaways split into multiple parties, the most aggressive of which migrated northward into St. Mary Parish and fought against colonial regiments for the next two years.

The Maroons and the runaways who swelled their numbers became such an omnipresent threat that by 1686 the colony had exhausted all funds dedicated to “serving against the negroes”

251 “Aug. 22, Sir Henry Morgan to Sir Leoline Jenkins, America and West Indies: August 1681,” in CSPCAWI: Volume 11, 1681-1685.
252 Craton, Testing the Chains: Resistance to Slavery in the British West Indies, 76.
and the Council ordered that each parish “provide for its own security.” At this same time, the Royal African Company was disembarking nearly 4,000 enslaved African in Jamaica per year. As plantations grew and profits were pursued, the situation for Jamaican planters on the northside of the island was rapidly deteriorating. In March of 1686, planters on the southside were abruptly acquainted with these threats when there was a large uprising on the Gay plantation in St. John. Lieutenant-Governor Molesworth – who was himself a prominent planter whose properties produced every variety of cash crop – declared martial law and made an impassioned speech to the Assembly of Jamaica in June 1686 describing the situation for planters on the island:

I have summoned you to advise how to secure ourselves and estates against the barbarous treachery of our slaves, to keep them in order and to dissuade others from joining such as are rebellious. You know the expense to which we have been put, the mischiefs that have been committed on divers poor families, and our efforts to suppress the rebels under the disadvantages of no money and a crippled power over the militia.

Three days later, the Assembly of Jamaica reported that, “The forts are in so good a condition that they cannot be improved without making them new.” The Assembly made no mention of the services of soldiers at sea against pirates and interlopers, but it appears colonists were at least confident in their ability to defend against invasion in 1686 based upon the state of the island’s fortifications.

Amidst the revolving door of governance in the late 1670s and into the early 1680s, planters in the northern parishes of St. George, St. Marie, and St. Ann moved forward with the

253 “Jan. 12, Minutes of the Council of Jamaica, America and West Indies: January 1686,” in CSPCAWI: Volume 12, 1685-1688 and Addenda 1653-1687.
255 “June 1, Lieutenant-Governor Molesworth's speech to the Assembly of Jamaica, America and West Indies: June 1686,” in CSPCAWI: Volume 12, 1685-1688 and Addenda 1653-1687.
256 “June 4, Report of the Committee of Assembly on the state of the forts in Jamaica, America and West Indies: January 1686,” in CSPCAWI: Volume 12, 1685-1688 and Addenda 1653-1687.
expensive task of clearing land for plantations. By the printing of Bochart and Knollis’s “A new & exact mapp of the island of Jamaica: with ye true and iust scituation of ye severall townes & churches” in 1684 there were at least six established cacao plantations along the Spanish River, nearby cotton plantations, and a large concentration of cacao plantations in the western half of St. George between the Wagwater and Buff Bay Rivers [Figure 4.2]. Slowly, but surely, planters seized new territory and reshaped it to their agricultural designs. At the same time, the Maroons continued to build out their settlements in the southern extents of St. George at the base of the Blue Mountains. Unlike their colonial counterparts, the Maroons used the natural landscape to their advantage rather than bending it to their whim and had, by 1686, created multiple substantial settlements in this region of the island. One such community included fifteen huts, each of which contained several “cabins” for cohabitation, constructed on precipices. There were also about twenty miles of traps for catching wild hogs and “divers plantations” totaling an approximate twenty acres of crops. In contrast, Molesworth wrote to William Blathwayt in September 1686 describing the dire circumstances of planters in the northeastern parishes of the island, emphasizing the precarity of, “those of St. George's (who), unless relieved, are prepared to desert their settlements.” Molesworth struggled to convince the Jamaican plantocracy to voluntarily consent to a tax from which funds could be reliably drawn for raising troops to combat the “rebellious negroes” and depended on volunteers until finally instituting martial law in desperation. Over the course of the next year, troops assigned by Molesworth marched

257 In the early 1670s in Jamaica there was a great deal of confusion caused by the multiplicity of surveyors employing conflicting survey practices on the island. Large tracts of land were granted to individuals who never intended to clear or plant the land and a series of reforms were enacted in the late seventeenth century to normalize the process of surveying, granting, clearing, and planting land. See: Higman, Jamaica Surveyed: Plantation Maps and Plans of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries, 29-35.
259 “Sept. 28, Lieutenant-Governor Molesworth to William Blathwayt, America and West Indies: September 1686,” in CSPCAWI: Volume 12, 1685-1688 and Addenda 1653-1687.
through the regions where the Maroons had been sighted and when they found a settlement they set fire to provision grounds, destroyed hog snares, and chased the inhabitants from their homes. This “success” seems to have had little long-term effect beyond further antagonizing these communities who exacted their revenge against northside planters over the course of the next decade, regularly raiding and ransacking these plantations.\textsuperscript{260}

The continued existence of the “rebellious negroes” was anathema to the Jamaican colonists. The groups were an impediment to the clearing and settling of vast swaths of arable land on the northside of the island in St. George, St. Ann, and later St. James and the colonial forces had effected no change to this dynamic by the end of the 1680s. With each passing year more enslaved Africans revolted and escaped into the woods across the island, continuing the patterns established under Spanish colonialism. In a single uprising in 1691, 400 enslaved laborers on the plantation of Thomas Sutton in southwestern Clarendon Parish along the banks of the Milk River rebelled [Figure 4.2]. Half of these rebels were killed within three weeks, but the remainder escaped and formed a community in the southern reaches of St. James. There are both an “Old Palink” and a “Negro Palink” included on Bochart and Knollis’s map published in 1684. The “Negro Palink” is situated on this map almost exactly where Cudjoe Town – later “Trelawny Town” – was in southern St. James, adjacent to the “Spanish Crawl.” This suggests that runaways might have inhabited this location and the “Old Palink” before the arrival of the rebels from Sutton’s plantation, potentially during the time of the Spanish insurgency. The leader of this group, the “Cudjoe” for whom the town was originally named, struck fear in the hears of Jamaican planters for decades to follow.\textsuperscript{261}

\textsuperscript{260} Campbell, \textit{The Maroons of Jamaica}, 42.
\textsuperscript{261} Dunn, \textit{Sugar and Slaves}, 260-261.
4.3 Devastation and Consolidation: Jamaica in the 1690s

On June 7, 1692, just before noon, a devastating earthquake struck Jamaica. The earthquake caused a landslide in Port Royal Harbor that submerged or destroyed close to ninety percent of the buildings of the merchant hub and generated a tsunami that exposed the seabed of the harbor before pounding the coastline.\(^{262}\) Approximately 2,000 people were killed, and for months afterward the impacts of the earthquake caused additional landslides that swallowed up entire plantations.\(^{263}\) The colony lay in ruins: plantations were destroyed, planters and merchants perished, all the island’s fortifications were either wrecked or greatly compromised, and the ships in Port Royal Harbor were capsized. Disease and aftershocks followed, which claimed more lives and deepened the disaster. The enslaved capitalized on this opportunity wherever possible, fleeing from plantations across the island. In response, the Council of Jamaica issued a bounty on all “runaway negroes,” at a rate of “£4 a head for every negro brought in alive and £2 a head for every negro brought in dead.”\(^{264}\) By April of 1693 martial law was declared to put the island in a posture of defense in case any rival European powers seize upon the weakened state of the colony.

The fears of the Jamaican plantocracy were realized in June 1694 when the French invaded. Most of the French forces landed at Cow Bay in the southeast of the island in St. David and ransacked the plantations, plundering any valuables, kidnapping the enslaved, and burning all structures to the ground. Additional forces landed on the northside of the island and swept through St. Mary and St. George, while a further contingent landed southwest of the capital in


\(^{263}\) Russell J. Maharaj, “The morphology, geometry and kinematics of Judgement cliff rock avalanche, Blue Mountains, Jamaica, West Indies,” *Quarterly Journal of Engineering Geology and Hydrogeology* 27, no. 3 (August 1994): 243-256. The rains of Jamaica’s yearly hurricane season likely contributed to this landslide as well.

\(^{264}\) “Feb. 22, Minutes of Council of Jamaica, America and West Indies: February 1693,” in *CSPCAWI: Volume 14, 1693-1696*.
Old Harbour. The Council of Jamaica issued orders on June 6 for, “abandoning the forts to windward, and that all people come in to Liguanea and Kingston with their cattle, negroes, etc,” to join the forces stationed there to defend the capital and harbor.\footnote{June 6, Minutes of Council of Jamaica, America and West Indies: June 1694,” in CSPCAWI: Volume 14, 1693-1696.} This invasion so soon after the 1692 earthquake caught the colony at its weakest state since initial conquest. Governor William Beeston took every precaution to fortify Kingston and St. Jago de la Vega. Every man on the island was called to arms. The French who invaded at Old Harbour prevented forces from Vere and Clarendon to rendezvous in the capital where their services were desperately needed. Beeston wrote to Major Richard Lloyd that, “since the place is so full of conveniences for ambuscados [sic]…to consider the Cockpitt [sic] path, whether they will not those moonshine nights give you the slipp [sic] over to Old Harbour and hither.”\footnote{William Beeston to Major Richard Lloyd, July 22, 1694, 312, CO 137/4, The National Archives, Kew, Richmond, UK.} In this moment of desperation, the colonial forces leaned on hard-learned lessons from their encounters with the guerrilla warfare of the “rebellious negroes” to out-maneuver the French and stave off the invasion. The island was not lost to conquest, but well over one thousand enslaved laborers were stolen, an undetermined number of “free negroes” were also taken, and dozens of plantations were raided and destroyed.

Agricultural production of the colony ground to a halt with the devastation wrought by the French. Enslaved Africans continued to be imported in large numbers and in 1694-1695 a total of 7,152 were disembarked in Jamaica. Much of this served to replenish plantations that had been stripped of valuables and laborers. Once these estates had been served, importation dropped dramatically from 1696-1698 with just 3,757 enslaved Africans disembarked during this three-year period. In October 1698, William Beeston reported to the Council of Trade and Plantation
that there were approximately 2,465 “white men” on the island as opposed to “Negroes of all sorts, sexes, and ages, about 40,000.” A good portion of these “white men” would have been merchants, troops, and residents of Kingston or St. Jago de la Vega, meaning that the 16:1 ratio of “negroes” to “white men” was probably far greater. The colony was in ruins and planters on the northside were destitute for want of oversight and security. Meanwhile, the Maroons of Jamaica flourished in isolation yet again.

The English colony of Jamaica in its reduced state after 1694 could not effectively combat the “rebellious negroes.” Campaigns against these groups in the latter half of the 1690s were scarce and ineffective. In January 1695, a Captain Hanger reported to the Council of Jamaica that there had been, “a fight with the rebellious negroes, in which the negroes had shown...”

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themselves very resolute and had killed one of his men and wounded another, whereupon he desired to be reinforced.”

For the next ten years, the Maroons focused their efforts on agriculture and settlement. Distinct communities formed political relationships and consolidated with each other through “bitter power struggles that manifested themselves in battles for leadership among different clans.” The Maroons developed robust infrastructures that included coastal access at Titchfield and Manchioneal Bays where they could obtain fish and turtle as well as harvest salt from coastal beds for curing and storing meats [Figure 4.3]. These sites were used by a variety of communities and fostered communication amongst the distinct groups and were vital nodes in the broader geographies of Marronage.

The Maroons coalesced into distinct towns in the early eighteenth century, becoming as mighty as the colonial forces. A powerful community formed out of the ascendency of Cudjoe over multiple groups in Western Cockpit Country, one of which was a group of shipwrecked enslaved Madagascans. “Cudjoe Town,” which was later renamed “Trelawny Town,” and Accompong emerged from this group. Along the northeastern ranges of the Blue Mountains, the community led by “Cuffee” and later “Quao” formed “Crawford Town,” which was situated on the banks of the Buff Bay River in the Blue Mountains of St. George [Figure 4.4]. An additional town was located due east of Crawford Town on the banks of the Rio Grande, which was listed as “New Negro Town” on the Browne, Sheffield, and Bayly map published in 1755, *A New Map of Jamaica* [Figure 4.4].

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268 “Jan. 9, Minutes of Council of Jamaica, America and West Indies: January 1695,” in *CSPCAWI: Volume 14, 1693-1696*.
269 Campbell, *The Maroons of Jamaica*, 44.
270 Campbell, *The Maroons of Jamaica*, 59. This was only discovered by the colonists in the 1730s.
Working back from these later maps helps to connect the dots between what is known of the Maroons in the late seventeenth century and the first two decades of the eighteenth century to form a more holistic framework of their contingent geographies. Fortifications and military positions that were established in regions of heightened Maroon activity in the eighteenth century demonstrate both how the colony responded to Marronage and the landscapes occupied by those engaged in it. The foundation and mapping of Maroon towns by the colony was a de facto recognition of the geographies formed by these populations filtered through the lens of mercantilist expansion. Herman Moll’s map published in 1728 did not include these towns and it is likely that the colony still possessed little in the way of accurate information about their locations [Figure 4.3]. The Moll Map also did not depict a barracks built in the immediate vicinity of Trelawny Town and another nearby Accompong, which were included on “A New
Map of Jamaica.” Another barrack was constructed in between Port Antonio and “the rebel haunts” in 1733, which did not make an appearance on either map.272

The layouts of Maroon towns were strategically designed to ensure that any single engagement with colonial forces would not destroy the community entirely. The principal settlement of the community was constructed at the highest elevation, making use of the rocky precipices along the slopes of the Blue Mountains, while smaller settlements at lower elevations could be easily abandoned and left to be destroyed by the colonial forces at little cost to the community who would retreat to the main stronghold in the hills.273 Every aspect of Jamaican Marronage was a carefully considered balance between security and utility: locations were chosen based on the safety the landscape provided and its proximity to a diversity of natural resources. Individual settlements that constituted the larger Maroon town apparatus were established with the knowledge that one could be abandoned and lost without compromising the whole. For this reason, each individual settlement was planted with provisions in addition to the large crop fields that were sewn as a means of ensuring that the community could weather engagements with colonial forces.

The Maroons that settled in the Blue Mountains of northeastern Jamaica saw – and continue to see – themselves as the autochthons of these landscapes.274 They cultivated and defended these territories against colonial expansion and in these efforts defined unique geographies. Settlements within these landscapes were connected by networks of

272 “Council of Trade and Plantation to Governor Hunter,” March 11, 1733, 177, CO 137/17, The National Archives, Kew, Richmond, UK.
273 Campbell, The Maroons of Jamaica, 47.
communication, subsistence, and resistance that rejected and subverted the authority of the colony in its entirety. The Maroons posed both a tangible threat to settlers and a symbolic threat to the stability of colonialism on the island. The enslaved saw what the Maroons had accomplished and in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries seized on the weakness of the colony and their own numerical superiority to attain some semblance of this autonomy.

In 1698, the English estimated that Jamaica contained roughly 40,000 enslaved Africans and needed many more to become profitable. The precarious situation of the colony in the 1690s forestalled any significant investment, but with those issues resolved, the early eighteenth century presented great opportunity for aspiring English capitalists. In the 1670s, English Jamaica disembarked a total of 14,491 enslaved Africans. By the first decade of the eighteenth century, that figure had skyrocketed to 53,947 individuals and during the 1720s Jamaica saw the arrival of 75,467 enslaved Africans. This massive increase, more than five-fold within the span of 40 years, tracked with the expansion of plantations and the broadening of commerce to allow for the entry of private merchants. It also precipitated the inevitable: widespread rebellions by the enslaved who vastly outnumbered the “whites” and an island wide confrontation between the ever-expanding colony and Jamaica’s Maroons.

Queen Anne was crowned in London in March 1702, at which point the Royal African Company was being overtly shunned by the English Crown. The Company monopoly over the slave trade was undermined by a series of acts that legitimized independent trading. As of 1712, British slave trading was fully independent, and Jamaica’s planters could acquire enslaved labor without restriction.

It is against this colonial backdrop of the early eighteenth century that the First Maroon War took shape, with communities growing through the inclusion of new runaways from the ever-expanding presence of sugar plantations. However, it was in the terse, uncertain period of colonialism from 1670-1700 that the geographical contours of Maroon resistance were laid through confrontation and negotiation with the expansion of plantations on the northside of the island. Jamaica’s Maroons were not passive observers of this growing threat to the landscapes they called home.

The initial decades of the eighteenth century saw sporadic engagements turn to open and island-wide warfare. The Maroons used every aspect of their natural environment and their intimate knowledge of the colony to seize advantages. They formed relationships with enslaved laborers on nearby plantations, traded with private merchants stopping in ports on the island’s northside, and purchased goods from Jewish merchants who the colony had forced to live apart from the other merchants of the colony in “Jew Alley.” Each of these individual strategic decisions were part and parcel of the larger geographic framework of Jamaican Marronage; each node on that “map” was of immeasurable importance to their survival. The geographic foundations of Jamaican Marronage are central to the Maroon identity. Reading along the bias grain of colonial maps unveils how the landscapes deemed uncleared and unsettled by the plantocracy were not only occupied but cultivated and part of a much larger network of subsistence. These foundational years of Marronage laid the groundwork for the more protracted warfare of the 1720s and 1730s and by pairing what we know from later maps we can better understand the processes by which resistance was honed and refined in the late seventeenth century.

277 “The further examination of Sarra alias Ned taken by order of His Excellency,” October 1, 1733, 42, CO 137/21, The National Archives, Kew, Richmond, UK.
4.4 Resistance or Incorporation: Contrasting the Legacies of the Palenques of Juan de Serras and Juan de Bolas

In the initial five years of the English conquest of Spanish Jamaica, the various palenques of “rebellious negroes” were presented with a choice: accept the overtures of the invading army and be welcomed as members of the colonial populace or continue to oppose the English and face the full force of the colony. In the parallel histories of the palenques led by Juan de Serras and Juan de Bolas we can observe the fallout of these two divergent paths by tracing them through the colonial record. Juan de Serras and the “Varmahaly” were obstinate in their refusal to consider terms offered by the English. Their journey as it relates to English Jamaica began in the isolated terrain of northern Clarendon, which is featured on Slaney’s map of 1678 as the “Virimijalas Savana” due west of “Mount Diabolo [sic],” where they first staged their resistance. Their tenuous and pragmatic relationship with the Spanish insurgency lasted only so far as it served their own needs. When the Spanish had proven themselves ineffective allies, Juan de Serras and his community abandoned the former masters of the island, choosing isolation and Marronage instead. The migration of the “Varmahaly” into the southern, mountainous stretches of St. Mary and St. George was facilitated by a deft political sleight of hand that used the desperation of the English to secure their passage unmolested. In this pristine landscape, the “Varmahaly” took root and became masters of their domain, expanding over time with the addition of new runaways – despite initial reluctance – and in collaboration with nearby settlements. Although it is impossible to trace with exactitude what became of the distinct individuals who constituted the “Varmahaly,” the strategic choices this community made were distinctive in shaping Marronage island wide.
The community of Juan de Bolas presents the alternative path: a history following the acceptance of overtures from the English and an earnest integration into the colony. The palenque led by Juan de Bolas was integrated into the English colony thereafter 1663 for their services rendered to the colony from 1660-1663. Members of the community above the age of 18 were granted thirty acres each but there was no definitive process for deciding where these plots of land would be located. What little is known can only be gleaned from colonial maps, surveys, and land deeds. Ogilby’s “Novissima et Accuratissima Jamaicæ Descriptio,” from 1671, which was based on surveys conducted the preceding decade, depicts the “Juan de Bola Palink [sic]” as lying in the far southeastern extent of “St. Annes” in a valley between the “Mount Diabla [sic]” and the “Porus Mountaines [sic]” [Figure 3.3]. Mount Diablo can be visited today in the southeastern extents of St. Ann Parish, but no record remains of the location of the “Porus” Mountains. Bochart and Knollis’s 1684 work shows the location of “Iuan [sic] de Bolas” along with three provision grounds (or less likely, “cotton workes”) in far western “St. Johns” [Figure 4.2]. Both a mountain and a river in this region were named after Juan de Bolas and remain as such to the present day, but it is unclear whether members of the palenque settled there after 1663 or if the placenames were merely renamed thereafter. What is clear is that not all the “Spanish negroes” that served under Juan de Bolas settled in this location.

A survey conducted in 1687 because of a land sale provides insight into the precise location of at least a portion of this community. John Goffe was employed to survey a parcel of land in the area known as the “Great Camanas” in St. Katherine’s Parish in 1687 in preparation for a land sale [Figure 4.5]. The primary sellers for this land patent are listed as William Moseley and “Antonio Mosso do Campo, Francisco Angola Mosso do Campo, and Captain Primo and the rest of the Company of Spanish Negroes of Great Camanos” and the sole purchaser is one
Captain John Ellis. This land patent also mentions “Manuel Chiquito” along with Antonio Mosso do Campo in reference to an additional parcel included in the sale that was not contiguous with the rest of the land held by the “Spanish Negroes.” According to this patent, the “Spanish Negroes” sold 26 acres of the 164 acres they possessed, which this document states had been deeded to them in 1667. In August 1670, Edward Stanton wrote to Colonel Thomas Lynch, then Lieutenant-Governor, that English prisoners who had been rescued reported that, “42 Spanish negroes from Jamaica have got safe to Cuba.” In 1671, Governor Thomas Lynch wrote to the Crown about having “expelled a parcel of Spanish Negroes and mulattos which did much mischief,” but there is no other identifying information for the group. The collection of 42 “Spanish negroes” that fled to Cuba did so in secret so as not to draw the attention of the colony, but where their allegiance had lain prior to doing so is unclear.

Meanwhile, the Varmahaly made sporadic attacks on settlers on the northern end of the island throughout the 1670s that became exceedingly regular. An entry on January 23, 1676 is perhaps the last specific mention of the “Spanish negroes” in the English record until the details of the 1687 land patent, “Six Spanish negroes to be sent over to assist with their lances” in “St Maryes [sic]” where the English were attempting to combat the “rebellious negroes” who were

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278 The patent refers to both “Great Camanas” and “Great Camanos” but the area being described is undoubtedly what is known today as “Caymanas.”
279 “A Gate formerly belonging to the Spanish Negroes,” Survey for Captain John Ellis, January 8, 1687, St. Catherine Platts, 2, f. 122, 1B/11/2/7, Jamaica Archives and Record Department. The patent states, “being part of 164 acres of land granted unto Antonio Mosso do Campo, Francisco Angola Mosso do Campo, and Capt. Primo and the rest of the Company of Spanish Negroes of Great Camanas by patent bearing date the 6 day of May in the nineteenth year of his late majesties reign.” The Council of Jamaica declared on February 1st of 1663 that land would be deeded to “Juan Luyola and the rest of the negroes of his Palenque.” Mavis C. Campbell states in The Maroons of Jamaica, 1655-1796 that two “Spanish negroes” named Paul and Domingo were accredited as diplomatic representatives of the colony in 1667, but no additional information is provided as to any direct compensation for these services. A survey and census ordered by Governor Modyford in 1670 did not include the “Spanish negroes.”
harassing settlers. It is difficult to distinguish who exactly was grouped into the “Spanish negroes” because the English record only named individuals in rare circumstances like in the case of the two men assigned to treat with Juan de Serras in 1668. Given what is known about the outlying Maroons and their unwillingness to accept English offers of land, liberty, and – after years of ambushes and raids – pardons, it is not unreasonable to conclude that these “Spanish negroes” had been part of the palenque of Juan de Bolas and that there was a dissolution of the community after integration into the English system.

The land patent of 1687 stated that the “Spanish negroes” sold their land to John Ellis in 1681 [Figure 4.5]. This suggests a disintegration of landholdings by those who relocated to plots deeded by the English. By parceling and selling off their land, the physical and legal presence of the “Spanish negroes” was being consumed by the adjacent estates of wealthier, connected English landowners. This process was occurring across Jamaica at the end of the seventeenth and into the eighteenth century and, by 1740, the larger sugar plantations and animal pens had, “swallowed up by degrees all the little settlements around.” The specific reasons why “Antonio Mosso do Campo, Francisco Angola Mosso do Campo, and Captain Primo,” along with, “the rest of the Company of Spanish Negroes of Great Camanos,” sold these lands are unknown. Combining what is known about this community with the political and economic

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282 “Jan. 23 at St. Jago de la Vega, Journal of the Council of Jamaica, America and West Indies: January 1676,” in CSPCAWI: Volume 9, 1675-1676 and Addenda 1574-1674. It is possible that this was the final engagement between the remnants of the palenque of Juan de Bolas and the palenque of Juan de Serras.

283 Campbell, The Maroons of Jamaica, 28-29. Paul and Demingo made political overtures on behalf of the colony, “the probabilities are that they were of Lubolo’s band and bilingual.”

Figure 4.5 “A Gate formerly belonging to the Spanish Negroes,” Survey for Captain John Ellis, January 8, 1687, St. Catherine Platts, 2, f. 122, 1B/11/2/7, Jamaica Archives and Record Department.
conditions of this period of English colonialism isolates some distinct possibilities. One potential reason for the sale is the economic pressure inherent with land ownership in the English system. Even before the fields could be sewn, the “Spanish negroes” would have needed substantial capital with which to pay for clearing the land even before the standard quitrents on the land owned needed to be paid.285 This group then would have needed to sow and harvest a quantity of cash crops for sale capable of generating the kind of profit necessary to continue this yearly process and to maintain many dozens of acres.

The Spanish Jamaican colony, such that it was, did not invest in exploiting the island agriculturally. At least a portion of the palenque of Juan de Bolas were free men who grew crops and may have purchased products under the aegis of Spanish colonialism. They were almost assuredly not integrated into markets that extended beyond the immediate confines of St. Jago de la Vega knowing that even the vecinos of the island lacked such access. They planted crops for subsistence and produced goods on a very small scale. Any crops grown in Spanish Jamaica for export were luxuries typically produced on the haciendas of semi-feudal oligarchs and consumed in Spain. The 200 acres of crops discovered by the English that were planted by the palenque of Juan de Bolas in 1660 was an impressive feat by any measure amidst the hostilities of English conquest and Spanish resistance. However, these fields were likely planted with cassava, crops like rice and herbs brought from Africa, or fruit native to Jamaica that had no demand beyond the island in the late seventeenth century and that English colonists and settlers were reticent to eat as well.

The ecological practices honed and refined by the “Spanish negroes” were the envy of the English in the late 1650s. The palenque of Juan de Bolas made effective use of the natural landscape despite constant warfare between the English and Spanish. Post-conquest, this form of agriculture was largely incompatible with a burgeoning mercantilist economic system that prioritized cash crops that could be sold in London for profit. These crops necessitated large, up-front capital investment and a substantial plot of cleared land for planting to hope to achieve levels of production that could net profits. Even in the earliest years of English Jamaica when agriculture was more diversified and settlers were transported to the island and granted land at no cost, the overhead for establishing profit generating plantation operations could be immense. There were costs for surveying land, clearing the land granted after survey, and for the labor and seed needed for planting the land. Each of these costs were in addition to the annual quitrent, which alone was onerous enough that even large, wealthy landholders like the Earl of Carbery, former Governor John Vaughan, fell into such untenable debts that they were forced to relinquished vast swaths of land in 1709.286

The 1687 land patent provides some insight into the internal dynamics of the colony at that time. The land held by the “Spanish negroes” borders a road that separates their holdings from several nearby English plantations. The land survey included depicts a gate on this road, “formerly belonging to the Spanish Negroes,” that restricted access.287 This suggests, at the very least, that the inhabitants had been wary of outsiders and sought some sense of autonomy in isolation. The gate itself remained, while possession of it was relinquished by 1687. With so little supporting information, it is impossible to be certain of the fate of the “Spanish Negroes of Great

286 “Nov. 1, Council of Trade and Plantations to the Lord High Treasurer, America and West Indies: November 1709, 1-15,” in CSPCAWI: Volume 24, 1708-1709.
287 “A Gate formerly belonging to the Spanish Negroes,” Survey for Captain John Ellis, January 8, 1687, St. Catherine Platts, 2, f. 122, 1B/11/2/7, Jamaica Archives and Record Department.
Camanos,” but each of these details in addition to the land sale indicates that settlement had not engendered long-term stability of the community. At least some of the inhabitants remained beyond 1687, but these properties were never featured on colonial maps.

The purchaser of the parcels of land formerly held by the “Spanish Negroes” in 1681, John Ellis, was a major character in the history of English colonialism of Jamaica. He rose to the rank of Major in the colonial forces and in the 1680s and 1690s he served as an Assemblyman for St. Mary’s and St. Katherine’s Parish. In May 1685, he was called upon by the Council of Jamaica to suppress, “the negroes’ market at the River’s mouth” and to arrest any, “who sell rum to the negroes.”

The descendants of John Ellis continued expanding their landholdings throughout the eighteenth century and additional members of the family held offices in the colonial government. The land purchased from the “Spanish Negroes of the Great Camanos” became part of a large, productive trio sugar plantation known as the “Caymanas,” where sugarcane was grown and processed until 1968. Today, the land still bears the name Caymanas and is home to a golf course and country club.

The names of the “Spanish Negroes of Great Camanos” included as sellers on the 1687 land patent reveal some details about the community. In particular, the individuals “Antonio Mosso do Campo, Francisco Angola Mosso do Campo, and Captain Primo,” point to a hierarchy within the group. Working off the assumption that “Mosso do Campo” is derived from “Maestro de Campo,” which was akin to the chief of staff to the executive authority of the “Capitán,” it is likely that these individuals were the leaders of the community. The “Spanish Negroes of Great Camanos” may have been the “Spanish Negroes” called upon in 1676, “to assist with their

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288 “May 11, Minutes of Council of Jamaica, America and West Indies: May 1685,” in CSPCAWI: Volume 12, 1685-1688 and Addenda 1653-1687.
lances,” if naming conventions were reflective of the internal dynamics of the community. The name “Francisco Angola Mosso do Campo” speaks to the regional origin of enslaved Africans in Spanish Jamaica, which diverged from English Jamaica and the diversity of the enslaved population imported in the seventeenth century.

Francisco Angola Mosso do Campo likely originated in the former Kingdom of Ndongo, which was colonized by the Portuguese as Angola and whose inhabitants were captured and sold into slavery by Imbangala raiders throughout the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. The enslaved individuals from this region of Africa who were transported to Jamaica were the victims or descendants of victims of warfare between the Portuguese colonizers, the Kingdom of Ndongo, and the Kingdom of Kongo. Their lives would have been dictated by quarrels between rival powers long before their enslavement and might help to explain the decision of the palenque of Juan de Bolas to form an alliance with the English to preserve their community. In the face of imperial conquest, the “Spanish Negroes” chose guarantees of land ownership and autonomy over destruction and re-enslavement.

However, it seems clear from the land patent that despite their integration into the colonial armed forces and legal ownership of the land deeded for their services, the community kept the English at arm’s length and were not entirely assimilated into colonial society. The “Spanish Negroes of the Great Camanos” never appeared on colonial maps of Jamaica. Their properties lay roughly five miles inland from Passage Fort on the coast of Port Royal Harbor, the site of so much devastation in the 1690s. After the devastating earthquake of 1692, the remainder of the decade featured regular hurricane activity followed by outbreaks of disease. The invasion in 1694 was but one of many instances in which the French predated on the colony and in

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February 1698 an inquest was unsuccessfully made to ascertain how many “free negroes the French may have carried off from Jamaica.” It is entirely possible that the “Spanish Negroes of the Great Camanos” fell victim to any number of these forces or the mounting economic pressures they faced. The English colony was in a state of rapid depopulation as the century ended and the “Spanish Negroes,” despite maintaining some semblance of physical isolation from the colonists, could not have been immune to these pressures.

The histories of the palenques led by Juan de Bolas and Juan de Serras survive in the margins of the colonial archives as examples of divergent approaches to managing the threat of the English conquest of Jamaica. Integration into the colonial forces and deeds of land granted the community of Juan de Bolas did not insulate them from the internal and external pressures confronted by any settler of early English Jamaica and especially those of the 1690s. The strategic approach of Juan de Serras and his people, namely isolation, subsistence, and resistance, may have appeared the riskier bet at the signing of the Treaty of Madrid in 1670, but by the 1690s was undoubtedly the preferable path. The dissolution of landholdings and eventual disappearance of the “Spanish Negroes” from the English record could have come as the result of any number of factors: economic burdens, natural disasters, disease, and warfare all played some role in the fate of this community. It is also possible, but less likely, that individuals secured passage, or attempted passage themselves, to Cuba. Whatever the case, by the turn of the eighteenth century the trajectories of the former palenques of de Bolas and de Serras were entirely dissimilar. The far less secure life in Marronage in the mountainous interior of the northside of Jamaica had proven to be the enduring choice. In their complete opposition to the English colony, the “Varmahaly” led by Juan de Serras fought for unequivocal autonomy and

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291 “Feb. 18, St. Swithin’s Lane, Gilbert Heathcote to William Popple, America and West Indies: February 1698,” in CSPCAWI: Volume 16, 1697-1698.
sovereignty over the territories that composed the geographies of Marronage long before the signing of any treaties. Revisiting the words of Chief Michael Grizzle of the Trelawny Town-Flagstaff Maroons, “The ancestors did not simply reject colonial rule and enslavement, they opposed Western civilization in its entirety.”
5 EPILOGUE

In 1728, the Jamaican colonial government and newly appointed Governor Robert Hunter adopted a far more aggressive posture to fight what can most closely be described as a protracted guerrilla war against the Maroons. The full might of the colonial forces, buoyed by troops sent by the British Empire that same year and backed by the emergent economic power of the Jamaican plantocracy, were committed to the task of extricating the Maroons from their landscapes. Shortly before this period of open warfare, the Treaty of Union had been signed between Scotland and England, which began the process of transforming the English overseas possessions into an ideologically coherent British Empire.292 This period also signaled a change in the war strategies of the colonial Jamaican forces against the Maroons. In June 1720, Governor Nicholas Lawes entered into an agreement with the head of the Miskito people of Honduras to bring some of the Miskito to Jamaica to hunt the Maroons. These campaigns were not effective in their immediate goals of defeating the Maroons, but the Miskito provided insights to the Jamaican colonial forces about guerrilla tactics, including maintaining silence on marches to not divulge their position on approach.293 In 1728, Governor Hunter began to aggressively pursue settlement of Port Antonio with the explicit intent to, “add to the strength and security of that part of the Island not only against a foreign enemy but also against the rebellious negroes.”294 The British colony of Jamaica had assumed a posture of war toward the Maroons.

293 Campbell, The Maroons of Jamaica, 54-55.
294 “Nov. 9, Governor Hunter to the Council of Trade and Plantations, America and West Indies: November 1728,” in CSPCAWI: Volume 36, 1728-1729.
The sharp increase in operations and the changing nature of these operations against the distinct Maroon communities that had coalesced by the turn of the eighteenth century coincided with land reforms enacted by the colonial government. Large plantations consumed smaller landholdings in Jamaica and dominated the colonial landscape. These massive properties produced an unintended consequence: by squeezing small landholders out of the colony, they left large tracts of land uncleared and unsettled. As a result, until the land reforms of the 1720s and 1730s, the Maroons remained insulated from colonial settlement. To compound the issue of the preponderance of latifundias – large, private estates worked by the enslaved – that dominated Jamaican agriculture and land ownership, many of these properties were owned by second and third generation “absentee owners” who oversaw their vast estates from the comforts of England. As plantation owners, they applied a form of capitalism that fused the patriarchalism of the English aristocracy with the violent, dehumanizing exploitation of transatlantic slavery. These absentee owners relied on the management structure of the extended household of a bygone era, which created hierarchies within plantation operations that often led to factionalism in the structures of oversight. Absentee owners also demonstrated a tendency to second-guess their subordinates managing the properties and enslaved labor force, which forestalled necessary improvements and investment. This relationship between the absentee owner and the operations of their Jamaican plantation further immiserated the lives of the enslaved, placing more onerous demands on their labor and leaving them without food, clothing, and medical care while enforcing more violence in their daily lives. These conditions – a lack of oversight and

investment and a deepening of the misery of enslavement – invariably led to an increase in the number of revolts in the early eighteenth century.

By this period, Maroon communities had softened their position on bozales and their populations grew, inflecting Jamaican Marronage with the ongoing, transatlantic fight against enslavement that Vincent Brown defines as, “the Coromantee War…the outcome of black military intellect in Jamaica.” While the colony grappled with absenteeism and the latifundias, the Jamaican Maroons formed discrete, independent political units that collaborated and communicated with one another. In the process, these relationships broadened and connected Maroon geographies, interlinking communities through networks of subsistence and cultural practice that stretched from the territories of western Cockpit Country that became Accompong Town to Nanny Town and Crawford Town in the eastern extents of the Blue Mountains. These geographic configurations did not rely on possession and settlement in the explicit sense defined by English colonialism and mercantilism. Sovereignty in these territories was determined by elements of West African land tenure practices that did not vest ownership in the individual but were instead predicated on first comer claims and natural resource access – especially hunting – rights of the community. The Maroons did not believe that land possession was determined by surveys and land grants commissioned by the colony both in theory and in practice: they rejected the authority of the colony entirely.

It is for this very reason that any periodization of the Maroon Wars as having taken place from 1728-1739 is anachronistic with the experiences of the Maroons or the enslaved who revolted and joined their ranks. Their repudiation of English colonialism began with the initial invasion of St. Jago de la Vega in 1655 and their struggle is intimately rooted in the foundations

of indigenous and African resistance to Spanish colonialism prior. Geographies and methods of resistance transformed and evolved over time in response to the expansion of settlement and the aggression of the colonial forces, but the core opposition never wavered.

The Maroon Wars were not a divergence from the dynamics that had arisen between the colony and the Maroons, they were a heightening of tensions by the colony to an untenable state. The colonial forces sought to end Marronage in Jamaica permanently, while the Maroons hunkered down within their territories to defend the geographies they had articulated over the preceding half century. The eventual signing of the Maroon Treaty of 1738-39 was a diplomatic resolution to the tensions between these two distinct societies in Jamaica: that of the Maroons and the colony. The terms were the result of protracted negotiations between representatives of both sides and officially recognized the territoriality of Maroon “towns” and their sovereignty within Cockpit Country. For the colony, the treaty accomplished what so many governors and planters before had failed to do: pacifying the Maroons to make settlement on the northside of the island more attractive. The signing of the Treaty for the Maroons signaled a change of course that was no doubt informed by the violent warfare enacted by the Jamaican colonial government in preceding decades. Their rejection of the authority of the colony was set aside and the Maroons sought – in processes defined by British legal tradition – to enshrine the geographies they had established and defended over the course of the preceding half century. Predictably, even after the Maroon Treaty became law in British Jamaica, the sovereign territory of Cockpit Country has never been safe from predations by the colony and the independent Jamaican government that succeeded it in August 1962. Maroon communities continue to resist the capitalistic exploitation of their lands, most recently by private mining interests granted leases by the government.
The examples laid out by the palenques of Juan de Bolas and Juan de Serras in the immediate wake of the English invasion in 1655 were each other’s antithesis: alliance and resistance. However, the signing of the Maroon Treaty reconnected these divergent tangents; The colonial government recognized Maroon territorial sovereignty, but at the cost of compulsory service to the colony in times of war against both internal and external enemies. This meant that Maroons had to fight to quell enslaved uprisings if called upon. Recognition of Maroon sovereignty did not put an end to all fighting between Maroons and the colonial forces, and in the late eighteenth century, disputes over the geographic boundaries of Trelawny Town ended with the capture and deportation of the community to Nova Scotia in May 1796. There they could not pose a threat to the dominant economic force of the Jamaican plantocracy. If the sovereignty of the Trelawny Town Maroons could be so quickly and easily violated, then of what value were the guarantees of the Jamaican colonial government on behalf of the British Empire?

The Maroon Treaty is a pivotal document in Maroon history. It represents the legitimation of their territorial sovereignty and a recognition of their autonomy. But the articles of the Treaty provided little security to the Maroons against the unrelenting expansion and exploitation of the colonial Jamaican plantation system. The capitalist logics that informed these efforts at plantation were predicated on the efficient and totalizing hyperexploitation of the Jamaican natural landscape and enslaved African labor to amass profits. These profits enriched the Jamaican plantocracy and the British Empire, which undermined Maroon legal appeals that challenged the recognized extents of Cockpit Country. Jamaican colonists attempted to resolve these questions permanently with the deportation of the Trelawny Town Maroons, but Accompong Town, Moore Town, Charles Town, and Scott’s Hall persist. Fundamental questions regarding the territoriality of lands outlined in the Maroon Treaty are still debated today.
Jamaica was granted independence by the United Kingdom on August 6, 1962. The independent Jamaican state thereafter adopted the role of ultimate legal authority on the island and therefore guarantor of the Maroon Treaty. Since independence, the Jamaican government has grappled with methods for achieving economic self-sufficiency and to avoid the many structures of international finance that have dictated development in newly independent countries. Bauxite mining – a mineral important in the production of aluminum – was first highlighted as an untapped natural resource in the early 1940s by North American mining corporations and post-independence offered a potential means to achieve fiscal stability. As it turns out, the richest reserves of bauxite on the island lay in Cockpit Country. For two decades, the Maroons and domestic and international legal organizations focused on indigenous land rights have defended Maroon sovereignty over the region. These debates are a continuation of the struggle that began in the late seventeenth century when Maroons forcefully defended their settlements and contingent geographies in the face of an expanding colony. Recent challenges of Maroon sovereignty by Jamaican Minister of National Security Horace Chang have resurfaced historical contentions at the heart of the Maroon Treaty. While the Jamaican government works to redefine the relationship between the Maroons and the independent state to facilitate capitalist exploitation of bauxite reserves, the Maroons continue to overtly resist any attempts to undermine their sovereignty.

On April 8, 2022, the Paramount Queen of the Maroons, Gaama Gloria “Mama G” Simms issued a formal apology on behalf of the Jamaican Maroons to the people of Jamaica for the historical role they played in combating enslaved rebellions. In her speech during a recognition of Tacky’s Revolt, the Paramount Queen declared, “We regret the hurt and
sufferings caused from such actions. We take total responsibility on behalf of our ancestors.”

This apology – and the legitimacy of Mama G – was later challenged by Accompong Colonel Richard Currie, “The reality is that we are not against apologies or reconciliation, but we are against acts of representation for people who do not know her as a leader.” Mama G was named Paramount Chief by the Suriname Maroons and installed at the 2014 Charles Town International Maroon Conference but was never formally recognized by the leadership of Accompong Town. In questioning her authority, Colonel Currie highlighted divisions and the diversity of opinions within the Maroon communities of Jamaica today and the lack of a unifying political ideology. Maroons occupy a unique place within present-day Jamaica, forced to strike a delicate balance between forcefully defending their lands and reconciling the historical role played by their ancestors. The unrelenting advance of capitalism has heightened these tensions and sewn divisions amongst the Maroons.

Remnants of the land deeded to the “Spanish Negroes of the Great Camanos” in the 1660s by the English colony can be found today nearby Spanish Town. A twenty-minute drive east on the A1 highway from Spanish Town brings you to Highway 2000 and the “T3 Caymanas Park Toll.” The lands along this highway were previously held by the “Spanish Negroes” and sold to John Ellis, which became part of a trio of sugar plantations in the immediate vicinity that

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operated into the nineteenth century. Today, Caymanas Park is the site of Jamaica’s only horse racing track and a golf course and country club and little remains of the sugar plantation or community that once held claim to the land. As the Maroons of Cockpit Country continue to defend their sovereignty, the example of the “Spanish Negroes of the Great Camanos” is a stark reminder of the economic pressures inherent in the process of integrating into capitalism. Guarantees of land and liberty for the members of the palenque of Juan de Bolas could not forestall the effects of a system predicated on the hyperexploitation of the natural environment and labor. The Jamaican Maroons of the present day face the daunting challenge of balancing their resistance to the onslaught of global capitalism through the independent Jamaican state with
the long-term economic welfare of their communities. Maroons are once again confronted with the decision between opposition or integration.
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