

## MARRONAGE IN JAMAICA: ITS ORIGIN IN THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY\*

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In his *Two Jamaicas*, Philip Curtin observes that "In many ways Negro culture was more truly native to Jamaica than European culture, although both were alien. Unlike the whites, the blacks' voyage from their homeland was strictly a one-way affair."<sup>1</sup> It is the one-way component of their sojourn and the compulsive nature of the journey that made for the peculiar historical process of the blacks in Jamaica as elsewhere in the New World and for the development of communities in the area with strong cultural attachment to Africa. Specifically, the *raison d'être* of the Europeans in Jamaica was to increase their wealth and return home. To this end the enslaved blacks were used as both capital and labor, but they stoutly refused to be a willing or acquiescent partner and resisted in myriad ways even when all the odds were against them.

African resistance began not on the plantation, but rather on the coffer line in the interior of West Africa, when some refused to be a part of the human caravan, ate dirt and died; they resisted on reaching the forts or castles or barracoons of European construction on the coast; from here some ran away, some poisoned themselves, some refused to eat; they resisted before entering the ships, throwing themselves on the sands rather than boarding (to prevent this the European slavers hired Krumen—former fishermen of the coast—as "Captains of the Sand" to whip, push, drag or carry them on to the vessels); on the ships they resisted by jumping overboard, refusing to eat, refusing to take medicine, and by suicide or attempted suicide.<sup>2</sup> Suicide and suicidal attempts were persistent through every point of the enslavement process, and to some tribes like the Ebos suicide became a fine art.<sup>3</sup> Mutiny on the ships took place on many occasions, and there are examples of a few successful mutinies where the captain, held as hostage, had to return to the African coast. Fear of slave mutiny among ship owners and captains was so prevalent that slaves were chained on board, and marine insurance was introduced to indemnify owners for losses of slaves arising from mutiny, which was legally listed as one of the "perils at sea."<sup>5</sup>

On the plantations in the New World the Africans built up a considerable arsenal of retaliation ranging, hierarchically, from the more subtle and passive resistance of various types to violent activities. Passive resistance on the New World plantations was a combination of the slaves' strategy of acting out the slave master's stereotype of him as a slave—an "instrument" or a "living possession" (to borrow a phrase from Aristotle) and as a "Negro" with all the pejorative connotations—and of the slave's perception of himself as a human being. In other words, the slave's view of reality was a dualism of his own and his master's and

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his everyday existence was a constant balancing between these two realities. A *song of the slave delineates this succinctly*: "Got one mind for the boss to see; Got another mind for what I know is me."<sup>6</sup> Perceived as lazy, stupid, ignorant dumb animals by the master, the slave found it to his advantage not to prove his master wrong. The more mentally defective he appeared to be the less work would be expected of him: his calculated laziness, his dull sullen slowness, his clumsiness, his carelessness, his wastefulness, his feigned illness, his stealing, his mendacity, have all been catalogued as the frequent behavior of slaves on plantations, notwithstanding the authors of *Time On The Cross* who would seem to disclaim this. Bryan Edwards, himself a Jamaican planter *in situ* and a man torn between a massive sense of justice and common decency and the overriding totalitarian necessity of the plantation system, which brought him his livelihood, took an acute interest in the ethnic peculiarities of his "people" on his plantation, and commented on *inter alia* "their propensity to conceal or violate the truth . . . If a Negro is asked even an indifferent question by his master, he seldom gives an immediate reply; but affecting not to understand what is said, compels a repetition of the question, that he may have time to consider, not what is the true answer, but, what is the most politic one for him to give."<sup>7</sup> The slave could not be certain that even a seemingly innocent question may not conceal a *double entendre* to ensnare him.

The slave's destruction of property was extensive. He broke tools and other plantation equipment, destroyed fences and sheds, ill-treated and maimed animals, and in some instances maimed himself. All these activities were part of the slave's retaliation—a way of getting back at his masters and a way of giving vent to his real feelings. And most masters, confined within the limits of their reality of the slave, reinforced and legitimized by the social structure they created, took the slave's calculated cunning at face value. That is, unlike the slave, with his dichotomous view of reality in adjusting to his status, the master, in his position of superordination, through force and coercion was able to utilize his definition of social reality without understanding the reality perceived by the slave. The success of the duplicity of the slaves is probably best exemplified by the diagnosis of a prominent southern physician, Dr. Samuel W. Cartwright, who, observing the controlled resistance tactics of the slaves, defined them as "diseases . . . peculiar to the Negro," which he dubbed *Dyaesthesia Aethiopica*. He then proceeded to explain the malady:

From the careless movements of the individuals affected with this complaint they are apt to do much mischief, which appears as if intentional, but is mostly owing to the stupidity of mind and insensibility of the nerves induced by the disease. Thus they break, waste, and destroy everything they handle; abuse horses and cattle; tear, burn, or rend their own clothing . . . They wander about at nights, and keep in a half nodding state by day. They slight their work—cut up corn, cans, cotton and tobacco, when hoeing it . . . they raise disturbances with their overseers . . . When driven to labor by the compulsive power of the white man he performs the task assigned to him in a headlong, careless manner treading down with his feet or cutting with his hoe the plants he is put to cultivate; breaking the tools he works with and spoiling everything he touches that can be injured by careless handling. Hence the overseers call it "rascality," supposing that the mischief is intentionally done.<sup>8</sup>

Well may one dismiss this elaborate diagnosis as a piece of human ostentation (possibly a quirk in the learned Doctor's personality—to borrow a page from his book), but an unease develops when it is recalled that certain modern scholars<sup>9</sup> would seem to take their stand not behind the overseer who detected the role-

playing stance of the slave—or behind Edwards,<sup>10</sup> quoted above, who rather more reflectively showed some understanding of his accommodation to a degrading institution—but behind Cartwright, who thought he saw the operation of inherent racial phenomena at work.

In between the passive and the more violent manifestations of resistance—that is, organized mass rebellion with a view to overthrowing the system—slaves would poison their owners, themselves or their children; resort to the practice of obeah,<sup>11</sup> commit arson on plantations; satirize<sup>12</sup> their masters; on occasion assault a master or overseers; collectively refuse to work; or run away. The masters' retaliation to the slaves' malingering and other forms of passive resistance was automatic, continuous, and brutal, and was always meant to be exemplary. Had the greed to maximize wealth, coupled in many instances with sheer racial sadism, not been so all-pervading on the plantations then the slaves may well have gotten away with *Dyaesthesia Aethiopica* (hereafter referred to as D. A.). But the whip was seen as a part of the coercive necessity of the plantation system to induce maximum production from the slaves even when D.A. was diagnosed. This was one of the many contradiction of the slave system. The whip was the ordinary everyday weapon for ordinary commonplace offenses; for the more heinous offenses, such as running away or striking whites or being rebellious, refined tortures were administered.

As early as 1686, Sir Hans Sloane, physician, botanist and later one of the founders of the British Museum, and President of the Royal Society, visited the West Indies and described, quite casually, some of the tortures he observed on the plantations. He reported that for certain flagrant crimes the slaves were nailed to the ground, with crooked sticks strapped to each limb. They were then slowly burned alive, first the hands and feet, and then "gradually up to the head." Lesser crimes were punished by castration or by chopping off half of one foot with an axe. Efforts at escape were rewarded by putting very heavy iron rings around the slaves' ankles or necks, and by forcing a spur into the mouth. Slaves were whipped until their bodies were raw, and then pepper and salt were rubbed into the wounds, or melted wax was poured over them.<sup>13</sup> Another British visitor to Jamaica, commenting on the slave system there at the beginning of the eighteenth century, observed that

... they have indeed here the severest ways of punishing. No country excels them in a barbarous Treatment of Slaves or in the cruel methods they put them to death; A rebellious Negro, or he that twice strikes a white man, is condemned to the Flames. He is carried to the Place of Execution, and chain'd flat on his belly, his Arms and Legs extended, then fire is set to his Feet, and so he is burnt gradually up: others they starve to death, with a loaf hanging before their mouths. I have seen these unfortunate Wretches gnaw the Flesh off their own Shoulders and expire in all the frightful Agonies of one under the most horrid Tortures.<sup>14</sup>

Although it is safe to assume that there were individual masters who were kind to their slaves, nevertheless innovative tortures of the kind described above were representative not only of seventeenth and of eighteenth century Caribbean slave society, but also of other slave societies within the Americas throughout the time span of slavery. As the slave systems in the area developed, it appears that some of the harshest punishments were reserved for the "skulking runaways" or "sneaking and treacherous rogues" or "pernicious scum,"<sup>15</sup> to cite the many opprobrious terms used by one European power or another to describe the Maroons. Richard Price, quoting Herlein, found that in Surinam "if a slave runs away into the forest in order to avoid work for a few weeks, upon his being

captured his Achilles tendon is removed for the first offense, while for a second offense . . . his right leg is amputated in order to stop his running away . . ."<sup>16</sup>

In these circumstances, therefore, it is no wonder that those who refused to be enslaved and would not countenance suicide as the only way out took to the hills and claimed territoriality over these regions for which they would fight to the last ditch. These communities, as Price observed, "stood out as an heroic challenge to white authority, and as the living proof of the existence of a slave consciousness that refused to be limited by the whites' consciousness or manipulation of it."<sup>17</sup> Since the Africans had only a "one-way ticket" to the New World, they could not therefore in any realistic sense view the return home as a practical proposition: running away—marronage— was therefore the answer. Marronage, the process of flight to erect black African hegemonies in the mountains of Jamaica or elsewhere in the New World, was the creation of the Africans' New Jerusalem, where they could live in liberty, however precarious, and where they could live within the matrix of their cultural imperatives. Almost all slave societies in the New World had at one time or other some form of runaway community, variously named *quilombos*, *pelinco*, *palenque*, *quilomos*, *mocambo-cambes* or *ladeiras mambissa*,<sup>18</sup> according to the European nation who possessed the territory, for there is no evidence to show that the Maroons themselves had named these communities. Had they done so, it is more than likely that they would have employed African name places, as indeed they did in Jamaica in naming one of their communities Accompon, an Akan name meaning great or capital town and not "the God of the heavens, . . . the creator of all things; and a Diety of infinite goodness," as Dallas said.<sup>19</sup>

One can see a parallel and a relationship between marronage and absenteeism. Like marronage, absenteeism was a flight, the flight of the master class from the crudities of the slave society; for the slave society is a total society enslaving everyone, both masters and slaves. Moral deterioration of slave masters from antiquity to the New World slave plantations has been well documented in numerous works. "It is of the nature of slavery to contaminate whatever touches or approaches it"<sup>20</sup> is a statement that is applicable to all slave systems. The absentee also returned home to live within the matrix of his cultural imperatives or to live among the aristocracy and "imitate their vices, and surpass their follies"<sup>21</sup> as one down-to-heel white of the island said grudgingly of them. And within the contextual framework of the Jamaican slave society the relationship between marronage and absenteeism became dialectic, with more masters fleeing home as more maroons took to the hills and more maroons taking to the hills as more masters fled home, and soon cause and effect became confused. This process might well have destroyed the plantation economy in Jamaica specifically—perhaps more than anywhere else in the hemisphere—particularly from the last decade of the seventeenth century through to the third decade of the eighteenth century. The urgency of the Deficiency laws<sup>22</sup> of the plantocratic legislature aimed at increasing the number of whites in the island testifies to the whites' awareness of this. Like Orlando Patterson,<sup>23</sup> one is bound to wonder why did this not happen. And indeed it is clear that Charles Leslie, the eighteenth century British eyewitness of the plantation society, had pondered the same question when he observed "that one should think it would be unsafe, considering all circumstances, to live amongst them"; and Leslie showed perspicacity when he gave the reason—perhaps the primary reason—for the planters' security as having its basis on the fact that "the slaves are brought from several places in *Guiney* [sic], which are different from one another in Language, and consequently they can't converse

freely; or, if they could, they hate one another so mortally, that some of them would rather die by the hands of the *English* than join with other *Africans* in an Attempt to shake off their Yoke."<sup>24</sup> Leslie's emphasis clearly showed the Englishman's natural ethnocentrism outraged at African peoples' centrifugalism. In addition to the tribal exclusivity, hostile fissures developed later between Spanish creole blacks and newly arrived Africans (*bozales*) and English creoles and *bozales*. Were the blacks united, they might have taken over the island instead of signing factional treaties with regulations not only proscribing their freedom, but also acting as a deterrent to the slaves' propensity to run away from the plantations. But in making treaties with the slavocracy, the maroons aided in perpetuating the slave system and became the agents of the whites as the mulattoes were to do later and, as some would say, the political elites do today.<sup>25</sup>

This study is a history of the development of maroon societies in Jamaica, which began with its capture by the British from the Spaniards in 1655. The Spaniards in Jamaica computed at between "twelve or fourteen hundred," about 500 of whom were in arms, were from all accounts, a set of impoverished grandees living in "sloth and penury" with a strong inclination to avoid work.<sup>26</sup> Although they occupied Jamaica for nearly a century and a half (since 1509), the country remained underdeveloped and underpopulated. One source said that "not one hundredth part of the plantable land was in cultivation"<sup>27</sup> when the British took possession. Yet, determined not to dirty their hands with planting, they enslaved the native Arawak Indians, estimated variously from six to sixty thousands, when Columbus "discovered" the island in 1494. But by 1655 they were totally exterminated by the Spaniards: "not a single descendant of either sex, being alive . . . nor, I believe, for a century before" declared Bryan Edwards.<sup>28</sup> Thus, their most reliable source of slave labor—even before the genocide of the Arawaks was completed—was imported from Africa, in line with the inexorable pattern of the colonization process of the New World.

The Spaniards lived just above subsistence level, growing food for domestic consumption and supplying a few European ships with cocoa, hogs-lard and hides. They also grew a small amount of sugar cane with local mills on site to extract the juice, but only for domestic consumption.<sup>29</sup> It was these activities to which the labor of the slaves was put—activities that, under different circumstances, would have been carried out by peasant or yeoman farmers. But the Spaniards and the Portuguese who occupied the island not only had brought with them their cultural heritage of slavery as practiced in Iberia, but more important, they also brought the model of the institutional complex of the slave-run sugar plantation of Madeira. Some of the slaves were, naturally, domestics, but those engaged in hunting wild cattle and hogs appeared to have been in the majority and "these hunters in the course of their work would have become masters of woodcraft and have known all the trails through the woods and mountains."<sup>30</sup> These skills were later to prove invaluable to their guerrilla activities. Edwards felt that the Spaniards, who had been for many years in "a state of progressive degeneracy, would probably, in a short time, have expiated the guilt of their ancestors, by falling victims themselves to the vengeance of their slaves."<sup>31</sup> The British conquest preempted Edwards' prophecy in the sense in which he meant it, although, in fact, as will be shown later, the Spaniards did fall victims at least to some of their slaves.

The exact number of the black slaves at the time of the conquest is not precise, but a census of the island taken by the Spaniards in 1611 accounted for

107 free blacks and 558 slaves,<sup>32</sup> while Edwards said "the number of Negroes" in 1655 "nearly equalled that of the whites,"<sup>33</sup> twelve to fifteen hundred, without making any distinction between the freed and the enslaved.

As victors, the British were hard taskmasters. They commanded the Spanish colonists to deliver up all their slaves and goods, and to leave the country altogether. But the Spaniards resented leaving. They pleaded that it was the only country they knew; they were born and brought up in the island; they had neither relations nor friends elsewhere and therefore they were determined to perish in the woods rather than leave. While a few finally left the island, chiefly for Cuba, Don Christoval Ysassi Arnaldo, who was later appointed Governor of Jamaica by the Spanish King in acknowledgment of his strong stand against the British, with the rest of his countrymen and some slaves retreated to the hills on the north coast. From here they made frequent raids on the British on the south side, allegedly receiving some help from Cuba, until Ysassi was finally forced to give up his guerrilla activities and to leave the island in 1660.<sup>34</sup>

It was the black slaves of the Spaniards who took to the hills at the time of the British conquest who were to form the nucleus of the first maroon society in Jamaica. The question may well be asked whether these Spanish blacks in the hills could properly be called runaway slaves. Given the legal definition of slaves as property, despite the inherent contradictions, then the Spanish blacks were by the conquest now British property and, as such, runaway slaves. This species of property in perpetuity was also heritable by itself and through its progeny; thus descendants to be born in the hills would also be slaves legally subject to be re-consigned to slavery in the event of recapture—whatever their perception of themselves or their notion of their "freedom" may be—so long as a slave society existed in the island.

There is also a sense in which the Spanish maroons could be seen as separate from and not as a part of the continuum of maroon society in Jamaica as developed from the turn of the seventeenth century to the first three decades of the eighteenth. The nature of their marronage, for instance, as arising from an historical event and not from the usual runaway situation, whether singly or in groups, was not typical. But despite the lack of unity among the different bands and despite the open hostility of the Spanish creole blacks toward the newly arrived African runaway to be dealt with in this study, nevertheless the Spanish maroons did set the stage for resistance; they created a precedent of defiance of the slave master's authority and their presence in the woods gave the inspiration to the plantation slaves either to run away or to rebel. In more concrete terms, when by the eighteenth century they began to cooperate with the other groups, they contributed their skill and expertise in guerrilla warfare and in adapting to their surroundings to the other groups.

Another direct contribution of the Spanish maroons (negative perhaps, depending on one's point of view) is that they set the model for designating their leaders with Western titles, such as "Governor," "Serjeant majors," and the like, and not with African ones, as Richard Price<sup>35</sup> saw prevalent in maroon societies of the area in the seventeenth century. This was of course due to the fact that the Spanish maroons were Creoles, again departing (for the historical reason stated above) from the historical paradigm of newly arrived slaves taking the initiative and leadership position in slave revolts and marronage.

It must be stressed here that the etymology of the term *maroon* is imprecise, nor is it clear when the name was first applied to them in Jamaica or when it became the generic term to embrace all runaway slaves throughout the New World societies. In Jamaica, for instance, the seventeenth-century primary sources

refer to them variously as “rebellious Negroes,” “fugitive Negroes,” “runaway slaves,” “rebels,” “Negroes in rebellion,” or “Karmahaly Negroes,” while an early work like Leslie’s *A New and Exact Account of Jamaica* published in 1739, makes no mention of the word maroon, but designates them “the runaways” or “the rebellious Negroes.” It was only after the peace treaty of 1739 that the word was officially used. The result of this is that most works on the maroons in Jamaica dealt with the eighteenth century, while the seventeenth century—the very foundation of maroon societies—has been largely neglected because this century’s source material had them under the different appellations mentioned above. In focussing on seventeenth-century marronage in Jamaica therefore this paper is attempting not only to fill a gap but also to identify certain differences between the strategems of the seventeenth-century maroons, who were Spanish-speaking Creoles, some of whom were Christians<sup>36</sup> and not of the Akan ethnic background, and eighteenth-century marronage, whose leadership was largely newly arrived Africans, predominantly of Akan ethnicity. Attention will also be given to the remarkable difference between the treaties the British were able to make with the seventeenth-century maroon groups and those concluded with the eighteenth-century ones.

There are many misconceptions about the Jamaican maroons and this may well be due to the fact that the historical maroons did not themselves write their own story. Even if they were literate, their preoccupation with survival warfare would have precluded this exercise. This is a handicap to the historian who must perforce lean heavily on official documents and eyewitness’ accounts as well as on the works of planter-historians almost all of whom were writing from the bias of their ethnocentricity and from the standpoint of their economic interests. But these sources are not without their uses. They not only provide the framework within which to reconstruct maroon history after careful checking and analysis, but they also serve to show contemporary attitudes toward the maroons.

The ethnic background of the Spanish slaves, for instance, is imprecise. But if Curtin<sup>37</sup> is correct, then they were mostly from the northern section of West Africa and from Angola, encompassing numerous tribal groups and not likely to be of the Akan group, as some would say.<sup>38</sup> The Akan presence among the maroons began with the coefficient of correlation between Britain’s capture of Jamaica and the “Gold Coast” ’s becoming a sphere of interest for British slave traders.

A common misconception held even by some maroons and other Jamaicans today is that the maroons are the descendants of the Arawak Indians.<sup>39</sup> Professor Robin Winks would seem to see the maroons as a breed of hybrids, when he said that they “were descendants of Negro slaves (and perhaps of Arawak women).<sup>40</sup> In an elaborate speculation without any evidence whatsoever, Barbara Kopytoff saw them as mostly West African, but also embracing a motley of Arawak Indians, American Indians and Miskito Indians.<sup>41</sup> This latter group of Indians was used by the British as paid “mercenaries” to fight the maroons, but there is no evidence to show that there was ever any friendly relationship between these two groups. Apparently Kopytoff too has not found any such evidence; nevertheless she concluded that “Some of the Indians may have defected and mingled with the Maroons in the woods, and some runaway slaves may have been Amerindian through earlier unions between slaves and Indians. The Amerindian contribution to the Maroon stock was doubtless very small, but there may have been some.”<sup>42</sup> It is true that some of the Arawaks, being overburdened with the yoke of slavery, did escape to the mountains, but there is no evidence to show that any survived the British occupation, as mentioned earlier. Dallas, writing in 1803 said, “To

this day in the mountains of Jamaica caves are discovered in which human bones cover the ground: and the skulls being preternaturally compressed, it is evident they belonged to skeletons of the Indian race,"<sup>43</sup> having perished by famine. It appears that the Arawaks, who lived mainly on the flat lands along the coast, did not manage to conquer the environmental hazards of the mountains as the blacks were to do so successfully later, and the skulls Dallas described may have included the remaining seventy-four who were computed in 1611. If any "other" existed among the Spanish blacks, from the evidence there were a few mulattoes, most of whom, however, finally defected to the side of the Spaniards.

Another misconception perpetuated by a few historians is that it was the Spaniards who made the maroons fight for their freedom. Winks, for instance, quite categorically stated that "The Spanish taught the Maroons to fight the British as invaders",<sup>44</sup> but here again there is no evidence for Winks' undocumented conclusion. The evidence to be dealt with in this study shows most clearly that the slaves saw the British conquest as *their* opportunity to make *their* forward thrust for *their* freedom. This is not to suggest that they all acted collectively; rather, it is to say that different groups perceived their means of obtaining freedom in different ways: thus, some of the mulattoes, whether free or bonded is not clear, and a few "Negroes" of unspecified number, whose fidelity the Spaniards thought they could depend on, were left with strict charge to harass the British while the main body of the Spaniards went to Cuba for reinforcement.<sup>45</sup> But as soon as these mulattoes and the few blacks conceived the Spanish case to be hopeless, they defected to the British, and the Spaniards returned to find them their staunchest enemies. These fought courageously on the side of the British and D'Oyley is said to have rewarded them mostly with freedom and lands for settlement. Among these was an ex-slave with his own private and personal grudge against his former Spanish master.<sup>46</sup> It is also interesting to note that the slaves did not avail themselves of the British offer of general freedom to them. Upon capturing the island, Article eleven of the terms of Capitulation said, in paraphrase, that "All slaves and negroes were to appear on the savanna near the town on the 26th when Venables would inform them of the favours and acts of grace concerning their freedom to be granted to them."<sup>47</sup> Apparently none responded—quite possibly since they had had enough of white overlordship whatever the nationality—but the majority took spontaneously to the hills "separating themselves from their late masters."<sup>48</sup> Indeed, in the guerrilla warfare situation that was to follow, the Spaniards themselves became the victims of some of their ex-slaves. But it is also true that there is some evidence to suggest that some of the black guerrilla groups may have worked in cooperation with the Spaniards when it was in their interest to do so. It appears also that a few remained with the Spaniards and from the evidence it is clear that some were cajoled and made promises of money, clothing and freedom to do so.<sup>49</sup> Apparently the other mulattoes, who were probably the domestics and house slaves, remained faithful to the Spaniards to the end, escaping with them eventually to Cuba.<sup>50</sup> From fragmentary data it would seem that at least three main black groups with recognized leaders were later formed out of the early situation of much uncertainty and confusion. The most known of these groups settled in the hills above Guanaboa Vale under the leadership of Juan de Bolas, who has given his name to this place to this day.<sup>51</sup> It is possible that the members of this group consisted of some free blacks and that the others may have been largely agricultural slaves.<sup>52</sup> The second group, much less known to history, was established at Los Vennejales,<sup>53</sup> an area that was more isolated and more secluded than that of the first group, and this was to affect the relative strategies of these



two bands. This group was led in the 1660s by Juan de Serras, undoubtedly one of the most astute maroon leaders of the island, and his band may well have consisted largely of the redoubtable hunting class—the samurai of the early Maroons—who were to apply their skills to guerrilla warfare. The location of the third settlement is uncertain, but it is generally thought to have existed somewhere in the valley between the Mocho mountains and Porus, in the parish of Clarendon.<sup>53</sup>

The Spanish-designated Governor, Ysassi, may have helped to generate the notion that the blacks were his loyal slaves and completely under his control. In August 1657, for instance, from his mountainous hegemony he wrote to Spain to say that “all the fugitive Negroes are under my obedience.”<sup>54</sup> This was either wishful thinking or ignorance of the fact that there were large numbers of blacks on their own in the mountains, forming their own independent communities and descending on occasion to attack the British.

While it is easy to understand Ysassi’s pathetic attempt to keep up the appearance of being a governor in control of his “Negroes” in very ambiguous circumstances, it is certainly not easy to understand S.A.G. Taylor’s attitude. Writing in 1965, with the relevant documents to hand, he consistently supported Ysassi’s claim of “Negro” loyalty to him,<sup>55</sup> the evidence to the contrary notwithstanding. Throughout Taylor’s work, he either explicitly or by implication made it appear that the blacks were mere ciphers acting mindlessly on behalf of and upon the command of the Spaniards. But this was decidedly not the case. Apparently Taylor has so absorbed the colonial master’s value system that in all probability he was quite unaware of the distorted picture he was presenting of the blacks; he was evidently bent on writing *European* history and thereby treating the people of the island, especially the blacks, rather incidentally or as mere auxiliaries. This is precisely the type of historical writing one hopes not to see continuing in the repertoire of colonial history.

As early as January 1656 Vice Admiral Goodson and Mayor Sedgwicke wrote to Cromwell that:

As for the Negroes, we understand, and to satisfaction, that they, for the most part of them, are at distance from the Spaniards, and live by themselves in several parties, and near our quarters, and do very often, as our men go into the woods to seek provisions, destroy and kill them with their lances. We now and then find one or two of our men killed, stripped, and naked; and these rogues begin to be bold, our English rarely, or seldom, killing any of them.<sup>56</sup>

Indeed a few of the blacks who did not escape to the hills, but were apprehended by the British, were running away, and to prevent the escape of the “seven or eight” who were left behind, the British kept them in “shackles.” Two months later the same officers again wrote to Cromwell to repeat the same story about the blacks: “Of the Negroes we have no certain intelligence, only this, that they are separated from the Spaniards, and live scattered in parties in the woods and mountains, as we have reason to believe, very near our quarters; for of late we find some of our men daily killed by them, and they were so bold one night not long since to fire a house in the head quarters of St. Jago de la Vega.”<sup>57</sup>

It is important here to stress that within a year of the British conquest, the maroons—“the rebellious slaves” in the hills—had made themselves so formidable (the word of the authorities, as Orlando Patterson would put it) that the British soon conceived that they were a greater danger to them than were the Spaniards. The maroons’ boldness, their prowess in guerrilla warfare, and their knowledge of the terrain of the country were all soon noted with apprehension. “Concerning the state of the enemy on shore here,” wrote Sedgwicke to Thurloe, “the

Spaniard is not considerable, but of the Blacks there are many, who are like to prove as thorns and pricks in our sides, living in the mountains and woods, a kind of life both natural, and I believe, acceptable to them . . ."<sup>58</sup>

Reports of maroon successes in plundering and burning plantations, capturing slaves, and killing British soldiers who ventured out too far into the woods continued to reach the British Governor, D'Oyley. Yet there is only one instance on record where the British gained some trifling victory over them at this period. D'Oyley reported that "it hath pleased God to give us some success against the Negroes. A plantation of theirs beeing found out, wee fell on them, slew some, and totally spoiled one of their chief quarters."<sup>59</sup> Another letter at the end of the same month, April 1656, said the British killed "seven or eight"<sup>59</sup> of them. But Maroon retaliation to this was swift. Sedgwick reported that "In two daies [*sic*] more than forty of our soldiers, were cut off by Negroes, as they were carelessly going about their quarters."<sup>60</sup>

Meanwhile, Don Quixote-like, Ysassi continued to convince himself that the blacks were under his obedience. He wrote to the Spanish King in August 1658 to say that he had been doing all he could to conserve them and to keep them under his power, adding that he had "promised their Chiefs freedom in your Majesty's name but have not given it until I receive an order for it."<sup>61</sup> The Spanish Lieutenant General of Jamaica (for so he continued to call himself), Don Francisco de Leyba, seemed rather more realistic when he testified in Madrid a year later that there were black settlements in the hills, consisting of men and women "who govern themselves." But no doubt in order not to offend royal sentiments, or possibly not to appear to be contradicting Ysassi, he went on to say that they were obedient to the Governor "who keeps them in this way so that they may not separate themselves from His Majesty's service."<sup>62</sup> A year later, however, Ysassi received news that some of his "obedient" blacks had joined the enemy, the British.

This was the palenque or "pelinco" of British designation, "of Negroes, about one hundred and fifty, under one Boulo, which are lanciers and archers and many of the private men of war men [*sic*]."<sup>63</sup> Exactly what is meant here by "private men of war men," is not clear but this is probably the first British official report on Juan de Bola, variously called Juan de Bola, de Bolas, Luyola by the British, but called Juan Lubolo (possibly an African name without the Juan) by the Spaniards. Juan Lubolo's palenque of 150 was stationed, as mentioned above, on the south side of the island in the Clarendon mountains and this settlement was among those cooperating for mutual benefits with Ysassi and his people. It also appears that the British had very early made overtures to this group. In Sedgwick's despatch to Cromwell in March 1655/6, for instance, he admitted that he did not know how to capture any of the runaways, but rather obliquely intimated some arrangement when he said "there is a work we are now striving to effect for be assured they must either be destroyed or brought in upon some terms or other or else they will be a great discouragement to the settling of a people here."<sup>64</sup> Further, in Ysassi's communication of August 1658 to the Spanish king, he mentioned that the fugitive blacks were being "sought after with papers from the enemy,"<sup>65</sup> while Dallas said that the British Governor "found means to conciliate"<sup>66</sup> them. The strongest evidence of official overtures comes from D'Oyley's instruction in 1660, paragraph eleven, stating "You are to give such encouragement as securely you may to such Negroes, natives and others, as shall submit to live peaceably under his majesty's obedience, and in the due submission to the government of the island."<sup>67</sup>

It is important to state here that in contrast to the Spaniards the British were

quick to see the economic potential of the island in terms of sugar plantations. In his first encounter with the Spaniards, when asked by the latter the purpose of his visit, Venables rather laconically replied that he came "not to pillage, but to plant."<sup>68</sup> Also, in his first account of Jamaica he gave some rather perspicacious observations on the possibilities of sugar culture and even looked ahead enough to have suggested the erection of sugar engines in areas near a plentiful supply of water. In all the early despatches from Whitehall to D'Oyley and other Governors, the emphasis was on the encouragement of plantations. Thus D'Oyley's overtures to Lubolo and his men, and other overtures to be dealt with later, had this aim in view. D'Oyley's method in approaching Lubolo is not clear, but it is certain that the wily Governor would have had recourse to a combination of terror and cajolery. There is evidence to show that he employed the daredevil buccaneers.<sup>69</sup> Perhaps these were the only whites of the area who could be a match to the maroons, for they too knew the art of guerrilla warfare and they too had some knowledge (not as intimate, doubtless, as that of the maroons) of the island's interior. The buccaneers, as our study will show, were to be used against the maroons later in the 1670s and 80s with the intrepid Henry Morgan (not yet knighted) in command on these occasions. It is clear that D'Oyley would not wish to have any open conflict with the blacks, whose skill in guerrilla tactics had already been established. Even with the aid of the buccaneers, the Governor could not be certain that open confrontation with the maroons would not be protracted and therefore dysfunctional to the development of the plantation economy. Secondly, the shrewd Governor may well have seen good policy in incorporating the blacks on his side to be used against outside enemies such as the Spaniards or the French. Conceivably, therefore, the buccaneers were employed to treat with and not to fight Lubolo, promising him amnesty, freedom and lands for settlement if he would submit to the British authority. The buccaneer presence would thus have added the ingredient of terror to the promises and the cajolery of the Governor.

Exactly when Lubolo agreed to the British overtures is imprecise. The formal Proclamation announcing the *rapprochement* to be dealt with later was not issued until February 1662/3. But there is evidence to show that Lubolo had been working with the British against the Spaniards and apparently even against other maroons in the hills, at least since 1660. One piece of such evidence is to be found from the communication of a British officer which said in part that "the enemy in our bowels, to whom our lives have been a prey, and many men have been subjected to their mercy (I mean the Negroes) are now become our *bloodhounds* . . . and they are *in our behalf* more violent and fierce against their fellows than we possibly can be"<sup>70</sup> [my italics]. The last paragraph holds an ambiguity where "their fellows" could either mean other runaways or the Spaniards or both groups together. Given white ethnocentrism it is more likely that the term was intended to embrace other blacks. Another piece of evidence is to be found from the records of a council of war (dealt with below) held by the Spanish "governor" and his military officers "in the mountains of Jamaica," on February 27, 1660 when news reached them that Lubolo had joined the enemy. But the strongest evidence is to be found in the Charter, which mentioned in part that Lubolo and his palenque had demonstrated their loyalty and affection to the British "upon severall [*sic*] occasions."<sup>71</sup>

The degree to which the Spaniards depended on the blacks, not only symbolically, but also in terms of their security, is demonstrated in Ysassi's reaction to what he considered Lubolo's defection. The council of war was specifically called to determine what should be done in view of his action. Here they decided

to leave the island, intriguingly enough, not out of fear of the British so much as fear of the maroons, the "rebellious blacks," as the British before had also seen the maroons as the greater danger to them than the Spaniards. They argued that the "Negroes" were "so experienced and acquainted with the mountains" that they could not hope to succeed against them; they were thus exposed "to the known risk of being murdered without escape" by their former slaves. The Spanish Governor then issued an order commanding the remnants of his army to remove from the spot quickly, pointing out that the blacks were bound to disclose their rendezvous to the British. Three days after leaving, as the Governor predicted, their settlement was reached and routed by the enemy accompanied by Lubolo and his men. Ysassi himself managed to escape to Cuba.<sup>72</sup> Thus it is quite clear that the Spaniards finally left the island because they could no longer hold out any hope of loyalty or help from their ex-slaves.

Yet Edward Long and Bryan Edwards<sup>73</sup> said quite the contrary. Edwards who "borrowed" almost word for word from Long said the "Negroes" were being "hard pressed" upon the final overthrow of the Spaniards by D'Oyley and this took "from them all hope of future succor from their ancient masters, they became very much streightened for want of provisions and ammunition. The main body . . . at length solicited for peace, and surrendered to the English on terms of pardon and freedom."<sup>74</sup> Here Edwards has contradicted himself for in the 1793 edition of his *History* he wrote correctly that the blacks had separated themselves from the Spaniards and had formed their own communities, attacking the British intermittently. In maintaining that Lubolo surrendered *because* of the Spanish defeat, he was, in fact, putting the cart before the horse for the very opposite was the case. Here again Edwards, following Long slavishly, contradicted himself. In the above edition he stated the facts as they were—that Sasi, as the British called him, and his men were routed by D'Oyley with the aid of a body of "fugitive negroes," "these wretches" informing D'Oyley where their late masters were sheltered.<sup>75</sup> The hostility of Long and Edwards to the maroons bristled throughout their works. Both men were planter-historians whose economic existence depended on slave-run plantations; therefore marronage represented to them a great threat to their economic livelihood. Furthermore, these two eighteenth-century English gentlemen/slave masters may have found it difficult to accept the fact that the white Spaniards were dependent on their black ex-slaves at a time when the "white man's burden" was being conveniently promulgated to redefine the interrelationship between whites and blacks.

The "Declaration" or Proclamation by the Jamaica Governor and Council, officially called "a charter to the said Negroes," issued February 1, 1662/3 is probably one of the first documents of its kind in history, anticipating those with the Leeward and Windward groups on the island by some seventy odd years and outside the island, those with the Djukas, the Saramakas and the Matawais of Surinam by between ninety-eight and over a hundred years.

In summary, the charter acknowledged the fidelity and affection of Lubolo to the British, in return for which he and his people were to receive their freedom and 30 acres of land to those 18 years of age and over. Lubolo's title of Governor of the Negroes was to be terminated and instead, he was "honored with the title of Coll. of the Black Regiment" in the island's militia. In addition, he and others of his men who were qualified were made magistrates to determine all ordinary matters against the blacks, "but all cases of great consequences and all of Life and Death shall be decided by ye English." They were to bring up their children "to the English tongue" and the adults should also endeavor to do the same. Those who fled to the mountains were offered freedom and similar benefits

if they gave themselves up and yielded obedience to the government within fourteen days of the charter; otherwise they would be "proceeded against as Outlaws and Traitors."<sup>76</sup>

Unlike the 1739/40 treaties, Lubolo's charter was not drawn up as a treaty arising out of the termination of bellicosity between two contending groups. Rather, in this charter or treaty, every effort was made to emphasize their cooperation with and loyalty to the British, which was deserving of some recognition and reward. In this sense, therefore, Lubolo's charter was more like manumission on a grand scale to a group of slaves who rendered some heroic service to the state. The grant of 30 acres of land for every one 18 years and over, for "his particular affection and service to the English," is indicative of this attitude. In depriving Lubolo of his original title, "Governor of the Negroes," and conferring on him the new one, "Colonel of the Black Militia," the British were here demonstrating their sovereignty over all on the island; equally, in appointing Lubolo and others among his group who were qualified, magistrates, the conquerors were establishing their sole authority to make appointments and to integrate them within the rubric of the new polity. Furthermore, to recommend that Lubolo's people and their children endeavor to speak the "English tongue," was perhaps the most effective way of ensuring loyalty through acculturation. But the granting of quasi-judicial authority to them in all cases excepting life and death—to be repeated in the 1739/40 treaties—may well have been a concession, the only concession, to existing practices among Lubolo and his people.

It would be interesting to reflect on the possible factors that determined Lubolo's *rapprochement* with the British. To begin with, his position, being on the south side of the island, was strategically precarious: it was too close to the area the British occupied, too easily accessible and much too close to Spanish Town. They were thus somewhat isolated from the other bands who were further in the interior, some already moving toward and settling on the north coast, where the main guerrilla activities were to take place from the 1670s onward. Secondly, there is some suggestive evidence that Lubolo and his people—at least some of them—were free. The Spanish census of 1611 already mentioned had accounted for 107 free blacks, and this category has been ignored or forgotten in most works written about the island after 1655. If these blacks were indeed free without the necessary papers to prove their freedom, then they could well be apprehended and reconsigned to slavery by the British, despite the offer of general freedom mentioned above. Lubolo and his people may thus have felt that a treaty under the circumstances was the best policy since it appears they were not averse to integration within the system. The condition of their settlement also shows a great degree of stability. Even if Taylor's figure of 200 acres<sup>77</sup> of cultivated crops is exaggerated, it still was considered the largest single source of locally grown food and the Spanish guerrilla bands appear to have depended on them for supplies of food. But perhaps the most important evidence to show that at least some were free is to be found in the charter, a part of the first paragraph which said, "Bola and all the free Negroes . . ."

Apparently the other bands of black guerrillas in the hills did not view Lubolo's new alliance with satisfaction; they rather saw him as a renegade who sullied their image by capitulating to the enemy. And perhaps, as if to demonstrate their disapproval of the *rapprochement*, various attacks on the plantations were soon reported to the authorities. In October of the same year of the Charter, for instance, news reached the Governor and Council that murder and other "Enormities were done to severall good people of this Island by Negroes that have had too much of their Libertie." But in keeping with the policy of blandish-

ment, in order to hasten the development of the plantation economy, the Council tried to contain rebelliousness by instituting regularized trials consisting of two Justices of the Peace with the power to examine offences such as the above. The punishment, remarkably mild, was to be either transportation or a recommendation to the master or mistress to sell the recalcitrant black.<sup>78</sup> This, of course, had no effect whatsoever either on the maroons enjoying their freedom in the hills or on the slaves on the plantations who were determined to runaway or rebel.

In line with the policy of blandishment with the view of integrating the rebels, the governor tried to sue for peace with Juan de Serras' group, the Carmahaly or Karmahaly or Vermaholis or Vermahalles,<sup>79</sup> as they were variously called, by issuing a Proclamation in 1663 offering to grant 20 acres of land per head, and "freedom" to those who would turn themselves in to live as peaceful members of the community. But none responded: "On the contrary, they were better pleased with the more ample range they possessed in the woods where their hunting ground was not yet limited by settlement."<sup>80</sup> Indeed, the overture proved counterproductive for the maroons read from this that they were feared and this made them display greater opposition to the system. Realizing the Karmahaly's contempt for official blandishment the Governor therefore sent Lubolo, now the official "bloodhound" of the British, whether to treat with or to fight against his black brethren is none too clear, but whatever the nature of the mission, the maroons apparently felt that this was their chance to wreak vengeance on the Black General.

Lubolo was victorious over the Spaniards, but in this instance he was up against more than his match. He fell into an ingenious Karmahaly ambush and was slain. It is reported that he was "cut into pieces," and this is not difficult to understand considering the supreme contempt they must have had for Lubolo's defection to the enemy.<sup>81</sup>

According to Dallas, after Lubolo's death his group decreased in number and morale and thus "sought quiet and protection in the vicinity of towns and settlements; nor were any of them ever known to return to their former haunts in the mountains of Clarendon",<sup>82</sup> where evidently a new cluster of maroon groups was being formed.

The Karmahaly band under Juan de Serras is a maroon group that deserves special attention, not only because they have nowhere else been systematically treated—nor because of their great skill in guerrilla warfare—but also because of their particular skill in negotiation and their diplomatic subtlety. Juan de Serras, from scanty data, appears to have been a man of extraordinary ability, strongly seated in his leadership position with a vigorous, disciplined organization based on an hierarchical ordering typical of maroon communities. He himself carried the title of Governor, while the next in command was designated Serjeant Major, where ranking was based not on African monarchical tradition but on military discipline of a Western model. He governed his people with consensual authority, recognized those with particular skills in his group, and delegated them with functions accordingly. Thus some were used as emissaries, the specific qualifications for these delicate positions being tact, finesse and bilingualism in Spanish and English.

The capitulation of Lubolo and his band in simple arithmetical terms meant fewer maroon guerrillas fighting the British. The Karmahalys therefore clearly saw that their security more than ever lay in placing themselves in strategic positions, which by the very nature of maroon societies meant inaccessible areas, which fortunately for them Jamaica did not lack. Although it is most difficult to reconstruct their movements, it is clear that their chief objectives were at least

threefold: first, to gain access to the as yet impenetrable north and northeastern interior of the island; second, to augment their numbers in the process by capturing slaves from plantations; and third, to increase their military strength by pilfering arms and other supplies from planters or from hunters carelessly wandering about in the woods.

By June 1664 their harassment of plantations became so alarming to the planters that Captain Rutter and a party of volunteers were sent out against them but with no success whatsoever.<sup>83</sup> By the following year, reports of their plundering plantations, killing whites, and making off with slaves reached alarming proportions, and in response to this the country was "put in a posture of Warr." Every regiment was given the power to raise and command parties either to pursue the "said Negroes" or to lie in ambush for them.

The Article of war, drawn up by the Governor, Sir Thomas Modyford, and Council, August 15, 1665, occasioned by "the Rebellion of the Carmahaly Negroes and other Outlying Negroes," was a formal document consisting of some three pages and ten clauses. This is the first formal declaration of war against any maroon group in Jamaica, just ten years after the British conquest. The article outlined in banal terms the rigor of warfare, the necessity of loyalty and obedience from private soldiers to their officers, and the overriding duty of the army to commit itself to the suppression of the rebellious Negroes: "If any officer," clause three said, "do grossly let slipp any opportunity—wherein he might have done service on the said Rebels such officers shall be censured also by the discretion of a Court Marshall; not extending to Life and Limb."<sup>84</sup>

The resolutions emanating from the Council of War were much more interesting and revealing. Here the nature and extent of the activities of the Karmahalys as well as the plantocracy's attitude to them were painted in vivid colors. The first resolution set the tone:

Whereas the Rebellious Negroes, commonly called ye Karmahalys, do dayly under notion of freindshipp and fair Correspondence beguile many Hunters and commit divers Murders, and outrageous [*sic*] upon them and others, which Negroes for their number and Condition are so contemptable [*sic*] and base that no way for the persecution of such perfidious villaines can be ill accounted of, and whereas the Assembly now in being did pass an Act for their Suppression and that the Monyes . . . should be levied on the Country by an equal Tax for the encouragement thereof, all the Inhabitants of this Island to surprise and kill those sneaking and treacherous Rogues . . ."<sup>84</sup>

Clearly the period of blandishment toward the maroons was over, and under pressure, the Karmahalys' superb sense of strategy implied in the first lines of the resolution will soon be put to the utmost effect.

The other resolutions set forth the rewards for capturing or killing any of them: any person or persons jointly or severally who killed or took alive the Karmahaly Negro called the Serjeant Major (Governor was the correct title), would receive £30 sterling; for any other officer among them then the reward would be £20, while £10 would be given for the killing or apprehending of any of the "common Negroes of the Said Gang." To the slave and the indenture on the plantation, freedom was offered: Resolution seven said "If the said person so killing and takeing any of the said villaines be it Servant or Slave, he shall from thence forth be free and the value of him paid to his Master or right Owner."

The attempt was also made in keeping with British colonial practice to divide the rebels among themselves, by promising pardon to potential renegades: Resolution six stated that, "if any of the Karmahaly Negroes repenting of their lewd

Course of Life shall bring in alive or dead any of their officers or fellows, such Negroes shall have pardon for what is past, and have his freedom any resolution to the contrary Notwithstanding." But the most interesting resolution was the last, which gave license to the soldiers to possess the women of the Negro palenque: It stated that "if any number of pson. shall find out the Pallenque of the said Negroes, they shall have and enjoy to their uses all the Women and Children, and all the plunder they can find there for their reward."<sup>84</sup>

It is clear that the British, from this early period, were well aware of the acute shortage of women among the maroon bands in Jamaica, as was indeed the case elsewhere in the area.<sup>85</sup> The capture of women was often the primary objective of many of their raids on plantations. This resolution was therefore intended to affect them on a most critical issue. But so far as the whites were concerned it was counterproductive because any abuse of maroon women was invariably met with the most serious consequences.

It appears that the state of war and the general preparedness of the island placed the Karmahaly on the defensive for a while, although the parties sent out against them were almost totally ineffective.

But about a year and a half later, after the posture of war, we find a Karma-haly black, Demingo Henriques, suing for "peace." This peace overture, however, was nothing more than a ploy to gain time in order to consolidate their position, and to select strategically new positions and to lull the whites into a state of security. And the ruse could not have been more successful.

The astute Karmahaly chief, Juan de Serras, arranged to have Demingo Henriques "captured" by one of the parties sent out against them; and accordingly Demingo was duly "captured," apparently by one Captain Colbeck of the white militia around the vicinity of the British military regiment at Guanaboa, and brought before the Governor, Sir Thomas Modyford. Here Demingo told Modyford that the black general of the Karmahaly, his chief, if granted a charter of freedom, would submit to the King of England. The war-weary island, anxious to pursue its plantation economy, which was greatly jeopardized by the "rebellious Negroes," went for the bait and accepted the deceitful Demingo's olive branch. Thus it was instantly ordered "that the Carmahaly Negro Demingo Henriques be pardoned of all his Crimes and have a Charter of freedom for himself, Wife and two children, and that he presently take the Oath of allegiance," and this was done immediately.

It was further ordered that Demingo be sent with two other blacks, Paul and Demingo, and "that he carry a Charter of pardon and freedom to all the Carmahaly Negroes to be enjoyed by them on their submission to his Majties Authority." The Governor and Council also ordered that all rights of the said "Rebellious Negroes" were now restored to them by pardon from His Majesty's government, and therefore no person whatsoever was "to disturb them, or demand any of them as Slaves." It was also ordered that the expenses of the two blacks, Paul and Demingo, accompanying Henriques, be paid out of the island's Treasury.

Paul and Demingo, the "two other Negroes," whether free or bonded is not clear, but the probabilities are that they were of Lubolo's band, and bilingual, speaking Spanish and English, were now the official ambassadors to treat with Juan de Serras. This is an interesting commentary on the role of blacks in the Caribbean. They were not merely the sinews of the plantation, but they also fought in battles as soldiers, against either external or domestic enemies; they built fortifications, bridges, barracks and roads; they were used as explorers and on more than one occasion as emissaries of governments,<sup>86</sup> and indeed the



maroons who later went to Sierra Leone were to be used to treat with African kings and chiefs in the interior of the country.

The report of the two black emissaries, recorded in the Council minutes of March 28, 1668, just about a year after their "accreditation," is clearly the most insightful Jamaican record we have of maroon skill at diplomacy. Paul, the chief spokesman, reported to the Governor and Council with skill and clarity. He told his audience that upon arrival at the palenque of the Karmahaly Negroes, he and Demingo were escorted to the black Governor who wanted to know the reason for their visit, whereupon Paul explained that it was to bring them a charter of freedom if they submitted to British authority. He explained that one of his Karmahaly people, Demingo Henriques, had already received his "Life and Liberty" from that source. The black Governor, with calculated duplicity, replied that he and all his people did acknowledge themselves "subjects and soldiers" of the King of England, that they would be obedient to the British, and that he desired "thankfully" to accept the charter of pardon and liberty. He further observed that it was never his intention to do any mischief to the British, but would certainly acknowledge responsibility for the killing of five white hunters, which they were provoked into doing: the reason being that these hunters, "under colour of fair trading" stole away "divers of their Women," whereupon they pursued them and had the upper hand in a fair fight. In taking pains to narrate this particular episode, the black Governor may well have been issuing a diplomatic caveat calculated to reflect on the Council of War's resolution mentioned above, giving license to soldiers or volunteers to "have and enjoy to their uses all the women and children" captured from the Karmahalys. As for the party of his men who went to Guanaboa (where Demingo was "captured"), the black chief said that he had given them strict orders to proceed to the north side of the island only to obtain salt. It was therefore contrary to his orders that they disturbed the British at Guanaboa and for this they were justly punished, he himself imprisoning four of them. But the most calculated part of the black leader's diplomacy was yet to come. He now bade the two emissaries, Paul and Demingo, "humbly" to ask His Excellency to issue a proclamation declaring their submission to the British authority and granting them "freedom to go and come amongst the English to trade and traffique." In order to gain more time, the black chief cleverly recommended sending some of his men to conclude the treaty with the British Governor, but it is not clear whether these were sent or not. He would wish to ascertain, for instance, in what part of the island he and his people were to be settled, what rules and regulations were to be imposed upon them, and so forth. Then the Karmahaly leader went on to denigrate "the other Negroes about town"—he could not agree with them; they were false to the English"; and he would not wish to associate with them. This was probably the only true statement of the black leader, for there was much disunity among the different bands of maroon groups, as mentioned before.

Paul listened carefully to all this and informed the Karmahaly that his message would be faithfully conveyed to the British Governor, but if he did not satisfy his side of the bargain, then the General of the British army would hang him. (A good diplomat knows when bluntness is necessary.) To this the black governor made serious protestations declaring his faithfulness and his honesty and promising to do any service to the British as soon as he and his people were settled, and for good measure supplied the two black emissaries with a guard and a "gang of doggs" to escort them out of his palenque.

The Governor and Council were delighted with Paul's deposition and on the

same day they ordered a Proclamation to be issued "in every Precinct of this Island that the Karmahaly Negroes may pass quietly about their business throughout this Island." The Proclamation gave notice to "all the Inhabitants" of Jamaica

. . . that the psons commonly called ye Karmahaly Negroes, have submitted themselves to his Majties Government here, and have . . . received his Majesties gracious Charter of pardon and freedom, granted to themselves, their Wives and children, and therefore all officers both military and civil, and other his Majties loveing subjects, are hereby strictly charged and commanded to take notice hereof and quietly and peaceably to permitt the said Karmahaly Negroes to pass and repass about their affaires in any part of this Island, without any trouble, Lett or Molestation, and in all things, and on all occassions to treat and use them as other his Majesties loveing Subjects are treated and used, as they will answer to the contrary at their utmost peril.<sup>87</sup>

Thus time, which was of the essence to the Karmahalys, was now gained; also freedom of movement to trade for necessary provisions and to deploy their people at strategic positions in the island was now legally ensured. The Karmahalys gained everything and lost nothing, and they could well have taught the maroons of 1739/40 how to make a treaty.

Richard Price<sup>88</sup> has put forward a tentative suggestion that the most valuable maroon leader was the one "skilled at understanding whites as well as his fellow Maroon," and there may well be much in this suggestion, especially where the Surinam maroons are concerned. Although not much is known of Juan de Serras, it is at least clear that he was a Spanish creole black and would thus have almost most certainly interacted with whites in one capacity or another, and could therefore hoist them by their own petard. His skill in leadership and his ability at delegating functions to his fellow maroons suggested understanding of his people and their acceptance of his position.

If one may make a furtive comparison here with Cudjoe, then de Serras had certain advantages. He was not as straitened by warfare as was Cudjoe at the time of his treaty; de Serras had his stratagems well planned and was, in fact, using the British as instruments toward the implementation of his plans. Cudjoe, on the other hand, was at the mercy of British stratagems. The British had by this time changed their attitude toward treaty-making with ex-rebel slaves. The aim was no longer to integrate them in the society with as much dispatch as possible, as was the case with Lubolo's treaty of 1660 or with the Proclamations of 1663 and 1670, but to use the maroons as a part of their defense system. They were to be a kind of glorified Plato's auxiliaries at hand to track down internal enemies—the slaves—or to assist in fighting external ones, like the French and the Spaniards, as the buccaneers had done before. Indeed the use made of the buccaneers may well have suggested this policy to the authorities.

The result of de Serras' ingenuity was that the whites were lulled into a state of false security, and as soon as the maroons found themselves in a secure position, some took the offensive and resumed open hostilities just two years after the Charter. Apparently, during the respite, some fanned themselves out into the Clarendon area, possibly using the old settlement of Lubolo, and further along the Mocho mountain range, but the main body, as events were to show, proceeded further toward the north and northeastern sections of the island. Their first great "outrage" was in Clarendon, however. Here the Governor and Council heard that the "outlying Negroes commonly called ye Karmahaly . . . committed divers Murders, Robberyes and other outrages on his Majesties Subjects," the most recent of which were the murders of John Piper, Pallisando Robin, John Townsend, Thomas Mason and Bloody Dick, all inhabitants of Clarendon.<sup>90</sup>

It was from this time that the most energetic measures were adopted against them. The two primary objectives were first "for the prevention of such Mischiefs for the future" and second "for the due and speedy punishment of those perfidious Villaines;" and the usual resolutions (on this occasion, ten) were passed with these ends in view.<sup>90</sup> The Island was again placed on a war footing: it became an offense for any person, whether soldier, officer or hunter, to venture out alone, two miles and beyond, without being armed; all persons on the island were to be ready with their arms to assist any officer of horse or foot or any Justice of the Peace or Constable in the service of apprehending or killing the "traiterous Villaines," and any one refusing to assist would be tried and fined at the discretion of the Justices and liable also to appear before a special "Court Marshall" [*sic*]; every one was "strictly charged and forbidden to give or suffer to be given any Cloths, Victualls or other thing whatsoever, or treat, talk, or parly with ye said Traitors upon pain of being prosecuted as Ayders, Assisters, Comforters, to the Said Rebels whereof all people are to take notice at their Perills, and that contrarywise they fire at them, endeavoring by all means possible to destroy them"; rewards were again offered (in this case the correct hierarchization of the Karmahaly's politicomilitary structure was ascertained when £30 was offered, not for the Sergeant Major as before, but for the killing or taking of the Governor, £20 for the Serjeant Major and for any common one among them £10; again, as in the first war against them, indentured servant or slave would be freed in taking or killing a Karmahaly, the master or owner of such servants or slaves to be reimbursed according to their true value; voluntary parties were again encouraged to search "for the said villaine's palenque" and if success attended such a party, it would be lawful for them to have "all their [the Karmahalys] wives and Children for slaves, also the respective Sums of money above provided" (the significant change in the wording here may well have been the authorities' response to the now known attitude of the maroons to their women); an alarm should be sounded, day or night, on sight of the rebellious Negroes and upon hearing it, all should repair "to the usual place of rendezvous there to await further orders; failure to sound the alarm if a rebel is sighted, or to respond to the alarm, would lead to a trial before a Court Marshall to be conducted according to the "Articles of Warr."<sup>90</sup>

This kind of preparedness is indeed indicative of the authorities' perceived seriousness of the maroon threat, which was no longer considered localized around the Clarendon area, but was now a general problem and the orders were to be "publiquely read every exercising [*sic*] day in the head of every Company and that every Commander in chief of every Regiment have a true Copy hereof sent him, and he is commanded hereby to distribute the same to his ffeild [*sic*] officers and Captaines within his Regiment, chargeing them with the due publication thereof as aforesaid."<sup>90</sup>

There is much that is hazy about the fate of the Karmahaly after these vigorous measures were adopted against them. One source said that in about 1670 "their number being about forty—when they retreated to the north-eastern section of the island . . . for the next thirty years [they] remained relatively secluded."<sup>91</sup> This is only partly correct—in the sense that some did settle in Clarendon, as we have already seen—but from the evidence, it is certain that some retreated to the northeastern section of the country. However, it does not appear that they remained secluded or quiet for the next thirty years, but rather for not more than about fourteen or fifteen years, as we shall discuss below.

If they ceased their harassment of the British there is some evidence to suggest that this may have been partly due to the influence of the buccaneers, now under the leadership of the daring Henry Morgan, but more so to the fact that in

their northeastern settlements they remained isolated and unmolested until a few British frontiersmen began to open up plantations there.

The buccaneers,<sup>92</sup> who became firmly rooted in Jamaica soon after the British conquest, were countenanced and even encouraged and made allies of by D'Oyley and succeeding Governors. No doubt alliance with such a lawless set of daredevil pirates was a risky business, but to have made enemies of them at such a precarious period of the island's history would probably have been much more dangerous. They were especially useful to the British in fighting first the Dutch and then the Spaniards, who even after leaving the island in 1660 never gave up hope of recapturing it. In 1670, for instance, at the height of the Karmahaly problem, the Spanish forays on the north coast increased to an alarming extent; news reached the Governor that they were marching inland, burning houses, and killing and taking prisoners, while three Spanish ships were actually sighted on the south side of the island. Here the planters complained that while they attended to the foreign enemy, not only did their cattle and other stock run wild, but also their slaves took to "the woods," which continues to show that the slaves were always on the alert for the right opportunity to seize their freedom. It was at times like these that the services of the buccaneers were sought, and accordingly, the Governor and Council appointed Henry Morgan, now Admiral, to take control of the foreign enemy on June 29, 1670; by August of the same year Morgan reported much success, and by the end of the year the Treaty of Madrid was signed with Spain where, ironically, a condition of the treaty was the promise of the British to curb the activities of the buccaneers.<sup>93</sup>

Under this treaty, Spanish prisoners and their slaves, among whom were Indians, Negroes and mulattos, were to be released. But the Jamaican Council found that these latter categories comprised "useless and dangerous persons" who would be a security problem to the inhabitants, and thus they were ordered to be sold (possibly to a foreign colony) for the purpose of increasing the revenue of the island, which was in a pretty desperate condition. Eighty pieces-of-eight for each Spanish "Negro" above the age of twelve, and twenty doubloons each for those under twelve were the going prices; the price lists for the Indians and mulattos were not given.<sup>94</sup> A survey of each parish was thus made for such persons to be taken by "military men" in each area.

It appears therefore that the activities of Morgan and his buccaneers, as well as the rounding up and sale of the Spanish blacks and mulattos, may have had some inhibiting effect on the maroon bands, whether Karmahaly or others in their mountainous retreats. Therefore, for the most part of 1670 there are hardly any records of slave rebellions on plantations or of maroon harassment; but by the end of 1671 sporadic attacks on certain plantations began and developed into a general pattern throughout the 1680s and the 1690s.<sup>95</sup>

It seems important here to review the different types of resistance groups now operating in the island. To start with, a new dimension was added to the maroon society with the influx of newly arrived runaway slaves from the plantations. Like the French, the British planters in Jamaica distinguished between *grand* and *petit* marronage, and passed laws attempting to define these categories. One such law said that all "Negroes" absent from their owners for six months, "shall be accounted as in actual Rebellion."<sup>96</sup> The Slave Act of 1696 made finer distinctions where punishment was linked to the duration of flight and the number of years spent on the plantation before flight. Thus a slave who absconded for less than a year, but who resided in the island for more than three years, would be considered a runaway, punishable by severe flogging if caught; one who absconded for more than a year would be considered a rebel and the pun-

ishment, if caught, would be death or transportation; while those in the island for less than three years who ran away were less severely dealt with.<sup>97</sup> The underlying assumptions behind these laws are not too clear, but it would seem that the seasoned slaves were considered to be so sufficiently acculturated within the rigor of the plantation system that they were expected to settle down quietly.<sup>98</sup>

The question to be dealt with here is the relationship between the newly arrived runaways and the old established maroon gangs like the Karmahalys, for example. There is sufficient evidence to show that the Spanish creole maroons, especially the Karmahaly under Juan de Serras' leadership, not only held themselves aloof from the other established maroon groups, but also displayed open hostility towards the newly arrived Africans—the *bozales*. From about the decade following the 1660s the fate of the bozales who took flight to the hills, whether singly or in groups, was considered intolerable in view of the bad treatment meted out to them by the Spanish creole maroons. It is said that some of these newly arrived runaways actually returned to their former plantations (whether to face trial as rebels or as runaways would depend on the duration of the flight) as a result of the Spanish creole's brutality to them.<sup>99</sup> It appears that the British exploited this hostility to the bozales by recruiting Spanish blacks among the parties sent out to subjugate them.<sup>100</sup>

Not all returned to the plantations, however. Some apparently lurked among the woods, either singly, forming their own bands, or joining larger groups already existing in the hills. One such large homogenous community functioning in the woods was the Madagascar band.

These, according to one source, were said to have been the survivors of a slave ship carrying mostly Madagascar blacks, which was wrecked off the coast of Jamaica in 1670, and numbered between forty and one hundred.<sup>101</sup> Dallas, however, describing their skin as being "of a deeper jet than that of any other Negroe," with features resembling those of the Europeans, but giving no date of their possible arrival in Jamaica, said that they ran away from certain settlements around Lacovia in St. Elizabeth soon after the planters had bought them.<sup>102</sup> The Madagascans, who in the eyes of the creole blacks were bozales, must have acted as a magnet to the newly arrived runaways who were not being welcomed in the camp of the Spanish creoles.

The bozales therefore did not remain the underdog for long. With the large importation of Africans into the island to satisfy the pressing labor demand of the plantation slave economy, more and more of these resorted to rebellion and flight. Slave rebellions on the plantations served as a conduit by which means slaves joined maroon communities. The result is that these newly arrived Africans soon gained ascendancy in the hills in terms of sheer numbers, and by the beginning of the eighteenth century they were decidedly in a leadership position, the famous Cudjoe of the Akan group serving as *generalissimo* up to the time of the Treaty in 1739. The degree to which the Madagascar blacks were committed to the spirit of marronage is demonstrated by the fact they did not allow ethnic particularities to deter them from joining forces with Cudjoe and accepting his leadership.<sup>103</sup>

Meanwhile, ecological difficulties arose in cultivating crops on the south side of the island. The whites had established some sugar plantations along the low-lying plains around St. Catherine, St. Dorothy and Vere but these areas, once the "choicest and richest spots in the whole island,"<sup>104</sup> soon began to suffer not only from soil exhaustion occasioned by overutilization, but also from severe droughts brought about by excessive wood-cutting, which adversely affected the rainfall. Thus the most hardy and determined of the planters, the frontiersmen,

began to push towards the north—an area that “was one entire desert from east to west, totally uncultivated”<sup>105</sup> to establish plantations. But these inland northern areas, the “no man’s land,” with their terrifying mountain ranges, had become the habitat of most of the Karmahalys and other runaways, and were to become the most important maroon territories in the island. These lofty precipitous rocks, the Blue Mountains, and the John Crow and the Cockpit ranges with ravines, caverns, defiles, and canyons, provided the natural setting in which the maroons acted out their saga. A Governor of the island, with nervous energy described the setting:

The scene of our action is more tremendous than can possibly be described: mountains rising one above the other, almost perpendicular from the base, all covered with wood, the surface everywhere sharp and rugged, each mountain detached and only separated from the next by a narrow defile or glade, which being daily watered by the rains produces an inexhaustible supply of ground provisions. Bold as the scenery is, nature has exerted herself in producing something still more astonishing. In the heart of this wonderful country, the mountains change their appearance. Losing nothing in their perpendicular height, they became stupendous honeycombed rocks undermined into an innumerable range of caves, some of which are near two miles in length. Immediately adjacent to these terrible retreats have the Maroons fixed and established themselves for ages.<sup>106</sup>

The Maroons in these retreats saw themselves as the autochthons of the area since as far as we know no one before, certainly not the Arawaks, had inhabited these pristine places. It is no wonder then that marronage from the 1670s onwards took on a more serious quality. Surrogate autochthons they may be but they were nevertheless determined to fight to the last ditch to defend their freedom and their territoriality.

Thus the relative quiet of the Karmahalys and other less specified bands was due mainly to the fact of their seclusion, and if the British had not begun plantations in the north then we may never have heard of these maroons again. But the establishment of plantations contiguous to their mountainous domains was considered an infringement on maroon territorial rights in terms of the lands they occupied and planted and of what they conceived as the purlieu of their hunting grounds; and they made it known to the white hunters that they would not countenance intruders on the environs of these areas. A contemporary account said, “if a colonist had the temerity to commence a plantation at all within their reach, they were sure to take advantage of the night, or some unguarded hour, and murder his family, carrying off in their retreat, both negroes and cattle. So that for a long time, the plantations were necessarily confined to the coast and neighbourhood of the towns.”<sup>107</sup> Even the efforts of the British to establish a watering resort at the Bath in St. Thomas in the East in imitation of Tunbridge Wells and Bath in England were thwarted by the proximity of the maroon settlements.<sup>108</sup>

Some of the frontier planters, however, were apparently not deterred by Maroon hostility, but did succeed in establishing a few plantations in the north and northeastern parishes, such as St. Mary, St. George, Portland and St. Thomas in the East, apparently around the end of the 1670s, during the period of quiet. But by September 1686 they were alarmed by the sustained and successful activities of the maroons who had become so “imboldden” that they had already succeeded in driving out the planters and other inhabitants who had settled in St. Thomas in the East; these settlers had “been destroyed, and wholly driven from their Settlements from Manchinele [Machioneal] Bay to Fort Antonio.”<sup>109</sup> The St. George planters, frightened that they may well suffer the same fate from

the "murderous and Rebellious Negroes" who for "several years past" had gathered together "from diverse parts of this island" into their parish and adjoining ones, petitioned the Governor, Council and Assembly for "speedy" relief in combating the enemies.<sup>109</sup> They pointed out that their plantations were yet small, and that they were too poor and weak to repress the rebellious Negroes whose strength derived from their great numbers as well as from firearms and ammunition confiscated from hunters or planters or purchased.

The legislature acted promptly enough by calling together the field officers and Mayors of the affected parishes to advise on the best means "for reducing and destroying ye rebellious and Runaway Negroes" of the northeastern parishes – the "most infested" with the rebels. The Governor thought these parishes in "imminent danger," and if the inhabitants were not defended, then other parts of the island would soon be in a similar situation. Captain Orgile who presented the petition for St. George also testified before the Governor in council. He explained that the maroons were in two gangs, the Windward and the Cove, and from the size of their tracts and cultivated grounds, the maroons appeared to be very numerous. To Orgile's knowledge, they had been gathering in these parishes for the past fourteen or fifteen years, though not so mischievous in the early years as of late. (This certainly coincided with the time the Karmahalys deployed themselves into strategic positions after the 1670 "Treaty" discussed above.) Orgile testified that the planters in the area had attempted to repel them, but all their efforts were ineffectual, while the maroons grew in strength "stealing great quantity of Provisions, and doing other mischiefs, and being imboldened by their strength often came to one and the same place, so that parties might the more easily know where to come up with them."<sup>110</sup>

The actions that were adopted to crush the "rebellious Negroes" were to be repeated throughout the period of the maroon wars, and indeed the pattern was not confined to Jamaica, but was used on almost every other maroon society in the Americas: parties of white volunteers, often headed by professional soldiers or militiamen, were sent out against them. Invariably these volunteers were insufficient in number, ill-equipped or mis-equipped, undisciplined, and in many cases downright incompetent. In Jamaica, as elsewhere in the area, the most effective parties against the maroons were the blacks, whether slaves or free, named the "Black shots" in Jamaica, and "Chasseurs" in Haiti and in Surinam. Indians too, the Muskito or Miskito, from Honduras were employed against the maroons in Jamaica, and these Indians were invariably more effective than the white parties. Rewards were offered by the authorities to the free or bonded, for taking or killing any of the maroons and from about the first decade of the eighteenth century the "choisest" British soldiers were sent against them with little or no success. Finally, forts and barracks were erected at strategic positions,

... sufficiently manned, as near their settlement as possible, that at convenient seasons and opportunities they may make Excursions on them, and attack them to the best Advantage, and in the Marches root up, burn, and destroy their provisions, each Barrack be duly provided with a sufficient Gang of Dogs, which the Commissioners are hereby directed and impowered to buy, or impress to be paid for by the Church-wardens of the respective Parishes out of the Parish Stock, or money they are obliged to levy and raise for the several Uses and Purposes by virtue of this present Act, which the Justices and Vestries are hereby obliged and required to do, on the penalty of Twenty Pounds on each Justice and Vestryman neglecting his Duty herein".<sup>111</sup>

The first party against the "rebels," after the St. George's petition, serves as representative of the inefficiency and bungling, not to mention the misunder-

standing of the nature of maroon guerrilla warfare throughout the 1680s and 90s. It was only from the beginning of the eighteenth century that a more sustained effort was made against them.

Following Orgile's testimony, Major Henry Archbold proposed to lead a volunteer party of thirty persons, while one Barnet Risby volunteered to lead another party of twenty, and both men undertook to be ready in ten days. Empowered with an executive order from the Governor and Council, it was left to their discretion to destroy and subdue "the sayd Runaways and Rebels." Two other officers, Captain William Bragg and Captain Drax, offered to assist Major Archbold, promising about sixteen and fourteen men, respectively, but neither was certain of mustering the desired number of white men: Drax however promised to supplement his army "with Indians and Trusty Negroes."<sup>110</sup>

Two months later we have an account of their adventures. Major Archbold fell ill close to one of the maroon settlements, and although he did not encounter any of them, this did not prevent him from pronouncing that the maroons could easily be destroyed by a party of not more than twelve men and that the reports about their strength exaggerated what was "but imaginary danger." The major displayed his ignorance of the very essence of maroon warfare, which was to be perfected in the eighteenth century, by stating that he did not encounter any of them in his whole march and that he returned to headquarters without so much as hearing where they were.<sup>112</sup> Indeed this was precisely the strength of the maroons. They mastered and by subtle disguises became such a part of their surroundings that detection was made difficult. Incredibly, the Governor accepted Archbold's report, reiterating that Orgile's petition from St. George was the "mere contrivance" of the petitioner.<sup>112</sup> This naturally infuriated the inhabitants of St. George, who at a neighborhood meeting pointed out that they were still in "dayley feare of being murdered" by the blacks, and that the white hunters who made their living from hunting were discouraged from going out because of the terror of the "rebellious Negroes"; they repeated that their poverty and the long distances between their plantations made it impossible for them to defend themselves alone, while the enemies were growing daily in strength from the addition of runaway slaves and from their increased arms.<sup>112</sup>

A few of the parties at least, unlike Archbold's, did encounter some well-established settlement and therefore could give a more realistic account of the situation. Lieutenant Pitts discovered "divers plantations," about 20 acres altogether, filled with provisions, and he himself had fought the maroons there on several occasions. Commenting on their ethnic background, he thought they were of several parties, "each being of a different country" (it is possible that the Madagascans were among these as well as the new additions from plantations embracing different tribal groups), and they were apparently well established, with their snares laid out for about 20 miles in length for catching wild hogs; one of the gangs had 15 huts with four or six cabins in each.<sup>112</sup>

Another party came within hearing and sight of the "houses" of the rebels, and these houses were built on "inaccessible" precipices. The white captain of this party, unable to scale the rocks, gave his lance to a member of the "Black shot" corps, commanding him to do so and to lance the "enemies." But a maroon, possibly reconnoitering, soon spotted him, and after firing a few shots to alert the others, they all ran away. In line with official instructions, they burnt the houses of the settlement, and destroyed their meat and other provisions, a practice which Stewart<sup>113</sup> considered unnecessary, but no doubt the prevailing philosophy was that all's fair in war. The captain of this party rode away and returned to headquarters leaving the others to shift for themselves and to return home as they could.<sup>113</sup> But to have dislodged the maroons without pursuing



them was to exacerbate the situation for the St. George planters. To avenge themselves on the whites became the immediate concern of the maroons and the people of St. George became "more apprehensive of Danger than ever, unless care be taken by the Government for them" The first victim was one Serjeant Cooke who was "dangerously wounded" by a maroon, shortly after they were dislodged.<sup>113</sup>

The performance of the parties was indeed shoddy, especially when it is recalled that the "rebels" had previously displayed their strength by audaciously returning to the same place for confrontations with the white parties of the area. Some of the more efficient officers complained of the "ungovernableness" of their parties and recommended that martial law be proclaimed on subsequent marches to ensure better discipline. Also, more realistically, these saw the necessity for a standing party (in addition to the *ad hoc* volunteer parties) to maintain constant vigilance.<sup>113</sup>

The Council, no longer guided by Archbold's myopic report, now saw the necessity to relieve the people of St. George "with all possible expedition," and after much debate they tried to effect some improvement on the deployment of and the strategies of the previous parties. For one thing, they agreed to implement the recommended standing party, which was to consist of about sixteen to eighteen woodmen and hunters who obviously would have more knowledge of the interior of the island, and these were to be paid for every day that they marched and not otherwise. Further, they agreed on a base as the rendezvous from which the different parties were to be sent out. From this central position an army officer would be in charge, and the Governor could then send instructions to him, giving directions to march based on the intelligence he might receive of the enemies. Major Langley and Captain Orgile, by virtue of their proximity to the "infested" areas, were both appointed to alternate in their duties, one of which was to be constantly at the bivouac which was to be at Swift River in St. George. Another innovation was that instead of desultory parties going out singly, the "total extirpation of the Rebellious Negroes" would be better effected, the Council decided, if many parties were sent out simultaneously. Thus six parties were raised: one each from St. Thomas, St. David, St. Andrews, two from Port Royal, and one from St. Mary and St. George together, each party consisting of a commissioned officer, a serjeant, and twelve men.<sup>114</sup>

From this period, too, more consideration was given to the modalities of guerrilla warfare. The Governor took it upon himself to instruct the commanding officers of the necessity for strict discipline among the volunteers, and above all, of the need to observe silence during the march in the interior.<sup>115</sup> It was well that the Governor gave such instructions to his officers, who were men trained in the iron-clad logistics of open combat warfare in Europe and who had no knowledge whatsoever of guerrilla tactics and stratagems. Stewart has left us a good account of the early troops marching in "pomp and circumstances of war . . . in their proper regimentals, as if they were going to fight a regular and civilized enemy, and sometimes had even the absurdity to traverse the mountainous roads with drums beating."<sup>116</sup> The noise of the drums assisted immensely the maroon espionage system in warning the bands of the approach of the enemy. Equally, Stewart observed that "the customary accoutrements were too clumsy and burdensome for traversing the woods and clambering over the rocks, and the red coats were too conspicuous an object to the maroon marksmen, who seldom missed their aim."<sup>116</sup> By the turn of the century, however, the red coats of the British soldiers were changed for light green or blue and the customary accoutrements were also lightened.

The financing of the new measures was to be of primary concern to the au-

thorities of the island, who were operating a treasury that was mostly empty. The volunteers of the standing party, as well as those of the parties on the march in addition to the regular soldiers were all to be paid on a per diem basis. The going rates were between 5/ and 5/8 for a commissioned officer, 2/6-2/8 for a serjeant and 18 d. per day for the ordinary soldier or for a volunteer. In addition, supplies of arms, ammunition, food, clothes, shoes and the like were sent to each party. The rendezvous party, for instance, had for its first installment of supplies one hoghead of good dry fish, one hoghead of brisket, one hoghead of salt, 50 pounds of fine pistol powder, 400-500 good French flint, 200 pounds of bullets and proportionate cartridge paper, and a good supply of shoes.<sup>117</sup> Exactly how long this was intended to suffice is not clear. Furthermore, rewards for "further encouragement" were given for every rebellious Negro taken or killed and the price varied apparently according to the danger potential of the black as perceived by the whites. Thus, for the killing or taking of Peter the reward was £20. Peter was clearly a British slave and therefore designated by only a first or Christian or practical name, unlike the blacks under the Spaniards who, from all accounts, although also renamed, seem to have been given the full complement of Christian and surnames. For another black named Scanderberg the reward was £15. These awards are closer to those offered for Juan de Serras and his Serjeant Major, while the rewards throughout the last decade of the seventeenth century were much less, varying from a range of £5 to 20/- in a decreasing order that may well have reflected more the bankruptcy of the Treasury than the need to catch the runaway. Other payments were also made variously to the hangmen of "Negroes," and it appears, in many cases, to those also who could prove that they pursued "rebellious Negroes," even if they had not apparently caught them. Thus one George Bayley was paid £43.10 "for executing of the Rebellious Negroes," while one Nicholas Scarlett tendered a bill (amount not stated) to the Council for the pursuit of rebellious blacks.<sup>118</sup>

Since the Treasury was empty, voluntary contributions from the different parishes were again sought, as was done in the 1670s.<sup>100</sup> To this end the Governor in Council sent out circular letters to the Vestries of each parish with strong emotional appeal urging the "relief and defense of the poor inhabitants of St. George against the said Runaway and Rebellious Negroes." The letter said in part that without speedy relief from the public more planters would "be forced to desert their settlements" since they were not in a condition to defend themselves, and "the volunteer parties who went to their reliefs were more generous than successful in their undertaking." The seriousness of the matter was stressed, "but having noe money in the Treasury," they approached the several justices and vestries of the island for some "charitable benevolence" towards the payment of a standing party "for the Reliefs of those poor and necessitous Peoples." Without relief, "the major part of the Settlements of that parish must be inevitably lost, neighboring parts brought into danger, and those places become Receptacles for other Runaway and Rebellious Negroes, that may be apt to joyne unto them, which will be vastly prejudicial to the General Interest of the Island."<sup>110</sup>

Meanwhile, the appeals of 1676 to the different parishes had borne some favorable responses from the following parishes:

|               | <i>Amount of Pledge</i> |
|---------------|-------------------------|
| St. Catherine | £50                     |
| Pt. Royal     | £150                    |
| St. David     | £50                     |

|                        |     |
|------------------------|-----|
| St. Thomas in the East | £30 |
| St. Mary               | £25 |
| St. Dorothy            | £25 |

The parish of St. Andrews promised to maintain four men at the cost of the parish, possibly on surveillance duty, for as long as they were required.<sup>114</sup>

Thus, for the first time the attack on the maroons was beginning to be more systematic and sustained and not as desultory and piecemeal as hitherto.

But the general effect of this more energetic effort against them was another matter. The most positive "victory" the white parties could claim was the destruction of maroon provision grounds and huts, the spoilage of their meat and other supplies, and the cutting of their springs, which they had set up to ensnare wild hogs. And even this kind of victory was of doubtful benefit, hardly more than pyrrhic, because the destruction of their property and foodstuff invariably roused the angry passion of the maroons, and retaliation against the whites was always swift and bloody. Again, although we know that many white soldiers and volunteers were killed, it was "never positively ascertained that any Maroon had been slain in action,"<sup>119</sup> and apparently when a maroon death was reported, it was usually of a recent runaway who may have been lurking around the periphery of the maroon communities. Major Langley's party of May 1697 appears to have had some unusually good fortune from the planters' point of view. He reported that after seven days march he killed "two Negroes" and wounded "others" (this latter fact he knew from the large track of blood he saw); he also burnt down huts with about 22 cabins in them, and after some pursuit he and his party lost the track, and abandoned the chase because his men had become "sick and in great want."<sup>120</sup>

The seventeenth century therefore came to a close without any appreciable victory against the maroons, and the morale of the whites was low indeed. This was exacerbated by the disastrous earthquake of 1692, which in the space of two minutes laid to the ground all the buildings, dwelling houses, churches and sugar works in Port Royal. Followed in its wake were violent rains and epidemics which took the lives of many of the whites and left others in a state of great physical weakness.<sup>121</sup> Apparently the maroons in the mountains did not suffer from the effects of the earthquake and the epidemics, and both they and the slaves on the plantations saw the plight of the whites as their opportunity. The Council reported that large numbers of blacks were running away from the plantations, either to join already established maroon groups or to set up their own communities.<sup>122</sup> In addition, the maroons were boldly descending on plantations to pillage supplies, and there appears to have been at some point a confluence of maroons converging on plantations and runaways diverging from them, and between the two movements the whites seemed helpless. A letter from the Council to the Lords of the Committee for Trade and Foreign plantations in England stated flatly that the whites were not in a position to defend themselves from the insurrection of the slaves.<sup>123</sup> Port Royal, the richest of the parishes, had supplied the largest money contributions as well as the largest force—some two thousand "effectual men"—but was reduced, after the earthquake, to some two hundred men<sup>123</sup> and now needed contributions in money for its rebuilding.

Thus, the eve of the eighteenth century saw the position of the maroons stronger perhaps than at any other time since they established their communities after the British conquest. Although it is not possible to give an exact number of their population, it is nevertheless certain that it had increased from the constant supply of runaways from the plantations as well as from natural increase in birth rate. From the very nature of their existence, however, as well as from the shortage

of women among them, it can be assumed that natural increase was not the main factor of their population growth, even if Dallas is correct when he considered the Madagascans "remarkably prolific."<sup>124</sup>

Yet despite their strength, or possibly because of it, and notwithstanding the ineffectuality of the white parties against them, the maroons were nevertheless shrewd enough to have responded to the systematic attack against them by consolidating their position. (Toynbee's theory of challenge and response is perhaps applicable here.) Since the days of Lubolo and de Serras, it appears from scanty evidence that their method of fighting was rather of a free-lance nature, with small bands attacking plantations and retreating under no recognized or permanent leadership, "but now finding that the colonists had determined to suffer themselves to be annoyed no longer by a lawless band of plunderers, and that parties were filled out to attack them wherever they could be found, they concentrated [concentrated?] their force and elected a chief, whose name was Cudjoe, a bold, skillful, and enterprising man, who, on assuming the command, appointed his brothers Accompong and Johnny leaders under him, and Cuffee and Quao subordinate Captains."<sup>125</sup>

#### NOTES AND REFERENCES

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